

National Joint Council for Staff in Sixth Form Colleges

13 May 2026

Dear Principal/Chief Executive,

NJC Workload and Working Time Agreement

Following meetings of the National Joint Council (NJC) workload and working time working party and Full NJC, we write to confirm that agreement has been reached on teacher workload and working time issues, which formed a key part of the teacher unions' pay claim for 2025/26.

The Employer Side and Staff Side of the Committee for Teaching Staff recognise the importance of workload for teaching staff. As such both sides of the NJC have fully engaged on teacher workload and working time issues and made every effort to seek common ground to support the sector with these issues.

The attached agreed wording introduces the concept of PPA into the Red Book and amendment to cover arrangements to move towards a rarely cover approach. While the NJC agreed to the introduction of the concept of PPA, the NJC Employer Side could not agree to setting a fixed figure for PPA time that might inadvertently reduce or restrict local flexibility for colleges.

The NJC has also agreed a set of workload principles (Appendix 1) and directed time principles (Appendix 2) attached. We believe that the attached workload principles should support colleges' commitment at national and local level to address teacher workload, while continuing to support the delivery of students' education. We also support the use of directed time calendars at local level and believe that principals should continue to consult with teacher unions and staff on these. The attached documents will take effect from 1st September 2026. Given the need to develop directed time calendars for the Autumn Term ahead of this date, we would encourage all colleges to determine how best to incorporate the changes this term, in consultation with teacher unions.

Unfortunately, the NJC Employer Side could not agree a recommendation on an upper limit for class sizes or to the Staff Side demand for a limit of 20 hours contact time. The NJC has however, agreed to discuss these issues further with a view to exploring existing best practice in this area within colleges.

We are of course happy to discuss any of this in more detail, so please do not hesitate to contact either Side of the NJC, if that would be of any help. The attached agreements will be incorporated in the next updated version of the Red Book.

Yours sincerely



Graham Baird
NJC Joint Secretaries



Phil Child

Employers' Secretary: Graham Baird, Sixth Form Colleges' Association, 78 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5ES, Tel: 0203 824 0464

Staff Side Secretary: Phil Child, NEU, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London, WC1H 9BD, Tel: 020 7388 6191

Staff Side Secretary: Ben Thomas, Unison, 130 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AY, Tel: 0207 121 5270