



Guidance for Local Associations on creating and submitting motions to Annual Conference

(Please read in conjunction with the Key Dates for Conference document which is available in the Annual Conference section of the NASUWT website.)

Ten Top Tips for Submitting Motions

1. Address only one topic in each motion.
2. Be concise – use 150 words or less.
3. Ensure that the motion is relevant to members throughout the UK.
4. Consider carefully exactly what action you want the Union to take.
5. Avoid using text that would be better placed in a speech.
6. Think about topics for motions that might be relevant to all of the sections – ie. (a) Education; (b) Equality; (c) Health, Safety and Wellbeing; (d) Pay Pensions and Conditions of Service; (e) Social, Economic and International; and (f) Training, Recruitment and Union Organising.
7. Consider making your motion inclusive of all members/workplaces (e.g. schools and colleges).
8. Try to identify a topic that will be new to Conference.
9. Remember that your motion should be engaging, so it will resonate in the ballot and at Conference.
10. Ensure that you have used the formatting conventions including addressing the motion to 'Conference'.

1 Topic

- 1.1 Each motion should address a single topic or issue.

- 1.2 A motion should require some action for the Union to take and not simply make a statement.
- 1.3 There is strong evidence that motions that are balloted highly are those written concisely (in no more than 150 words). Whilst there is not a word limit for motions, those of excessive length may be less likely to be voted on to the final Conference Agenda.
- 1.4 The topic of a motion should be something that takes Union policy forward, commands the attention of members and that one or more of your Local Association members can speak on with enthusiasm and belief. To assist the process of identifying topics for motions, Local Associations may wish to refer to the decisions (resolutions) made at previous conferences to avoid repeats of existing policy as this often fails to engage Conference and may not be the best use of time. A summary of the resolutions agreed at Annual Conference 2026 can be found in the Campaign Plan, www.nasuwt.org.uk/CampaignPlan.
- 1.5 The NASUWT is the only UK-wide teachers' union. Where possible motions should be inclusive and worded so that all members in all constituent nations would benefit from the actions requested. This will also increase the chances of success in the balloting process (see 2.10).
- 1.6 Amendments to the Rules of the Union can only be made in accordance with Rule 28 of the Rules of the Union. Other motions for submission on the Agenda cannot make any amendment to the Rules of the Union.

2 Format and Conventions

(For examples relating to this section, please see appendix A)

- 2.1 The subject of a motion must be 'Conference' – not 'We' or 'The NASUWT'. For examples of this, see 2.4 below.
- 2.2 Consider the verb to follow 'Conference' from a number of possibilities, for example:
- urges/requests/requires the National Executive, etc.;
 - notes;

- believes;
- calls upon;
- condemns;
- endorses;
- applauds;
- deplores.

- 2.3 Once a verb has been used it should not be used again without being preceded by the word 'further'.
- 2.4 Avoid writing the motion in a way that reads as if it were a speech. In order to avoid this, work out the main points about the issue you are concerned with and formulate paragraphs to reflect this. It could look like this:
- Conference notes/condemns/endorses (facts);
 - Conference believes (views);
 - Conference requests/urges/calls upon/demands that the National Executive (actions).
- 2.5 Lists in the same motion are constructed first in Roman numerals and then in letters.
- 2.6 Lists, whose component parts are elements of one statement, are usually set up with a semicolon at the end of each point, except the penultimate, which ends with 'and'.
- 2.7 Names of organisations and references can appear in an abbreviated form (often the first letters of each word). The convention is, however, that on the first occasion they appear in the title or the motion, they must be written out fully followed by the abbreviated form (acronym) in brackets. Further references can then be in the abbreviated form.
- 2.8 The issue at the heart of the motion and the title of the motion should match. Your title will be a working title only. Once the ballot for motions determines the 20 motions for Conference, the Standing Orders Committee will decide on titles for publication in the final Agenda.

