



Guidance Note – Teacher Attendance Time

Background

The attendance times for teachers are set out in clause 59.1(b) of the [Victorian Catholic Education Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2018 \(VCEMEA\)](#). *The parties agree that:*

- (i) *Teachers' work includes the work undertaken to meet their professional responsibilities. This work may be performed in other locations including, for example, the Employee's home.*
- (ii) *There is no set attendance requirement for Teachers at the workplace beyond their scheduled duties including classroom teaching.*

The attendance time clause has been the source of disputation in some schools. The Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania (IEU) and the Employers through their representative, the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Limited (CECV) have agreed, without prejudice to their interpretations of clause 59.1(b), to the recommended approach set out in this Guidance Note to avoid further disputes.

Attendance Time

The professional status of teachers is premised on the understanding that teachers are aware of the totality of their work and that teachers take responsibility for meeting their professional responsibilities. Teachers, as professionals, perform their work without constant supervision and direction. Much of the work of teachers does not appear on a timetable or school calendar. It is acknowledged that teachers perform work beyond the times that students are in attendance at school and that work may be performed outside school hours. Teachers are responsible for planning their workload. Teachers have flexibility as to when and where they perform some of their work.

While schools may have preferred attendance times for teachers, or may reach agreement with the teaching staff about practices to be implemented, schools should not implement arbitrary attendance requirements for teachers in the absence of scheduled duties. Nor should schools schedule duties so that they unnecessarily extend the working day for teachers.

Preferred attendance times should take into account a brief period before the start of the school day for students: to provide for availability to deal with immediate/urgent matters, availability for extras/replacement classes, time for collegial interaction and so on. Appropriate times should be discussed (and preferably agreed) with staff.

Recognising the workload on teachers, any preferred start/finish times should not be earlier/later than is necessary and should respect that work is performed outside the school day and off the school premises.

Where teachers without scheduled duties absent themselves from the premises, they should record the absence in accordance with the usual school processes. Teachers should not take unfair advantage of the flexibility provided by clause 59.1(b) and should be mindful of fairness with other teachers. For example, it is not expected that a full time teacher with no scheduled duties will leave the school premises each week/fortnight, but they may opt to do so occasionally in appropriate circumstances. Schools need to be mindful of part-timers' hours of engagement.

Schools should avoid making arrangements for all teachers to manage individuals who are not fulfilling reasonable professional expectations. Clause 13 of the VCEMEA provides appropriate mechanisms to manage concerns.

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