

Special Leave Guideline

Supported Pathway into Teaching:

Special Leave conditions and entitlements for Department of Education employees while studying initial teacher education courses



Supported Pathway into Teaching: Special Leave conditions and entitlements for Department of Education employees while studying initial teacher education courses

Purpose

This guideline provides department employees and their supervisors with the steps required to be followed when applying for and/or approving special leave while studying initial teacher education courses.

Overview

The Department of Education's Supported Pathway into Teaching supports departmental employees to take the next step into teaching. The program recognizes and addresses balancing employment with the time and study commitment required to undertake and complete an initial teacher education degree.

Commencing 10 July 2023 (the start of Term 3 2023) state school teacher aides will be eligible for special leave with pay from their normal work for any compulsory practical placements required as part of an initial teacher education degree; and an offer of permanent employment upon registration as a teacher in a Queensland state school in a priority location.

From 22 January 2024 (the start of Term 1 2024) eligible department employees in Queensland state schools who are doing their teaching degree will receive special leave with pay from their normal work to undertake exams and compulsory practical placement.

From 1 July 2024 all eligible department employees who are doing their teaching degree will receive special leave with pay from their normal work

to undertake exams and compulsory practical placement.

This guideline facilitates the management of planned leave in accordance with the relevant legislation, industrial instruments and/or directives as issued by the Public Service Commission and Minister for Industrial Relations (as may be amended from time to time). It should be read in conjunction with the [Leave policy](#) and [Employee leave entitlements guideline](#) which provides a summary of the range of leave entitlements available for employees including eligibility requirements and notification requirements.

Eligibility

Special leave is available for department employees who are enrolled and studying an [approved Australian initial teacher education course](#) which will lead to registration as a teacher in Queensland.

Eligible employees must be:

- Permanent employees; or
- Temporary employees whose engagement covers the period of leave.

From the commencement of Term 3, 2023 (10 July 2023) special leave on full pay is available for permanent and temporary teacher aides who are completing a professional experience placement that is a course requirement of an approved initial teacher education course.

From the commencement of Term 1, 2024 (22 January 2024) special leave on full pay is available for permanent and temporary school based employees who are:

- completing a professional experience placement that is a course requirement of an approved initial teacher education course
- attending an examination that is a course requirement of an approved initial teacher education course. Leave with pay up to four days, including necessary travel time, is only available for examinations held on work days during designated hours of duty and excludes the minimum period allowed for lunch. Leave for examinations is available on those occasions when examination requirements cannot be satisfied outside the designated hours of duty.

From 1 July 2024 special leave on full pay is available for permanent and temporary department employees who are:

- completing a professional experience placement that is a course requirement of an approved initial teacher education course
- attending an examination that is a course requirement of an approved initial teacher education course. Leave with pay up to four days, including necessary travel time, is only available for examinations held on work days during designated hours of duty and excludes the minimum period allowed for lunch. Leave for examinations is available on those occasions when examination requirements cannot be satisfied outside the designated hours of duty.

Responsibilities

Department Employees

- Apply for the special leave type which is appropriate in the circumstances and, if required, provide sufficient evidence to substantiate the reason for leave.
- Submit planned leave requests in advance and with sufficient time to allow for verification of entitlements and work unit planning.
- Use approved leave for the purpose for which it was requested.
- Notify their principal or supervisor of an address or telephone number where they can be contacted while on leave.
- Maintain contact with their immediate supervisor to provide updates

Principals, Business Managers and Supervisors (HR delegate)

- Consider all leave requests in a timely manner and approve them on the basis that the leave applied for is appropriate for the circumstances and that a leave entitlement exists.
- Approve leave in accordance with Human Resources Delegations Manual.
- Consider human rights when making a decision regarding an employee's request for leave.
- Review operational requirements of the work unit, and determine any required relieving arrangements prior to

approving leave requests.

- Facilitate open, supportive and honest communications with the relevant teacher aide regarding the approval status of their leave request and possible justification for any refusal or requested amendment to a leave request.
- Approve leave requests in accordance with this guideline.

Payroll Services

- Process leave in the payroll system.

HR Advisory Services

- Provide advice on request in accordance with this guideline and Knowledge Base Article.

School Resourcing (for School Based Employees Only)

- Provide credits to schools in the School Budget Solution (SBS) through a centralised process, with no requirement for schools to apply for the funding.
- Credits will be provided as follows:
 - in 2023, the central process will provide credits for the first and second day of leave to schools on a monthly basis, with the third day onwards captured in the existing fortnightly automation process (noting that for special schools' credits from the first day of leave are already automated); and
 - for future years, development work will commence to capture the first and second day of leave through a fully automated fortnightly process.

Resourcing (Non-school Based Employees)

- Business units, who approve leave for this purpose, will need to assess the need to replace employees and manage costs of replacing employees from within existing resourcing.

Process

Identify leave type – SupportPath Teach

Employee refers to this guideline (and source documentation as necessary) to identify the applicable leave for their situation and the associated entitlements. If unsure, discuss with HR Advisory team.

1. Application for leave

Employee applies through their usual level processes within their school/business unit providing sufficient notice of the dates requested. The leave type in MyHR is *SupportPath Teach*.

2. Approval of leave

HR delegate to approve leave in accordance with this guideline in a timely manner.

Considerations when approving leave

In approving leave, the HR delegate should cite the required evidence which includes:

- Proof of enrolment and current study of an approved initial teacher education course which will lead to registration as a teacher in Queensland; and
- Proof of intended professional experience placement provided by the relevant higher education institution; or
- Proof of examination schedule provided by the relevant higher education institution.

The HR delegate must give consideration to [good decision making](#) and factors such as

- eligibility requirements have been met;
 - the teacher aide's reason for requesting the leave;
 - the duration of the leave request;
 - the leave type is appropriate for the purpose of the leave; and/or whether other forms of leave are available and might be more appropriate;
 - the appropriate documentation is supplied where required.
-

3. Documentation

School/business unit is to retain sufficient evidence as per this guideline.

4. Process leave

Payroll services processes the leave in the payroll system.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Teacher Aide	A person permanently employed as a teacher aide by the department under the General Employees (Queensland Government Departments) and other Employees Award – State 2015.
General employee	A general employee is someone who is employed to perform work of a type not ordinarily performed by a public service officer. The basis of employment may be: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• permanent (full-time or part-time); or• temporary for a fixed term (full-time or part-time); or• on a casual basis.
Temporary employee	An employee engaged to perform work on a temporary basis whether full-time or part- time.
Designated Hours	Usual rostered hours of work for a permanent or temporary teacher aide
HR Delegate	Delegates outlined in the <i>Human Resources Delegations</i> available on OnePortal