

Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers

Code of Practice on the Engagement of Short Term Supply Teachers

Short term supply teaching is defined as a period of cover teaching for 5 days or fewer. This Code of Practice sets out the basis of engagement of short term supply teachers. Supply teaching is where teachers may be offered work on a short term temporary basis, generally with little notice. Short term supply teachers will fulfil the duties set out in the SNCT Handbook (Part 2, Section 2, paragraph 2.2).

(1) Terms of Engagement of Short Term Supply Teachers

The arrangements for engaging short term supply teachers should be as follows:

- a. In every short term supply engagement there can be no mutuality of obligation; there is no duty to offer work and no requirement to accept work. Engagement should be on a daily basis.
- b. The reasons for each engagement should be made explicit.
- c. Where it is known at the outset that the requirement for cover is likely to extend beyond 5 days a fixed term temporary contract (in accordance with the SNCT Code of Practice on the Use of Fixed Term Temporary Contracts) and any relevant LNCT Agreements should be issued.
- d. The deployment of a short term supply teacher may occur in a number of circumstances when cover is required for absences including:
 - in service training/staff development/working groups
 - short term special leave, for example, bereavement leave, jury duty
 - short term sickness absence
 - trade union duties arranged on an ad-hoc basis
 - SQA duties
 - public duties

(2) The Role of Headteachers

The Headteacher has a crucial role in ensuring the Code of Practice operates smoothly and in maintaining, as far practicable, the continuity of education provision. The Headteacher shall ensure that, within the constraints of the SNCT Pay and Conditions Agreement, the circumstances in which pupils are taught by different short term supply teachers should be limited and should not exceed 5 days regardless of individual engagement of supply teachers during any absence.

The Headteacher shall:

- a. state the specific arrangement orally as set out in Section 1 above and ensure the arrangements are confirmed in writing at the outset of any engagement, including the hours to be worked.

- b. take responsibility for arranging the daily renewal of engagements of up to 5 days.
- c. ensure that the duties of short term supply teachers do not extend beyond the duties set out in the SNCT Handbook (Part 2 Section 2, Paragraph 2.2). In particular, headteachers should ensure that class contact time is honoured. Authorisation should be sought from the Council for payment in accordance with the provision of the SNCT Handbook in circumstances where a short term supply teacher is asked to take on the full range of duties of a teacher before the engagement extends beyond 5 days.
- d. ensure that where there is a pattern of recurrent work a fixed term contract is issued.
- e. ensure that in circumstances where a part time teacher provides absence cover for a class or classes they normally teach, that teacher will be expected to maintain the full range of duties of a teacher and be paid accordingly. However a part time teacher who provides absence cover for a class or classes they do not normally teach should be deployed in accordance with the provisions of the SNCT handbook set out in Section 4 below for the first 5 days of that engagement as per the SNCT Pay and Conditions Agreement.

(3) The Role of the Council

The Council has prime responsibility in ensuring short term supply is managed efficiently and properly and shall:

- a. issue clear guidelines on supply teaching when placing teachers on supply lists. In particular, those on supply lists should be provided with the Code of Practice on the Engagement of Short term Supply Teachers and the Code of Practice on the Use of Fixed Term Temporary Contracts and, where applicable, relevant LNCT agreements.
- b. ensure that engagements are confirmed in writing signed by the supply teacher and Headteacher or nominated manager.
- c. ensure clear mechanisms for recording deployment as short term supply and deployment on fixed term contracts.
- d. support these by clear pay mechanisms.
- e. ensure that service as a short term supply teacher counts in full for pay increments, as set out in the SNCT Handbook, Part 2, Section 1 paragraphs 1.11 to 1.26.

(4) SNCT Handbook

The SNCT Handbook sets out the provisions for short term supply teachers as follows:

- a. Pay – SNCT Handbook, Part 2, Paragraphs 1.5 to 1.7.
- b. Duties – SNCT Handbook, Part 2, Paragraph 2.2.
- c. Working Year, Working Week – SNCT Handbook, Section 3, paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3.