

ORDER OF BUSINESS

ANNUAL CONGRESS 2021 Part 2

Delegates are asked to note that all items of business are listed without specific timings being given. The following notes may help delegates in respect of when a specific item will be taken.

1. Apart from Guest Speakers the President intends to take order of business as printed unless he advises otherwise
2. The President will inform certain speakers if their item of business may be taken at short notice.
3. Those delegates proposing or seconding motions, or presenting reports, are asked to ensure that they are present when their item of business is called.
4. Certain items of business will take place at specified times.
 - Presidential Address will be given at 10:30
 - Guest Speaker: Prof. Mark Priestley at 12:15
 - Guest Speaker: Prof. Walter Humes at 13:30
 - The General Secretary will be heard at 15:00

Sessions

Saturday 2 October 2021

Session 1	10:30 to 12:30
Lunch	12:30 to 13:30
Session 2	13:30 to 17:00

CONGRESS AGENDA

- 1 Welcome – John Guidi President
- 2 Announcements
- 3 Sederunt
- 4 Apologies for Absence
- 5 Order of Business
- 6 Presidential Address – John Guidi
- 7 Motions (part 1)
- 8 Guest Speaker: Mark Priestley
Education Professor, University of Stirling.
- 9 Guest Speaker: Walter Humes
Honorary Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences,
University of Stirling
- 10 Motions (part 2)
- 11 Report of the General Secretary
- 12 Motions (part 3)
- 13 Votes of Thanks – Catherine Nicol (President Elect)
- 14 *Catherine Nicol New President installed*
- 15 *John Guidi, Past Presidents Medal*
- 16 Close of Congress 2021

MOTIONS

Motion A

Class sizes should reflect the workload involved in meeting learners' needs. To achieve excellence and equity for all learners, and to reduce teacher workload, archaic maximum class size arrangements which do not meet modern curricular aspirations must be reviewed, along with adequate time to implement and develop changes to meet individual pupils needs.

Congress calls on the Scottish Government to work with the SNCT to dynamically reduce both maximum class sizes in secondary schools and teacher class contact time, thereby addressing the spectrum of learners' needs.

Proposer: John Guidi (Education Committee)

Motion B

Congress notes that in the greatest majority of subjects, courses at National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher do not articulate and have substantially different assessment requirements. When courses are taught within a single class it has a considerable impact on teacher workload and on quality of engagement with learners. Congress calls on the Scottish Government to work with the SNCT to reduce the negative impact which multi-course teaching has on teachers and learners.

Congress further believes that the number and quality of qualifications obtained will be improved if 3rd Year in secondary schools is removed from Broad General Education. This would allow a return to the position of two years being available for National Courses with exams at the end of S4. This would also allow pupils to achieve qualifications in a greater number of subjects and would provide a more solid foundation for Highers in 5th Year.

Congress calls on the Scottish Government to enact this change in order to achieve the improvement in education attainment which we all desire.

Proposer: Peter Thorburn (Education Committee)

Motion C

The COVID pandemic has revealed vulnerabilities in the current National Qualifications system. There is a need to be certain that qualifications are sustainable and equitable and less reliant on high stakes summative assessment. Congress calls upon the Government:

- 1) To carry out a subject-by-subject review of National Qualifications assessment methods, that meet national standards and are not bureaucratic or onerous in implementation as to minimise workload
- 2) to affirm the place of the individual teacher's professional judgement in delivery of curricular materials, particularly those provided through external agencies
- 3) to establish an independent regulator to oversee the new qualifications body.

Proposer: James Cowans (Education Committee)

Motion D

Congress expresses grave concern over the growth of workload associated with HGIOS 4. We call upon the Scottish Government to assess the purpose and value of such inspection exercises. In addition Congress asks Government to assess the capacity of schools to implement such a policy in terms of time, staffing and resource implications for each Quality Indicator that deflects teachers away from teaching and learning.

Proposer: Paul Cochrane (Executive committee)

Motion E

Congress calls on the Scottish Government to instruct and support Local Authorities to implement a consistent and rigorous system of recording, reporting and responding to the increasing levels of violence and aggression faced by teachers.

