

FACILITIES FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF RECOGNISED TEACHERS' ORGANISATIONS (FURTHER EDUCATION)

INTRODUCTION

1. This agreement between the management and staff sides of the Lecturers' Negotiating Committee describes the principles and practices which are recommended to institutions of further education in respect of the facilities to be made available to those teachers, not being paid officials of any of the recognised teachers' organisations, who are accredited representatives of these organisations.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

2. This agreement is based on the belief that both the teachers' organisations and the employing authorities accept their joint responsibility for ensuring a well-ordered system of trades union organisation and industrial relations and on a recognition of the contribution that can be made by the teachers' organisations and their local representatives to the smooth running of the further education service at all levels. It is agreed that in jointly determining the nature and extent of the facilities to be provided locally, and in their use, the parties will have regard not only to the value of the agreed facilities for effective employee representation as a means of promoting good industrial relations, but also to the need to avoid unnecessary cost to maintain the effective running of further education establishments where the teacher representatives are employed, and to recognise that the provisions of the agreement will have to be introduced within the resources available to the employing authority concerned.

3. An accredited representative of a recognised teachers' organisation will be a teacher who is:-

- a. a member of the National Executive or other national committee of the organisation; a representative of the organisation appointed by its National Executive to serve on a national body; or a delegate to a national conference of the organisation for the period of the conference;
- b. a Northern Ireland regional representative whose duties will be limited to activities which are a necessary part of his duties for the organisation and its members within Northern Ireland;
- c. a representative of the organisation whose duties will be at college level.

In certain circumstances a representative may have responsibility at more than one of these functional levels. For their part the recognised teachers' organisations undertake to ensure that their accredited representatives understand the extent of their authority and responsibility as teachers' representatives.

4. It will be the responsibility of the recognised teachers' organisations to notify the employing authorities and college principals of the names of accredited representatives as defined in Paragraph 3 and it will be to these representatives only that the recommended facilities are extended. In large colleges organisations may wish to appoint more than one representative, while in those areas where there are very small colleges organisations may wish one representative to service more than one institution.

5. The principal matters with which appropriate accredited representatives will deal, in accordance with the responsibilities defined in Paragraph 3, are as follows:-
- a. matters arising from proposals from the Government Department responsible for further education which have a direct bearing on the further education service;
 - b. matters arising from the Negotiating Committees;
 - c. matters arising out of the use of the grievance procedure;
 - d. responsibilities to their organisations;
 - e. responsibilities in connection with the interests of their members in colleges;
 - f. functions connected with the training of teachers' representatives, including attendance at training courses arranged by the recognised teachers' organisations at national, regional and institution level for this purpose. In these respects consultation with the appropriate authorities will be part of these functions.
6. It is expected that 5d. above will include the involvement of members of local committees of recognised teachers' organisations in attendance at these committees. Item 5e. is likely to include the convening of meetings of newly-appointed teachers for the purpose of meeting them and explaining the advantages of membership of a recognised organisation. The teachers' organisations accept that such local meetings should be held at times which do not interfere with the normal functioning of the college.

FACILITIES FOR ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVES

7. Facilities for the accredited representatives of the recognised teachers' organisations should, regard being had to the principles set out in paragraph 2, include:-
- a. arrangements for carrying out association responsibilities within colleges and for obtaining leave of absence to perform functions as accredited representatives;
 - b. arrangements for use for association meetings of accommodation in colleges or other premises of the employing authority.
8. Absence from college duties for the performance of their responsibilities as accredited representatives of the recognised teachers' organisations is to be allowed without reduction in pay (see Appendix).
9. Accredited representatives should not be refused unreasonably the remission of college duties and/or leave of absence necessary for the performance of their duties and the time which the performance of those duties is likely to occupy should be taken into account when determining the college duties to be performed by teachers who are accredited representatives.
10. Accredited college representatives of the recognised teachers' organisations should be permitted reasonable opportunities and be given the necessary facilities to discharge their

functions as provided for in the Labour Relations Agency Code of Practice on Time Off for Trade Union duties, namely:-

- a. union matters such as recruitment, maintaining membership, collecting contributions and communicating with members;
- b. within the responsibilities conferred on them by their respective organisations, industrial relations matters within an individual college, such as the handling of members' grievances.

11. The facilities envisaged for accredited college representatives are as follows:-

- a. notice board facilities for notices which should bear the name of the union and should be signed by the accredited representative;
- b. use of telephone with reasonable privacy, with payment by the representative for outgoing calls;
- c. provision of a room for a meeting with an organisation's members as requested, provided reasonable notice is given;
- d. use of a college typing, duplicating and reprographic equipment where available, for essential union work within the college provided this does not interfere with the work of that college;
- e. provision of, or access to, a small room which can be used as an office where this is possible within a college.
- f. use of college e-mail facilities including access to the internet for purposes relating to the accredited representative's trade union duties and activities. Any additional expenditure incurred by the Institute under c,d and f should be borne by the organisation concerned.

12. The accredited representative at institution level should be provided by the institution with a copy of documents produced by the appropriate authority which set out the salaries, the conditions of service, and such consequential regulations as may, from time to time, apply to the further education teacher in the institution area. These documents should be provided without charge to the recognised teachers' organisations.

13. The accredited college representative should, on request, be provided by the Principal with full information on the structure and allocation of the staffing establishment of their own college, and also with a copy of the Instrument and Articles of Government of that college, as from time to time amended.

DEFINITION

14. A recognised teachers' organisation (further education) is one represented on the staff side of the Negotiating Committees for Further Education in Northern Ireland.

APPENDIX

1. The agreement provides for leave of absence with pay to be granted to accredited representatives as defined in paragraph 3 of the document. Employing authorities have in the past recognised, and undertake to continue to recognise that accredited representatives shall be given adequate leave of absence with pay to enable them effectively to deal with their responsibilities arising under paragraphs 3a and b of the document. It is also accepted that accredited representatives in some instances will not need to be absent for the whole day. They may however on occasions have to travel some distance to meetings and it is accepted that such leave of absence will be construed in such a way as to ensure that the representative has adequate time to travel to and from the meeting and if necessary to have a meal before or after his journey.

2. In order to enable employing authorities to deal with the granting of leave with pay, it is accepted that individual representatives will furnish to employing authorities particulars of the meeting, conference etc which requires their attendance. It is also accepted that on request, the recognised teachers' organisations will make available to individual institutions a detailed description of their constitution and organisation as it affects accredited representatives at college, regional and national levels. The recognised teachers' organisations will also be prepared, on request, to verify the numerical strength of their membership at the various levels described.

3. A representative whose duties are at college level, as defined in paragraph 3c of the document, shall be entitled to remission of student contact time for association business on the following scale:-

5 - 30 members	-	1 hour per week
31 - 60 members	-	2 hours per week
61 - 100 members	-	3 hours per week
Over 100 members	-	4 hours per week

4. a. Accredited representatives should be allowed reasonable paid time off work for initial basic training and for further training, where such training is necessary to meet circumstances such as changes in legislation affecting the representatives duties.

b. The maximum possible notice should be given by the teachers' organisation concerned when a need has been identified for an official to receive basic or further training. The institution should be notified, through the normal college channels what training the teachers' organisation wishes the official to receive and, if required, a copy of the syllabus or prospectus indicating the contents of the training course or programme should be provided.

c. The need to maintain colleges at an efficient level of operation should be borne in mind when training is being arranged and the number of officials receiving training from one college should not exceed what is reasonable in the circumstances. Management and teachers' organisations should co-operate to ensure that this requirement is met.