

Addendum to VEVE Guidance and Checklist: “Implementing the recommendations of the workload reduction taskforce in your workplace”



Background

As well as pay, workload is the single biggest concern of teachers. “High workload” and “excessive working hours” are the most quoted reasons for teachers leaving the profession prematurely.

The NEU has been working with the workload reduction taskforce to secure meaningful reductions in working hours and workload for our members. The workload reduction taskforce has been directed by the Government to secure workload reductions for teachers and leaders; and reduce working hours by five hours per week over the next three years.

In January 2024, the taskforce published its initial recommendations [gov.uk/government/publications/workload-reduction-taskforce-initial-recommendations](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/workload-reduction-taskforce-initial-recommendations), which the government has fully accepted. As well as updating the list of administrative tasks which do not call for the exercise of a teachers’ or leaders’ professional skills and judgement, the NEU also secured Government agreement to end the obligation for schools to operate performance-related pay progression (PRP) from September 2024.

This addendum will provide additional guidance and support for NEU reps and members to ensure effective implementation of these initial recommendations in your workplace. This addendum should be read alongside our VEVE booklet and checklist, which you can find here [VEVE home - VEVE hub](#) (foleon.com).

The NEU says:

“It’s time for NEU members working in schools and academies to take control of their workload & working hours”

Recommendations

Updated list of admin and clerical tasks

An updated list of admin and clerical tasks that should not be done by teachers or leaders has been reintroduced into The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD). In any case, beyond the 23 tasks specified in the updated list, teachers and school leaders should not be instructed to carry out activities that do not require their professional skills or judgement, ie the list below is not exhaustive.

Updated list of administrative and clerical tasks:

1. Managing data and transferring data about pupils into school management systems (eg Question Level Analysis) or printing electronic records for paper filing.
2. Reformatting data or re-entry of data into multiple systems.
3. Production of photographic evidence of practical lessons eg for assessment purposes or to 'evidence' learning.
4. Creation or duplication of files and paperwork perceived to be required in anticipation of inspection, such as copies of evidence portfolios or regularly updated seating plans.
5. Administration or data analysis relating to wraparound care and preparation of food/meals.
6. Administration of public and internal examinations.
7. Collating pupil reports eg reports of pupil examination results.
8. Producing and collating analyses of attendance figures.
9. Investigating a pupil's absence
10. Responsibility for producing, copying, uploading, and distributing bulk communications to parents and pupils, including standard letters, school policies, posts on electronic platforms.
11. Administration relating to school visits, trips and residentials (including booking venues, collecting forms, and recording lunch requirements) and of work experience (but not selecting placements and supporting pupils by advice or visits).
12. Organisation, decoration, and assembly of the physical classroom space eg moving classrooms, moving classroom furniture, putting up and taking down classroom displays.
13. Ordering, setting up and maintaining ICT equipment, software, and virtual learning environments (VLEs), including adding pupils to VLEs and online subscription platforms.
14. Ordering supplies and equipment.
15. Cataloguing, preparing, issuing, stocktaking, and maintaining materials and equipment, or logging the absence of such.
16. Collecting money from pupils and parents.
17. Administration of cover for absent teachers.

continued overleaf

18. Co-ordinating and submitting bids (for funding, school status and the like).
 19. Administration of medical consent forms and administering of medication on a routine or day-to-day basis.
 20. Taking, copying, distributing, or typing up notes (eg verbatim notes) or producing formal minutes.
 21. Producing class lists or physical copies of context sheets.
 22. Keeping and filing paper or electronic records and data eg in school management systems or physical office files.
 23. Bulk photocopying.
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- ☐ Can you confirm that teachers and leaders in your workplace are not routinely undertaking any of the 23 tasks above?
 - ☐ Can you confirm that teachers and leaders in your workplace are not routinely undertaking any other tasks that do not require their skills and professional judgement?

Support staff – NEU says:

Reduction in teacher and leadership workload and working hours, including any reduction achieved when teachers or leaders cease to undertake any of the 23 tasks identified above, should not result in increased workload for support staff. Support staff should not be expected to go over and above their contractual obligations or be expected to take on more work without additional time and/or pay.

Support staff should not be expected to undertake duties that are appropriate to a higher grade, and which do not reflect their job description or pay packet.

Schools must take account of the need for additional support staff resource, and the NEU will strongly oppose any attempts to increase the workload burden on existing support staff.

- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace support staff are not required to undertake additional work that is not commensurate with their grade or pay?
- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace support staff are not required to work beyond their contracted hours?



Performance Related Pay (PRP)

As part of the settlement of last year's pay dispute the government established a workload reduction taskforce. It has recommended that the requirement for maintained schools to operate performance-related pay progression be removed.

This is a significant win, however removing the requirement for schools to use PRP will not automatically end it. Academy trusts, which are not statutorily required to follow the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD), are already free to abandon PRP, however most have not done so.

- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace teachers and leaders will be receiving automatic pay progression through their pay scales from September 2024?
- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace the appraisal process is not increasing the workload of teachers and leaders?

We should also note that the recommended changes on PRP were not due to its inherent discriminatory nature nor it's undermining of teacher professionalism but due to the 'administrative and workload burden' it created, which leaves the door open for a similar, less burdensome iteration of PRP to be introduced.