A robust approach, supported by an agreed national protocol, must be adopted that supports the fostering of a safe environment in order for effective learning and teaching to take place.

Proposer: Kevin Madill (Angus District)

Motion F

ACAS advises that an employer should record pregnancy-related absence separately from other sickness absence and should not count this towards any review or trigger points in their attendance policy. This Congress believes that absences associated with mental health issues and medical procedures that result from pregnancy should also be recognised by all employers as being separate from the normal procedure. SSTA Congress demands that the SNCT takes action to ensure that all employers adhere to ACAS recommendations and that absences related to pregnancy are not included in calculation of trigger points for the purposes of absence management relating to sickness and ill-health.

Proposer: *Catherine Nicol (Salaries & Conditions of Service Committee)*

Motion G

A number of security issues have arisen in connection with remote learning. To help build teachers' confidence, the SSTA calls on the Scottish Government to investigate how to give teachers greater protection in relation to data sharing and online learning and teaching.

Proposer: *Catherine Nicol (Education Committee)*

Motion H

Congress is alarmed at the increasing number of teachers expected to manage and undertake responsibilities for which they have little training or curriculum expertise. These include risk assessments of hazards within curricular areas, involving both school staff and pupils. Congress calls on the Scottish Government to establish clear national guidelines to ensure that only qualified, suitably trained staff, with allocated time, are allowed to carry out such functions.

Proposer: Grant McAllister (Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee)

Motion I

Congress welcomes the Scottish Government's commitment to addressing diversity issues in education and calls upon the Government to ensure schools are provided with the curricular materials and resources they have promised, as well as appropriate staff development opportunities.

Proposer: *Maggie Nesbitt (Equalities Committee)*

Motion J

Employees who experience a miscarriage after 24 weeks have protections under employment law in terms of bereavement. ACAS recommends that employers should be as understanding and supportive as possible in the event of miscarriage. This advice extends to how and when to communicate with the employee and suggests giving more time off or a phased return to work. This Congress recognises that women who experience a miscarriage prior to 24 weeks of pregnancy can also feel bereft. Congress insists that the SNCT takes action to extend ACAS' recommendations regarding best practice on bereavement to all teachers who experience a miscarriage during pregnancy.

Proposer: *James How (Salaries & Conditions of Service Committee)*

Motion K

Congress believes that the future of teaching will continue to present pedagogical challenges in relation to basic ICT skills, online learning, and the innovative use of software and hardware. Congress calls upon Government to ensure that there is continued, progressive and appropriate professional learning which is relevant in relation to the ICT challenges of the future.

The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the shortcomings and inconsistencies in ICT equipment provision for teachers by employers. Most teachers resorted to using their own equipment for the successful delivery of online lessons. Congress further calls on the Scottish Government to provide the funds to ensure that all teachers are supplied with ICT equipment that is fit for purpose.

Proposer: *James Cowans (Education Committee)*

Motion L

Congress congratulates the Scottish Government in its ambition to support young people by having school counsellors in every secondary school.

Congress calls on the Scottish Government to extend this ambition for improving mental health in schools to include school-based staff counselling for teachers and pupil support staff.

Proposer: *Grant McAllister (Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee)*

Emergency Motion 1

Congress notes the recently published document ‘Supporting Transgender Pupils in Schools: Guidance for Scottish Schools’ (August 2021), and Congress is concerned over pupil safeguarding and other issues, including,

- The potential exclusion of parents/carers from the process of children under 16 transitioning to another gender
- Implying that teachers may not pass on information that may be revealed to them by a child without the child’s consent
- The potential for professional harm to staff involved in withholding information from parents/carers, including future legal action
- That the identified “best practice” has not been rigorously examined for its legal implications nor risk assessed for potential harm it may cause others in the school community, including those with protected characteristics.

Congress believes it is unacceptable for the government to seek to make such consequential changes without legal underpinning. Congress therefore calls on the guidance to be withdrawn until appropriate legislation has been enacted which can then inform the guidance to be disseminated to schools

Proposed by Equalities Committee (Speakers to be confirmed)