

Functional job requirements for the position of lower primary teacher

Department of Education

This document was developed for the following purposes: assisting in the development of rehabilitation programs for injured or ill employees, and providing detailed information about job demands to medical practitioners and allied health professionals undertaking medical reviews of departmental employees.

This report identifies those activities which are essential to successful performance in this role. In determining whether a work activity is a 'critical activity', the following questions are considered:

- Does the worker spend greater than 33% of designated work time performing this activity?
- Is specialised training/experience required to complete this activity? Has this been completed by only a small proportion of staff in this geographical region?
- Is this activity performed in an environment where no other workers are readily available to assist with its completion?
- Does this activity occur without prior notice and require immediate attention leaving no time to seek assistance to complete it?
- Is this activity core to the development of stakeholder relationships, which are essential to achieving successful outcomes?
- Would an inability to perform this activity result in an increased health and safety risk to co-workers, students, and/or members of the public?

The development process included: site observation of work environments, staff interviews, staff feedback on draft documents and consideration of benchmark publications for the analysis and description of work activities and job demands specific to particular positions (the *Revised Handbook for Analysing Jobs*, the *Occupational Information Network* and the *Australian Job Guide, 2006*).

This report indicates the average time spent across a working week on each work activity, and also on each physical demand of work. In order to make this information meaningful to the various users of this report, in some instances the time spent is expressed as a single word, as a percentage of total time, or as an actual amount of time (i.e. hours and minutes). The timeframes used are based on the benchmark descriptions (from the publications above) for expressing frequency of performance of work tasks.

Descriptor	Percentage of time	Amount of time based on 25 hours per week
Not present	0%	0 minutes
Rare	1% – 7%	15 minutes – 1 hour 15 minutes
Occasional	8% – 33%	1 hour 30 minutes – 8 hours 15 minutes
Frequent	34% – 66%	8 hours 30 minutes – 16 hours 30 minutes
Constant	67% - 100%	16 hours 45 minutes – 25 hours



Description of lower primary teacher

It is the role of a lower primary teacher to teach a class of up to 25 students in grades 1 to 3. Students in grades 1 to 3 will range in age from 5 to 8 years old. Lower primary teachers are responsible for all aspects of the planning, preparation and delivery of effective learning and teaching programs across the key learning areas for every student in the allocated classes. In addition, all teachers have a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students within their care.

Hours of work and scheduled breaks

Hours of work: the ordinary work hours for a lower primary teacher is 25 hours per week. The ordinary spread of hours of work exclusive of meal times is between 8.30am and 3.30pm, Monday to Friday. These ordinary hours shall be worked continuously excluding an unpaid meal break of at least 30 minutes. Alternate hours can be worked between 7.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday. The maximum rostered duty shall not exceed 7 hours per day or a minimum rostered duty time not less than 3 hours. These alternate hours must be implemented through the Local Consultative Committee (refer to Teachers Enterprise Bargaining Agreement for details).

Meal breaks: lower primary teachers are entitled to an unpaid meal break of 45 minutes if in excess of 5 hours is worked on any day. This meal break is to be taken between 11.30am and 2.00pm or such other times as may be arranged by the principal. Meal breaks may be altered to 30 minutes through consultation with the Local Consultative Committee. Total period for meal breaks for lower primary teachers per week is no less than 225 minutes.

Rest pauses: lower primary teachers are entitled to a rest pause of 10 minutes duration to be taken mid-morning which will be considered as rostered duty time

Bus and playground supervision: teacher aides will relieve teachers of bus and playground duty as far as possible and where appropriate. Lower primary teachers are still required to undertake some part of bus and playground duties. Lower primary teachers shall not be required to undertake bus supervision for more than 30 minutes after completion of the daily program.

Non-contact time: lower primary teachers are entitled to at least 2 hours of rostered preparation and correction time to be allocated in blocks of no less than one-half hour, with the objective being to provide one hour blocks of time.