Further, while any link between appraisal and pay remains within performance management policies, there will be an element of PRP that remains – particularly as teachers move through threshold to the upper pay scale. **The NEU believes that progression should be automatic and annual on the nine point pay scale recommended in the STPCD.**

Further information on PRP can be found here [Performance-related pay for teachers | National Education Union \(neu.org.uk\)](https://www.neu.org.uk/performance-related-pay-for-teachers)

Engagement with union reps

The taskforce acknowledges the essential role of school reps and recommends that schools, trusts, and local authorities work with union reps to reduce workload and improve wellbeing.

- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace employers are working with union reps to reduce workload and improve teacher and leader wellbeing?
- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace SLT and school governors are aware of the recommendations of the **2016 independent workload review groups** and **2018 Workload Advisory Group**?
- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace SLT and school governors are working with union reps to ensure that they are adhering to the recommendations of the **2016 independent workload review groups** and **2018 Workload Advisory Group** on planning, marking and data collection?

A staff lead on workload

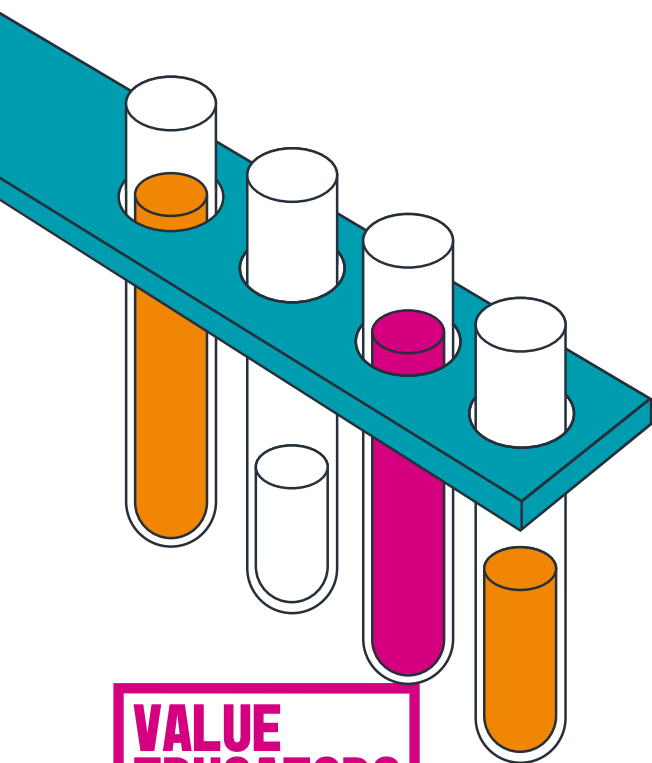
In order to facilitate effective communication with union reps and implement successful workload reduction initiatives and improve wellbeing, schools and trusts should assign a senior leader or workload lead with dedicated responsibility for improving wellbeing and reducing workload.

- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace there is a workload lead responsible for improving wellbeing and reducing workload?
- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace you have scheduled time with a workload lead to discuss workload and wellbeing issues?

An Inset day used for workload

Reducing workload and improving wellbeing is an ongoing process and requires dedicating time to address the specific workload concerns of staff. The Government has committed to working with the NEU to embed a culture of sustainable workload in schools. With that aim, schools should make use of one the existing five Inset days to review staff workload and wellbeing.

- ☐ Can you confirm that in your workplace during the next academic year an Inset day or dedicated time has been reserved for consideration of measures to tackle workload and wellbeing issues?



Review

If you are answered YES to all or most of the questions posed above, your school is aware of the recommendations of the taskforce and is acting accordingly to tackle workload and improve staff wellbeing.

We would love to hear from you if you have said YES to all or most of the questions above – it will be invaluable and inspirational to other groups, NEU reps and members to hear about schools and colleges where workload has been taken seriously and reduced.

If you are answered NO to all or the majority of the questions posed above or there are other workload issues of concern to you and your colleagues, use this addendum along with the NEU VEVE booklet and checklist nationaleducationunion.foleon.com/value-educators/vevehub/ to:

1. Identify areas that will help reduce workload and improve wellbeing.
2. Arrange a union meeting (consider working with other unions) to discuss those issues.
3. Formulate a strategy, produce a workload reduction action plan, and identify priorities.
4. Share this with your head or workload lead and agree steps forward.
5. Agree a date for implementation and a date in the future to review.

The evaluation section of the NEU VEVE toolkit includes a model template for recording areas that have been identified as priorities for action, model letters and a PowerPoint presentation for NEU reps and members to use.

The NEU position is that all schools and trusts should have a clear action plan to identify and reduce excessive workload and improve wellbeing. This is key to improving retention rates and increasing morale in workplaces. The recommendations of workload reduction taskforce have been agreed with the DfE and have the full backing of the government. It is the position of the NEU that the recommendations of the taskforce are a requirement and not voluntary.

If your school or academy fails to implement the recommendations of the taskforce, the NEU will take action to support members in securing the workload reductions to which they are entitled. Please contact your local branch or regional office, which will be able to support you and discuss the options open to you: neu.org.uk/about/contact-us