

HLTAs and Cover supervisors

Specified work carried out by HLTAs is defined as:

- Planning and preparing lessons and courses for individual pupils, groups and whole classes
- Delivering lessons to pupils including delivery via distance learning or computer aided techniques
- Assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils
- Reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils

HLTAs teach whole classes but only on a short-term basis. Cover supervisors and HLTAs are for short-term absences only they should not be used as the remedy for the medium or long term absence of a qualified teacher. Or as any part of a job share with a teacher.

NEU advice is that HLTAs should not be used to cover whole classes for more than five consecutive days in a secondary school, and no more than three consecutive days in a primary setting.

Cover supervision occurs when no active teaching is taking place and involves the supervision of pre-set learning activities in the absence of a teacher



Job evaluation

The NEU is deeply concerned that support staff members are regularly working beyond their contracted hours and taking on additional duties beyond their role without pay.

The mechanism for challenging this is job evaluation, which is the process of assessing the value of individual jobs to determine their remuneration.

Check your job description against what duties you are currently undertaking.

This is supported by the Green Book (the national agreement on pay and conditions for local government services), which states "any additional responsibilities (taken on by support staff) need to be assessed against the grading system".

Performance management

The 2003 National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services requires schools to implement performance management for support staff. It states that all staff must have an annual, constructive appraisal leading to a personal development plan. Appraisal can, and should, be used to motivate staff, resolve workload concerns, identify training gaps and encourage career progression.

It is vital that all support staff members have access to professional development, irrespective of whether a formal appraisal process exists.

If you are an HLTA, Cover Supervisor, Teaching Assistant or Learning Support Assistant, and you have concerns about the way your role is being interpreted by your school, speak to your NEU School Rep or Branch Secretary.

Know your rights



Support staff are the backbone of our schools and colleges. They bring invaluable expertise to education and their voices must be heard

Email us for more information

hullbranch@neu.org.uk