



New Educator Guide 2025



Stronger Together



Union (noun): an organised group of workers who come together to collectively advocate for their rights, working conditions, and interests in the workplace.

Members of the AEU ACT Branch are the people who make public education happen every day in our schools and TAFE campuses.

Through our union, we campaign for resources to create the best possible learning environments. We speak up to ensure the community appreciates the value of public education.

The AEU gains our strength from many voices sharing their stories, advocating for their colleagues, and proposing fair and just solutions to support a free, equitable, and universally accessible public education system.

About our union



The only union exclusively for public education workers



We're run by educators, for educators and everyone gets a say



We advocate for more resources for schools and TAFEs



Support in every workplace from trained union reps, elected by you and your colleagues

The Australian Education Union ACT Branch has worked for half a century towards the ideals of free, universal public education. We understand that the people who work in our schools and TAFEs are the most critical part of delivering public education. We advocate to ensure that educators' work is given the value it deserves.

We are the peak professional body for education workers.

Our union is run by members for members. We all have a say - in the sub-branch at your school and through your delegates at Council, our highest decision making body. In turn, your union represents the voice of teachers throughout the community. On a regular basis, your union officers meet with the Minister for Education and senior executives in the Education Directorate to make sure they understand the issues educators are facing in classrooms.

New educator rights

As a new educator there is a wealth of rights and entitlements to help you get through your first three years successfully. Knowing your rights - and that you've got a support network you can tap into - helps you cope with the challenges of being a beginning teacher.

Face-to-Face teaching hours

As a new educator, you have a reduced face-to-face load.

Maximum face-to-face teaching hours per week

Sector	First Year	2nd and 3rd Year
Primary	18.5	19.5
Secondary	17	17.5

How you use your extra hours away from the classroom can be negotiated with your supervisor: planning and preparation, lesson observation and team teaching, or consultation with your mentor. Remember, it's ultimately about helping you.



New educator rights

New Educator Support Days

As a new educator, you're entitled to 6 days release from face-to-face teaching over your first three years. You can use these days to observe other teachers, receive coaching and mentoring, get support with assessment and reporting, or engage in other professional learning.

New Educator Support Plan

As part of your induction into a school you should be asked to complete a New Educator Support Plan. This plan allows you to think about how you will use your new educator days and the types of professional learning that would be valuable to you as a new educator.



“Inspired by
role models,
I found my
place in
AEU ACT.”

- Katie Slater



Important things to know

Maximum class sizes

Preschool	22	Years 7-9	32
K to 3	21	Year 10	30
Years 4 to 6	30	Years 11 and 12	25
Small Group Programs*	6-8	Introductory English Centres	15

Maximum class size limits operate in ACT public schools. Maximum class sizes for multi age classes are the average of the relevant year levels.

There may be circumstances where a slight variation to these class size maximums is required. This variation must be negotiated to take account of the needs of the students, teacher and school.



* The class sizes policy uses the terms Learning Support Unit and Learning Support Unit Autism, but the term Small Group Program is now more commonly used.

Release time

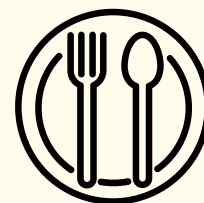


Release time is protected and self-directed time off class and other duties for you to complete your professional responsibilities such as lesson planning, curriculum development, assessment and reporting.

The allocation for this is 10 hours a week, 3 hours which must be scheduled during hours of student attendance (generally between 8:30am and 3:30pm). New educators also receive additional time off class as part of your new educator entitlements.

Meal breaks

You must receive a meal break of at least 30 minutes within five hours of commencing work. This meal break is unpaid time. Typically, this break will fall during the students' break time. You cannot be directed to remain on-site during your unpaid meal break.



Hours of attendance



You need to be at the school site for your timetabled teaching and scheduled meetings or other directed activities. This usually means that your on-site hours cover:

- Your timetabled face-to-face teaching time
- Scheduled team or whole school meetings
- Scheduled playground duty

“Union
friendships
make the
journey
fun and
enriching.”