- 2.9 The Standing Orders Committee will also determine the grouping of motions for the purpose of the ballot for motions, in the following sections:
- (a) Education
 - (b) Equality
 - (c) Health, Safety and Wellbeing
 - (d) Pay, Pensions and Conditions of Service
 - (e) Social, Economic and International
 - (f) Training, Recruitment and Union Organising
- 2.10 Local Associations may wish to note that members will be strongly encouraged to vote for at least one motion in each section.
- 2.11 The NASUWT prides itself on being an inclusive body and the NASUWT does not represent teachers who are solely based in schools. In order to ensure that no member or group of members is excluded and that motions are relevant to all members whenever possible, Local Associations should consider the language used when referring to the places where members work. It is often easy to make a motion inclusive just by changing a reference from 'school' to 'school/college' or 'workplace'.
- 2.12 The NASUWT is the only teachers' union which is recognised throughout the UK. Local Associations should think about the terminology being used in motions and, wherever possible, use inclusive references. For example, a motion may refer to 'Ofsted' which would mean that it would only be relevant to members employed in England. However, by changing this reference to 'inspection body', the motion could become relevant to members employed throughout the UK. It is obviously important to ensure that the issues being referred to in such a motion are, when appropriate, generic to members across the UK.

3 Compositing – Re Standing Order (SO) 3

- 3.1 If more than one Motion on the same issue is submitted, the Standing Orders Committee may prepare one or more Composite Motions on that issue drawn from the words of those Motions.

- 3.2 Compositing is carried out by the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) following the closing date of submission of motions to bring together motions dealing with similar issues.
- 3.3 Your Local Association will be informed if your motion has been composited. You will be asked to notify the national Union of acceptance or withdrawal from the composited motion by noon on the second Monday in December of the relevant year. If you choose to withdraw from the composited motion, you will also be asked whether you wish your original motion to be put back on the agenda, subject to SO3. In this case, your motion, subject to scrutiny in accordance with SO3, will be re-inserted to the list of motions for ballot.
- 3.4 When there are a number of motions on the same subject there is a risk that each of them attracts a small number of votes and therefore none are successful in the ballot. Compositing these motions together can help consolidate this support and ensure that the greatest possible range of issues are debated at Annual Conference.

4 Amendments to motions

- 4.1 Amendments to the 20 balloted motions can be submitted by noon on the fourth Monday in February in accordance with SO5. This provides an opportunity for your Local Association to make a point if a suitable motion exists and if the amendment adds to or clarifies the motion.
- 4.2 An amendment shall not negate the original motion.
- 4.3 The same conventions as for submitting motions (2.1–2.10) apply but they are more relevant to submitting amendments:
- a) The starting point will be the reference to the place the amendment is being made e.g. 'In the second paragraph...'
 - b) Following that, if a word or words is/are to be deleted, the wording will be '*delete such and such*'...
 - c) If a word or section is to be inserted, the wording will be '*insert such and such*'.

- d) If a word or section is to be taken out and an alternative word or section is to take its place, then the wording will be '*replace such and such*' '*with such and such*'.
- e) Amendments should not anticipate decisions of Conference by referring to numbering that might be consequential on a Conference decision. The amendment should simply refer to the motion as tabled. The President will notify Conference of any consequential numbering as the debate progresses.

5 Amendments to reports

5.1 The Annual Report

The Annual Report is a factual account of the activities of the National Executive during the relevant period (normally the calendar year preceding the Conference). An amendment to this report can only be to correct a factual inaccuracy or insert factually correct information that has been omitted. A Local Association wishing to propose an amendment to the Annual Report shall submit that amendment in writing to the General Secretary to be received by him/her no later than noon on the seventh day preceding Conference.

5.2 National Executive Reports

A Local Association wishing to propose an amendment to a National Executive Report to Conference shall submit that amendment in writing to the General Secretary to be received by him/her no later than noon on the seventh day preceding Conference. The National Executive will endeavour to give as much advance notice as possible of the topic of any Reports for the Conference Agenda.

6 Making your point even if your motion does not make it on to the Conference Agenda

6.1 Following the process of compositing and publication of motions for ballot, it is possible that your motion does not end up in the final list of 20 for Conference. There remain several opportunities for your Local Association to make its point:

- a) submitting an amendment to a motion (see 4.1) or the National Executive's Annual Report (see 5.1);

- b) speaking **for** or **against** a motion by submitting a card available from the Standing Orders table at Conference;
- c) speaking **to** a motion, the National Executive's Annual Report or a National Executive Report. Speaking to a motion or report can be a way of making a point, provided it is relevant to the motion/report, when you feel it would not be appropriate to oppose or support outright. This may be especially relevant in the case of the National Executive's Annual Report provided the point made relates to the period covered by the report. Cards for this purpose are also available from the Standing Orders table at Conference

NB: The National Executive sometimes submits reports for the Conference Agenda. As a consequence, it is possible that any related motions that follow in the Agenda could fall, subject to a ruling from the President. If you wish to ensure that your Local Association's point of view is heard, then it may be better to speak in the debate on the report (see 5.2 with regard to submitting amendments to National Executive reports).