The activity frequencies below have been calculated based on a week of 5 days comprising 5 hours per day. Rare = 0 -1h 45mins per week, Occasional = 2hrs - 8hrs 20mins per week, Frequent = 8hrs 30mins – 16hrs 36mins, Constant = 16hrs 45mins - 25hrs (times are exclusive of scheduled breaks).



	Job activity	Average time	Critical job demand
1	Room setup involving moving chairs, furniture and equipment for learning activities, as well as packing up previous activities.	Up to 1 hr 15 mins per week	Yes
2	Parent liaison involving telephone and face-to-face contact with parents, requiring recollection or sourcing of specific information related to current students. (When conducting scheduled, formal parent-teacher sessions)	Up to 1 hr 15 mins per week (up to 8 hrs 15 mins per week)	Yes
3	Classroom based teaching of students involving standing or seated presentation of information to students monitoring verbal and non-verbal responses of students to information, providing answers to questions, supervision of group and individual learning activities, and encouraging participation by students.	Up to 25 hrs per week	Yes
4	Supervision during meal breaks (including playground, library and bus duty) involving mobilising around a pre-determined area and completing visual and auditory monitoring of students' activities and school premises, providing assistance to students as required	Up to 3 hrs per week	Dependent on the school
5	Excursion-based teaching of students involving supervision of small or large groups of students outside the school premises, conducting site tours of destinations, monitoring student completion of excursion-related learning activities, and constant surveillance of surroundings to ensure student safety.	During week of excursion up to 8 hrs 10 mins. Up to 1 hr 45 mins at other times	Yes
6	Specified non-contact time involving planning, completion of administrative paperwork, correction of students' work, reports, class preparation e.g. photocopying/resource preparation.	2 hours per week Up to 8 hrs 15 mins per week for reports in final weeks of term	Yes
In support of the above activities performed during rostered duty time, the activities below are performed by most teachers.			
7	Staff meetings/liaison with teaching staff involving face-to-face or (depending on the distance) teleconferenced meetings at which day-to-day operational issues, short term and long term strategic planning for the school occur.	Up to 8 hrs 15 mins per week	Yes
8	Committee meetings involving a variety of activities dependent upon the nature of the committee and the number of committees in which the staff member is a part of. Most committee based tasks are of a voluntary nature.	Up to 1 hr 15 mins per week	No
Teachers may also participate in extra-curricular activities most of which are of a voluntary nature. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> overnight camps intra-school sport after school student elective activities. 			No



Frequency of physical job demands (average % of shift)

Demands	Not present	Rare (0-7%)	Occasional (8-33%)	Frequent (34-66%)	Constant (67-100%)	Demands	Not present	Rare (0-7%)	Occasional (8-33%)	Frequent (34-66%)	Constant (67-100%)
Sitting			✓			Reaching			✓		
Standing – static		✓				Handling			✓		
Standing – dynamic				✓		Pushing		✓			
Walking – flat terrain			✓			Pulling		✓			
Walking – slippery/gravel terrain		✓				Lifting		✓			
Climbing – step stools/ladders		✓				Carrying		✓			
Climbing – stairs		✓				Balancing – above ground		✓			
Stooping		✓				Fine motor				✓	
Kneeling		✓				Control operation			✓		
Crouching – one off		✓				Arm – hand steadiness			✓		
Crawling		✓				Driving		✓			
Auditory function					✓	Visual function					✓

Tools/equipment handled

Students' chairs and desks – up to approximately 3kg and 8kg respectively.
Classroom furniture and soft furnishings e.g. A-frames (17kg) partitions, cushions, rugs, etc.
Computers and data projectors – for use during information technology-based learning activities with students and administrative tasks.
Pens/pencils/chalk/whiteboard markers and books.
Sports equipment – various balls and bats
Art equipment – paints, paintbrushes, cardboard and collage equipment, etc.
Learning aids – charts, models, posters, overhead projectors and screens
Event equipment (fetes, dances, etc.) – tables, chairs, tents, tarps