- Becky Gill

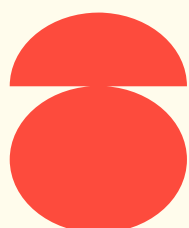


Salary information

Classification	Salary as at January 2025
Permit to Teach	\$80,184
Teacher Level 1	\$88,615
Teacher Level 2	\$97,055
Teacher Level 3	\$101,278

New educators in the ACT have the best pay of any new teachers in Australia. Your salary rates can be found in the Enterprise Agreement.

Unless you have received recognition of prior learning or service, you will begin at Teacher Level 1 on the scale and progress to the next classification each year.



Getting **involved**

Teaching is a rewarding, interesting career where there are many opportunities that can lead you in different directions.

If you are a member of the AEU, our union offers a number of ways for you to get involved in promoting your professional and industrial interests.

System wide opportunities

AEU members represent our union on a variety of committees, covering a range of issues such as: TQI, initial teacher education, WHS and equity. The AEU regularly calls for nominations of interested members who wish to represent the AEU on these committees.



National events

Each year, the Federal AEU conducts forums such as the National New Educators Conference, AEU Women's Conference and the AEU Federal Conference. Each of these conferences brings together teachers and union officials from around Australia to debate issues of national importance and plan future directions for our union.

Make sure to regularly check for AEU communications through emails or your sub-branch's AEU notice board, take up opportunities to attend AEU training, take part in your sub-branch meetings, have a say in nominating members of your sub-branch, advocate in current campaigns and approach non-members to join our union.

New educator network

Being a new educator is exciting, but it can also be really tough. Lots of new educators aren't getting the mentoring they need, are struggling with wellbeing and work/life balance, or just want someone to chat with who gets it.

Our regular network meetings are open to all new educator members and are a great opportunity to network with other new educators in an informal and supportive environment.

They also provide the chance to talk about the issues that are affecting you and to learn about your rights and entitlements as an early career teacher.

Union activism



Being a part of the AEU means being a part of something bigger than yourself.

Our members advocate for a range of educational causes as well as social justice issues. Activism is an action on behalf of a cause, action that goes beyond what is conventional or routine.

Historically, activism has played a major role in ending slavery, challenging dictatorships, protecting workers from exploitation, protecting the environment, promoting equality for women, opposing racism, and many other important issues.

As educators, union activism has won us a number of crucial entitlements such as annual leave, maternity leave, the five-day working week, better wages and better work place safety conditions and support.

It is our job as future leaders to ensure all workers, in all fields, are able to enjoy quality working and living conditions.

It's more than just a job

Did you know that teachers have their own bank, their own health fund and much, much more?

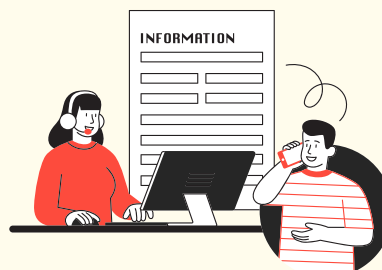
Teacher-unionists have built a whole architecture to support our profession over the years, making sure that we're taking care of our members and their families.

Whether it's your personal health, your financial security or just getting a better deal, becoming a teacher and joining your union has provided you with access to services built for teachers, by teachers.

Member benefits



Better pay and conditions through enterprise bargaining



Expert support when you need it from people who understand your work



Health and banking services founded by educators, for educators



Build your professional contacts and make new social connections through AEU events



Easy access to information and advice through our online member portal



Thousands in discounts and savings through services like Union Shopper

Visit members.aeuact.org.au to access our great member benefits

We are here to help

Throughout the year the AEU offers a range of exciting events, training and networking opportunities for all members to engage in.

Whether you just need some advice about a work matter or want help making your sub-branch event successful, you have the full support of the branch office to make sure you're never alone.

Contact us



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