Contact for advice

Clarification on any of the above can be sought from the Chair of Standing Orders, c/o the General Secretary at NASUWT, Hillscourt Education Centre, Rose Hill, Rednal, Birmingham B45 8RS or e-mail annualconference@mail.nasuw.org.uk.

Appendix A

The resolutions and motions in this appendix are taken from previous Conferences and give real examples of the information contained in the guidance.

This resolution indicates how the points made in sections 1 and 2 of the guidance are put into practice.

TEACHER RETENTION CRISIS

Conference is concerned that schools are finding it increasingly difficult to fill teacher vacancies and that governments and administrations have been missing recruitment targets for trainee teachers.

Conference is aware that:

- (i) teachers are increasingly leaving state-funded schools before they reach retirement;
- (ii) unrealistic targets, workload, league tables, micro-management and inspection are some of the barriers to teacher retention and
- (iii) governments' interventions to support and retain the existing teaching workforce have been inadequate.

Conference urges the National Executive to:

- (a) continue to lobby governments and administrations to set out plans to ensure that the teacher retention crisis is addressed;
- (b) meet with governments and administrations to share evidence that more teachers are leaving before retirement due to current working conditions and
- (c) continue to pursue workload reduction strategies with governments and administrations.

This motion from the 2015 Agenda gives examples of a number of points from the guidance.

THE IMPACT OF THE PUPIL PREMIUM

Conference notes that the pupil premium (PP) was introduced by the Coalition Government in 2011 to support disadvantaged pupils.

Conference acknowledges that the Coalition Government holds school leaders and governing bodies accountable for how the funding is used through:

- (i) inspection;
- (ii) annual reporting and
- (iii) pupil performance tables.

Conference further notes the fact that teachers are having accountability for PP pupils linked directly to appraisal and pay progression by means of whole-school targets and scrutiny measures such as book audits and PP trails.

Conference believes that the prescriptive use of PP scrutiny is being used to restrict teachers' professional judgements concerning classroom management.

Conference condemns the increasing practice of requiring teachers to record interventions for PP pupils, justify crude performance measures of PP achievement and prioritise PP pupils above other pupils including those with special educational needs.

Conference asserts that there is no academic evidence that this initiative is having a significant impact on pupils with most needs.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to:

- (a) commission research into how PP funding has impacted on the performance of PP pupils;
- (b) include questions relating to PP appraisal objectives and their impact on workload in its annual Big Question survey;
- (c) petition the Department for Education to audit and publish the impact of the PP on the workload of teachers and to review its effectiveness on pupil performance;
- (d) work with the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Department for Education to conduct and publish an equality impact assessment of the PP and
- (e) provide advice to members about the use of PP targets in appraisal and their potential impact on workload and wellbeing.

AMENDMENT

In the first paragraph:

replace 'to support' with 'on the pretext of supporting'

Replace paragraph 2 with 'Conference is deeply concerned that the Coalition Government does not hold schools to account for how the funding is used.'

In the third and fifth paragraphs: replace 'PP pupils' with 'pupils attracting PP funding'

After the fifth paragraph: insert a new paragraph: 'Conference further condemns the practice of requiring teachers to identify interventions without providing additional funding in the classroom.'

In the sixth paragraph in (iii): delete 'and to review the effectiveness on pupil performance'

Concise motions of a shorter length are encouraged. Below is an examples of a motion from an Agenda that dealt with an issue in no more than 150 words.

PUPIL INDISCIPLINE

Conference recognises the success of recent campaigns in publicising violent attacks on teaching staff.

Conference, however, notes that there are other forms of attacks on staff, such as swearing, intimidation and persistent low-level disturbance which contribute to high levels of stress and early exits from careers in education.

Conference maintains that no school employee should have to suffer persistent problems from pupils who seriously disrupt teaching and learning.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to gather data with a view to making the public aware of the frequency of disruption and its detrimental effect on education.

Conference requires the National Executive to continue negotiations with the Government to achieve greater consistency and transparency in behaviour policies that should reflect zero tolerance of such disruption.