

ADVICE NOTE

Information & advice for members of the
Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association



PAY AND LEAVE FAQS

The SSTA regularly receives queries from teachers who have recently started in a promoted post or increased their hours and are surprised to find that their first pay following the additional work is less than expected.

Frequently when querying this with payroll departments they receive an unsatisfactory answer along the lines that “any teacher who moves position, new starts, leavers etc. are subject to the Teachers’ new start/leavers calculation” along with a spreadsheet calculation which may need explanation.

To help clarify this we offer the following FAQ:

1. Do all employers calculate pay in the same way?

Since 2018 all Scottish local authorities have been required to follow the same procedure when calculating pay and leave. Independent schools have different procedures, and the following does not apply.

2. I work a different number of days each month; why do I receive the same amount of monthly pay?

Teachers are paid in regular equal instalments: most local authorities pay 1/12 of annual salary monthly, although it is also possible to use a lunar cycle and pay 4 weekly. This latter method complicates calculations and is not preferred by the SSTA.

3. How much annual leave am I entitled to? What if I am unwell during my holidays?

Teachers are entitled to 40 days paid leave each year (pro rata); the remaining 26 days are ‘school closure’ days – like weekends, unpaid but still time off work. The 40 days of paid leave and 26 closure days are spread through the year. The SNCT recommends leave is allocated as follows: autumn holiday 5 days, festive holiday 10 Days, spring holiday 10 days, summer holiday 15 days (to include the final week of the holiday period). Teachers who experience sickness absence for 8 or more consecutive days during these periods of annual leave are entitled to compensatory leave of 2 days for every 5 consecutive days of absence up to a maximum of 8 in a year.

4. How is annual leave calculated?

Annual leave is built up each day a teacher works. It is calculated as 0.20513 of a day for each day worked in the school session and pro rata for each part day. ‘Days worked’ include any period of family leave, days of sickness and any other form of paid leave. A teacher working 195 days will receive payment seamlessly for their 40 days of annual leave (or pro rata).

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Want more info? Call to speak to one of our professional officers on 0131 313 7300, visit our website www.ssta.org.uk or email us at info@ssta.org.uk

PAY AND LEAVE FAQS CONTINUED...

5. If I am promoted or increase my hours will my monthly pay go up immediately?

When a teacher is promoted (permanently or with a fixed term contract), or increases their hours (eg from 0.6 to full time) they will expect an increase in salary. The employer will carry out a calculation to ensure that the teacher receives the correct amount of pay during the year. The employer will also aim to pay the teacher in equal instalments for the remaining months of the year. This means that, depending on the time of year, their first pay might be less than the teacher expects because the employer will be obliged to pay their remaining days of annual leave at the new higher rate of pay. An amount will be deducted from the teacher's first pay in their new contract to ensure the correct amount is paid in the 12-month period.

6. If I change employer, what happens with holidays I have accrued but not taken?

When a teacher moves from one Scottish local authority to another, without a significant break, their employment rights and sickness benefit entitlements are preserved. If it is mid-session the employer they are leaving will carry out a calculation to check their annual leave entitlement. If the teacher has taken fewer days' leave than they have accrued, they will receive an additional payment. The employer the teacher is joining will carry out a calculation to see how many days of leave they will expect to take in the remaining session. If there are more days' leave due than they will accrue during the remainder of the session a deduction is made from the teacher's first pay so that each month's pay thereafter will be the normal amount expected. In situations where a teacher moves from one authority to another with no change in salary level the payment and deduction should be closely equal.

7. I've just moved to a new promoted job in another local authority and my first month's pay has a big deduction, why?

Depending on the time of year, and if the new promoted post has a significantly higher salary, quite a large deduction can result from the annual leave calculations (see Q6). If it results in a payment which is less than 70% of the normal monthly salary for the post then the authority should spread the deduction over the remaining months. Payroll departments frequently forget to do this.

8. Where can I find out more, including how the calculations are performed?

The full pay and leave specification is available here: [Appendix 2.19 - SNCT Handbook](#)

9. Help!

Please send a message to info@ssta.org.uk outlining your query.