Loads lifted and carried

	Not present	Rare (0-7%)	Occasional (8-33%)	Frequent (34-66%)	Constant (67-100%)
0-5kg				Floor to above shoulder level	
6-10kg				Floor to chest level	
11-15kg		Below knee to waist level			
16-20kg		Restraint of child			
21-25kg					



Risk based physical environmental considerations

- There may be clutter in the work area, increasing the risk of trip hazards, awkward bending and lifting, and poor storage practices.
- Items, furniture and fixtures may be poorly positioned or designed by staff members, requiring the adoption of awkward postures.
- There may be limited/confined space for movement during performance of some activities.
- There may be limited knee space when seated, resulting in trunk rotation (due to smaller furniture required for this student/age group).
- There may be constant low-level ambient noise (from students, traffic, school activities e.g. music practice, etc.)
- There may be limited lighting and ventilation in some facilities.
- Some work may be performed outdoors or in an area exposed to the elements.
- Fine motor work may be performed in temperatures of 16 degrees or lower and above 24 degrees, due to local environmental conditions and capacity to school facilities to control ambient air temperatures.

Psychosocial risks to be considered	Social/interpersonal demands
Time pressure/high workload – while deadlines exist for many tasks, the level of demand is dependent upon school environment and staffing level. HOSS's may also be required to address multiple demands and a large number of unplanned interruptions may occur throughout the day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing for or working directly with the public. • Communicating with persons outside organisation. • Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships. • Resolving conflicts and negotiating with others. • Communicating with supervisors, peers or subordinates. • Guiding, directing and motivating subordinates. • Training and teaching others. • Coordinating or leading others. • Coaching and developing others. • Coordinating the work of others – aides and students. • Interpreting the meaning of information for others. • Dealing with unpleasant or angry people. • Dealing with physically aggressive people. • Assisting and caring for others (may include first aid).
Poor worker/team leader relationships – may exist in some environments.	
Environmental stress – constant low-level ambient noise from students, PA announcements, school bells etc. requiring considerable projection of voice to be heard. Some temperature variation during winter and summer.	
Insufficient work breaks – shortened breaks may be taken on a voluntary basis due to high workload and time constraints. Breaks may be limited by meal and playground supervision duties, particularly if there is insufficient planning e.g. unplanned wet weather duties. Although break times are stipulated, teachers do not always receive an uninterrupted break	
Investigations – participate in reporting, investigation and resolution processes, including mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect and participation as a witness or party to performance, discipline, grievance, WorkCover or other processes.	
Policies – comply with departmental policies, procedures, guidelines and the code of conduct, including undertaking risk management processes to ensure the health and safety of students and others under their supervision or direction.	

Considerations for assessment of physical job fitness

- Assessment of sustained sitting capacity of 50 minutes, including 15 minutes on small school sized chairs and 15 minutes on floor either cross-legged, side sitting or kneeling (acknowledging ability to regularly vary posture).
- Assessment of fine motor dexterity or actual keyboard operation for typing activities.
- Symmetry, range and discomfort with movements of the spinal and peripheral joints, including hips, knees, ankles, shoulders and wrists.
- Sufficient flexibility to allow adoption of awkward postures when working with children, particularly on floor level.
- Able to ascend and descent 2 x flights of stairs.
- Ability to lift and carry heavy and/or awkward loads with some assistance.
- Ability to sustain constant dynamic standing throughout the day with minimal sitting breaks.
- Sufficient visual and auditory function to enable interaction and response to students.

Other considerations

- History of neck/shoulder discomfort associated with static and sustained repetitive neck flexion postures.
- History of upper limb, lower limb or spinal pain with repetitious or static tasks.
- History of lower back pain with sustained sitting.
- Knowledge of ergonomic principles for clerical workstations and knowledge of/ability to learn safe crouching/stooping posture (with flexion occurring at the hips rather than in the lumbar spine).
- Knowledge of correct manual handling techniques i.e. ability to bend at hips, bend knees and squat with a straight back.
- Knowledge of vocal health and techniques to enable safe projection of voice.

