

## Alternative Certification Model

On 16 February, it was announced by the Scottish Government that two assessment support days would be available for all secondary teachers, to give them extra time to engage with the alternative certification model. The purpose of this time is to allow teachers to engage with the assessment, moderation and quality assurance process required for awarding National Qualifications during this year. The Union is clear that teachers should not be providing work for pupils on inset days: if approached to do so, members should contact [rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk) for further advice.

While there is a significant variation in practices across Scottish schools, the NASUWT is strongly advocating against any move to progress with normal timetable changes in secondary schools: a 'business as usual' approach is not appropriate. Members who are concerned that they have been given unreasonable or unachievable tasks, or are facing a significant workload burden, should in the first instance raise these concerns with their line manager. Where a resolution is not reached, members are encouraged to seek further advice and support from their school representative, Local Association secretary or via [rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk).

## Health and Wellbeing

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, excessive workload and poor wellbeing were cited by teachers and school leaders as being among their main concerns about the quality of their working lives. Not only have many of the causes of these concerns remained relevant during the pandemic but they have been exacerbated by the extraordinary pressures that COVID-19 has placed on schools and the staff who work in them.

Teacher and school-leader wellbeing and mental health, as well as being important concerns in their own right, have always been central to securing an effective, motivated and resilient workforce, capable of meeting the challenges associated with providing worthwhile and engaging learning opportunities for children and young people.

The NASUWT has published a range of resources that will support work to identify and tackle barriers to securing workforce wellbeing and positive mental health in the workplace. These resources include:

- wellbeing at work audits; and
- advice and guidance on stress management.

These resources can be found at: <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/advice/health-safety/coronavirus-guidance/full-reopening-of-schools/workload-wellbeing-and-covid-19.html>.

In order to assist and support members experiencing work-related stress, anxiety and depression, members who have management responsibility for risk assessments, and activists seeking to ensure that members are adequately protected, the NASUWT has also produced a stress and mental health toolkit: <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/advice/health-safety/mental-health-and-work-related-stress-toolkit.html>.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published The Talking Toolkit for Schools, with substantial input from the NASUWT, in a bid to get schools to talk openly and honestly about stress to help prevent problems or stop them getting worse: <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/advice/health-safety/the-hse-talking-toolkit.html>.

We recognise that some members may currently be experiencing high levels of anxiety or stress. The NASUWT's long-standing advice to any member in this position is to seek advice from your GP for support. Your health and wellbeing must be your top priority.

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## Pay Update

Negotiations for the Teachers' Pay Award 2021 continue. At the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) Extended Joint Chairs meeting on 5 May, there was no improved offer from the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA). The COSLA leaders had met on 28 April but although pay was discussed, it was decided to await the outcome of the election, and further discussions on finance with Scottish Government, before reconsidering the terms of the offer. The Teachers' Side clearly set out the frustrations over the time scale of negotiations and a desire for a settlement before the end of this session. Negotiations continue to ensure that the entire profession is recognised and rewarded for their commitment to the delivery of education throughout the pandemic. The next meeting will be on 7 June.

## Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL)

On 4 May, the unions of the Teachers' Panel of the SNCT wrote to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills further to a letter from Scottish Government to directors of education, which set out the intention to collect ACEL data this session and the continuation of the administration of Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSAs). The SNCT Teachers' Side Panel letter set out the unanimous view of all unions that this edict would increase teacher workload at a time when teachers and schools are stretched to their very limits. The NASUWT has been clear that the bureaucracy, demands and workload caused by a 'business as usual' approach will undermine schools' efforts to implement the alternative certification model and will have a significant adverse impact on teacher workload and wellbeing. It is clear that administering SNSAs, developing/moderating teacher judgements and collating/submitting that information is both time-consuming and unnecessary. The Union will continue to call for this decision to be reversed.

## Scotland Annual Conference 2021 – Fringe Events

This year, our conference will be a virtual event on 22 May. Any member can attend all or part of the conference as an observer. Please contact [rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk) for more details.

There are three satellite fringe events planned around the conference on 25/26/27 May. Each of these events are open to all members: you do not need to be registered as a delegate or observer to Scotland Conference in order to attend. To register your interest to attend any of the following events, please contact [rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk).

### **LEADERSHIP ROUNDTABLE EVENT**

**TUESDAY 25 May 5pm (Zoom)**

#### **Empowerment across leadership: freedom to innovate or constrained and blamed?**

Calling all leaders: headteachers, deputy heads, faculty heads and principal teachers. The NASUWT is inviting you to a roundtable event to hear your views.

The NASUWT works at school, college, local and national level to ensure that the interests of leadership members are represented effectively and that their specific needs and concerns are reflected in the development of its policy and its advice and guidance.

Join us on Tuesday 25 May to explore your views on:

- how the empowerment agenda has affected leaders;
- the impact of COVID on leadership, including the use of risk assessment tools, workload and mental health;
- whether the job sizing toolkit is working in your context;
- support and training needs for leaders;

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- whether current systems are supporting those aspiring to lead;
- how we can best support and promote greater diversity in leadership, across the school and the curriculum;
- leading learning within Curriculum for Excellence and decolonising the curriculum.

We would encourage all members in leadership to attend and have your say. To register your interest, please email [rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk).

## **Delivering LGBT Inclusive Education (NASUWT-hosted training event)**

**WEDNESDAY 26 May 5pm - 6.40pm (Teams)**

### **Time for Inclusive Education (TIE)**

This input will introduce you to the new national policy covering the implementation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) inclusive education, as set out in the Report to the Scottish Ministers (2018), and provide you with practical information to incorporate LGBT inclusive education learning themes within your curriculum and through interdisciplinary learning; from teaching about historical figures and role models, to addressing gender stereotypes.

The session will support you to get ahead of national policy implementation throughout 2021; highlight the importance of delivering a diverse and representative curriculum in efforts to address prejudice and bullying post-COVID; and provide practical stimulus, and showcasing of resources, for your own curriculum development.

This input will be delivered by staff from Time for Inclusive Education (TIE), Scotland's LGBT inclusive education charity.

We would encourage all members to attend to take advantage of this training event. To register your interest, please email [rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk).

## **NASUWT: Act for Racial Justice**

**THURSDAY 27 May 5.30pm (Zoom)**

Prejudice and discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality and religion or belief deny people their fundamental human rights, limit opportunity for everyone, and undermine the cohesion of communities and of wider society. Schools and colleges and the wider education system have a central role to play in promoting racial justice.

The NASUWT's Act for Racial Justice campaign aims to challenge all forms of race discrimination, injustice and inequality in education for black pupils and teachers.

The NASUWT is committed to:

- (a) lobbying governments and administrations to hold them to account on their statutory obligations for eradicating all forms of racial disparities;
- (b) campaigning for an independent public inquiry into the impact of the Government's actions during the pandemic on racial justice at work and in the education system;
- (c) giving voice to the everyday racism black members face in the workplace and ensure that these experiences are integrated into the Union's organising, bargaining and campaigning priorities.

Join us on **Thursday 27 May 5.30pm** to share your views and experiences. An update on the 2021 NASUWT Black Teachers' Consultation Conference, the ongoing work of the STUC Black Workers' Committee, as well as the 'Race Equality and Anti-racism in Education Programme – Stakeholder Network Group' will also be shared.

We would encourage all black members to attend and have your say. To register your interest, please email [rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:rc-scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk).