

## Financial Guideline 2021/2022 - 38

### Voluntary Secondary Schools in the Free Education Scheme

## Revision of Working Hours: Implementation of the Independent Hours Body Recommendations in relation to the Haddington Road Agreement Hours for Secretaries and Caretakers in the 1978/1979 Scheme in Recognised Voluntary Secondary Schools in the Free Education Scheme

### 1. Introduction

The Department of Education has issued [Circular 0044/2022](#) which gives details of a reduction in working hours, changes to flexible working arrangements and overtime for **secretaries and caretakers paid directly by the Department of Education under the 1978/79 schemes only. This circular does not apply to staff paid directly by the board.**

### 2. Working hours

- Haddington Road Agreement (HRA) hours implemented in 2013 will be restored in all relevant employments with effect from July 1, 2022.
- Working hours will not be less than the level that applied prior to HRA, in this regard a minimum floor of 35 hours per week will apply.
- Under the Haddington Road agreement (HRA) on 1 July 2013, the hours of civil servants and public servants were increased as follow:
  - Those with a pre-HRA working week of 35 hours or less (net of rest breaks) had their weekly hours increased to a minimum of 37.
  - Those with a pre-HRA working week greater than 35 hours, but less than 39 hours (net of rest breaks), had their weekly hours increased to 39.
  - The hours of those working 39 hours or more per week remained the same.
- Annual leave will not be impacted by the restoration of hours.
- Where an employee availed of the option under the terms previous of public service agreements to remain on pre-HRA working hours, they may elect to remain on those hours or move to the 35-hour net working week with an appropriate pay adjustment in both cases.

For example, on implementation of the reduced working hours, individuals who remain on pre-HRA hours (less than 35 hours a week, 34.75 hours in the case of a civil servant) a pro rata adjustment should be applied resulting in a smaller pay reduction than that which applies at present i.e., the current reduction in pay for staff with these arrangements should decrease to reflect the fact that pre-HRA hours for affected staff have been restored.

- There is no adjustment to overtime divisors (i.e., if overtime was calculated based on a 37 hours per week and the hours are now reduced to 35, overtime is still calculated using 37 hours).
- This applies also to staff employed since 1 July 2013.

### **3. Flexible Working Arrangements (Flexitime)**

- No change is proposed to the existing terms of the Flexitime Agreements.

### **4. Overtime**

- Overtime is the payment given to an officer for extra attendance outside of the standard working week. It is only payable after the completion of the required working hours for the grade in question. In addition, schools should be satisfied that the amount or nature of the work to be done makes overtime unavoidable. Attendance on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays should be kept to a minimum. Every effort should be made to avoid a situation where staff attend for very short periods only.
- With effect from 1 July 2021, any overtime and premia payments impacted by sections 2.12 and 2.17 of the Haddington Road Agreement, will be fully restored to what pertained prior to July 2013.
- Schools are reminded that any costs arising from the unwinding of the overtime rate measures will be managed from within current budget allocations.

### **5. Part-time Staff**

Those who do not work full-time will have their working time reduced on a pro-rata basis.

### **6. Communication**

Please ensure [Circular 0044/2022](#) is circulated to all secretaries and caretakers paid directly by the Department of Education under the 1978/79 schemes only and that its contents are brought to the attention of all relevant staff, including those on leave of absence.

## **7. Queries**

Any queries can be directed to department at [esr@education.gov.ie](mailto:esr@education.gov.ie).

## **8. Reference**

This guideline is based on [Circular 0044/2022](#).

Tel: 01-269 0677

[info@fssu.ie](mailto:info@fssu.ie)

*27<sup>th</sup> June 2022*