Working Time Arrangements (WTA) - Frequently Asked Questions

**What is a WTA?**

A Working Time Agreement (WTA) is a collective agreement reached annually at the school level between the teachers’ trade union(s) and the school management that sets out how teachers’ ‘collegiate hours’ are to be undertaken for the following year. A WTA is a mechanism for all grades of school teaching staff to manage workload and achieve the contractual 35-hour week.

**Who does the WTA effect?**

Each year’s WTA is binding on all teaching staff.

**How many hours should a teacher work and how is the time Allocated?**

Teachers in Scotland have a contractual working week of 35 hours.

22.5 hours maximum class contact time.

7.5 Hours personal planning and preparation time.

5 hours – each week the remaining 5 hours are set aside for collegiate time.

**What about part-time staff?**

All WTA requirements for part-time staff are determined on a pro-rata basis. Teachers and managers should reach agreement at the start of each school session about which events will be attended by part-time colleagues. N.B Part-time staff can only be obliged to attend work on a day they don’t normally teach if there is a planned parents’ meeting (SNCT Handbook, Part 2: Section 3.9). Try to schedule staff meetings and parents’ nights on different days of the week each time.

**Who does the negotiating?**

For the purposes of negotiating there is a teacher side and a management side. The Branch Negotiating Committee will engage with any other teachers’ unions to mirror
the LNCT to form a ‘Teachers’ Side’. The Teachers’ Side will be led by the EIS school rep (if the majority of staff are EIS members). The Teachers’ Side negotiates with the Management Side, which is usually led by the Headteacher.

**What should we do before starting negotiations?**

Your Branch should meet, audit the current year’s collegiate activities and agree
on objectives before beginning the WTA negotiations. The EIS has produced an audit document to assist this process. This meeting will only be attended by the teacher side members- even if the management side are members.

**I’ve heard that every WTA must have a calendar - why?**

The WTA Calendar is part of the agreed WTA, and it sets out the dates and times of all WTA events for the school session. The calendar and WTA should be agreed at the same time to ensure a maximum allocation of 5 hours per week. It is a joint document and is not owned by the Management Side, nor can it be unilaterally varied.

The Calendar allows teachers and managers to plan workload demands and avoid pressure points such as parent meetings and report deadlines clashing with other school meetings.

The Calendar should be shared with all staff.

**Can a WTA be changed once it has been agreed?**

Changes can only be made to a WTA or Calendar in-year with the agreement of both the Teachers’ and Management Sides. If something additional goes in, then something must come out.

**Parents Nights**

Parents’ meetings may take place in the evening or end-on to the school day, subject to appropriate consultation and agreement. Current arrangements whereby staff do not require to attend for groups of pupils they do not teach, or are allowed to leave when appointments have been completed, will continue to remain.

Where do I find the current North Ayrshire WTA Document?

This can be found on the SNCT website at the following link:

<https://www.snct.org.uk/lnctAgreements.php>

On the filter drop down select North Ayrshire. Then click on the Filter button.

The document is called “Working Time Arrangements”.

It can also be found on our website.

<https://www.eis.org.uk/northayrshire/wtapowerpoint>