



2021

Reps Handbook



Independent
Education
Union of Australia
NSW/ACT Branch



A message from the Secretary

Thank you for undertaking the important task of IEU rep for your school or centre. The following pages provide an overview of how the union operates, as well as some guidelines and advice for carrying out your role as rep.

Your IEU organiser is the first and most important point of contact with the union office. If ever you are unsure about how to proceed, you should contact them in the first instance. If they are unavailable, there is always a duty officer on hand to take your call.

Besides this Reps Handbook, the union also has dedicated training for reps, as well as other printed and digital resources to assist you in supporting members.

Thank you once again for accepting this valuable role. The IEU is stronger because of your efforts.

Carol Matthews, Secretary



In the spirit of reconciliation, the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people.

IEU | Independent
Education
Union of Australia
NSW/ACT Branch

**Bushtucker Dreaming
by April Campbell**

STUDENT

Background	5
Union structure	5
Overview of the rep's role	4
Communication is the key	5
Your organiser is only a phone call away	5
What should your chapter look like?	5
Your rights as a rep	6
The right to hold a meeting and notify members	7
Emailing members	7
Posting union notices	7
Interviewing the employer/principal	7
Inviting your organiser to the school	7
Protection from adverse action	7
Running a successful chapter meeting	7
Why call a meeting?	7
An overview of the meeting process	8
Drafting a motion	8
Amending a motion	9
Graduate your chapter's response	9
Recruiting members to the chapter	10
Who can join?	10
Being prepared	10
Making the approach	10
Reasons to join the union	10
Follow up	11
Talking about membership fees	11
Recruitment is not my strength, what can I do?	11
Identifying and dealing with a workplace issue or grievance	11
Don't let members think you have a magic wand	12
Supporting or representing individual members	13
One of my chapter members has been called to a meeting	13
What can I do during the meeting?	14
Keeping members engaged	15
What we've achieved so far	15
Membership services we offer today	16
Health and safety representatives	16
Rep checklist	16

Background

The Independent Education Union of Australia represents teachers and support staff in non-government schools, early childhood centres, and other non-government educational institutions in NSW and the ACT. The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch has over 32,000 financial members and we are part of the Independent Education Union of Australia, which represents over 75,000 teachers and support staff in all states and territories. The IEU grew out of the Assistant Masters Association, which represented teachers in independent schools from 1954. In 1966, it became known as the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Associations and in 1973, the union’s name was constitutionally changed to the Independent Teachers Association. We are now known as the Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch.

Union structure

The IEUA is a federal union comprising of five branches reflecting the state and territory boundaries. The five federal IEU branches are:

- NSW/ACT
- QLD/NT
- SA
- VIC/TAS
- WA

The IEU in NSW/ACT is organised on the following lines:

Chapter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consists of all the financial members from a particular school or centre, excluding principalsEach chapter elects a representative known as a “rep”Principals have their own chapter consisting of all principals in a sub branch
Sub branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All the reps from a particular geographical area meet once per term at sub branchThere are 19 geographical sub branches in NSW/ACT, and one sub branch for members who are principals
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Each sub branch elects delegates to Council through elections conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission every two yearsCouncil meets once per term in SydneyCouncil deals with all or any objects of the union, excluding financial management of the branchProfessional organising and industrial staff also attend Council.
The Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Executive is elected every three years from the entire membershipExecutive meets once per month in SydneyExecutive is responsible for the financial management of the branch and for overseeing the strategic priorities in between Council meetings.
NSW/ACT Branch	The NSW/ACT Branch is the largest of the five branches of the IEUA. The NSW/ACT branch contributes financially to the running of the Federal Office on a pro rata basis.
Federal IEUA	<p>The Independent Education Union of Australia is the federal body representing all five state and territory branches.</p> <p>The governing body is the Federal Council consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">elected delegates from each branchthe Federal Secretarytwo Assistant Federal Secretaries.

Overview of the rep's role

The rep's role will look different in each school or centre. It will depend on the nature of the workplace as well as your personal strengths and interests.

The union understands that there is a range of reasons a member becomes a rep, and the level of engagement or activism you choose to embrace is entirely up to you.

As an elected representative, your main responsibility is to keep members informed and assist members where possible.

This might involve you providing members with advice, directing them to sources of information, including your IEU organiser (in the IEU office), or helping them with an individual grievance as a support person.

Communication is key

Regular personal contact with members is the best way for you to gain the respect of members and to encourage their active involvement in the union. Contact can be maintained by distributing information and talking to members either individually or in groups.

In some schools or workplaces, it will be possible to hold regular meetings to keep members up to date with union issues. Where this is not possible, you will need to consider other methods of maintaining regular contact. This could be through a noticeboard, email, or out of hours meetings.

Occasionally you might be asked to provide support for a colleague either by acting as a support at an interview or more generally by providing advice or information.

reps are not expected to be industrial advocates. This is the role of full-time officers of the union and you should feel comfortable in passing over such tasks to them. This is particularly important if the member is facing serious disciplinary issues.

For many members, however, the IEU rep is the union so, ultimately, the job can be as broad as you want it to be.

Your organiser is only a phone call away

One of the best ways you can support your chapter is to be a strong link between the union office and the rank and file members. Maintaining strong connections with the union office will ensure you keep up to date with what is happening in your sector and will allow you to keep members informed of union activities and services.

The golden rule of being a rep is "when in doubt, consult your organiser."

Below you will find advice on some of the more common questions you might have and the tasks you might be required to undertake in your role as chapter rep.

What should your chapter look like?

The chapter is the fundamental unit of the union's structure. Ideally, every workplace should have a Union representative, known as the rep.

Sometimes it is more effective for schools to have two reps as this provides each of them with support and allows members an alternative if there are personality clashes on staff.

Large schools might choose to elect reps who represent different areas of the school or centre, for example, a rep for support staff/boarding staff/maintenance staff.

chapters should also consider forming a committee. This is an effective way of distributing the workload and raising the profile of the chapter within the school. chapter committees can take a variety of forms, however, they usually consist of:

- President/Chair (a person who can run a meeting)
- Secretary (sends out the meeting agenda and takes minutes)
- Rep/reps

A meeting to elect these positions should be held either in the last two weeks of the school year or the first three weeks of Term 1. Be sure to let your organiser know of any changes.

Your rights as a rep

Who is a delegate?

For the purposes of this handbook, the terms 'delegate' and 'rep' are interchangeable. Under our current rules, every chapter shall have a union representative, known as 'the rep'.

The current IEU rules state:

- A chapter with three or more members shall elect a union representative from among the financial members of the chapter, and
- each chapter with six or more members may also elect a chapter chairperson and chapter secretary
- Where there are only one or two union members in a chapter, one such member shall by agreement or by virtue of these rules become the union representative.

How is a rep elected?

The current IEU rules state:

- A meeting to elect a union representative shall be held in the last two weeks of the school year, the first three weeks of the school year, or at any time when a vacancy arises.
- The meeting should be called by the current union representative or, in their absence, any other member of the chapter. The election shall be conducted by a Returning Officer appointed by the chapter who is not a candidate.

The chapter may also, if it wishes, elect additional persons to assist the union representative. Such persons may perform duties by agreement with the union representative, including the roles of chapter Chairperson and chapter Secretary.

Under changes to the *Fair Work Act* (the Act) in 2023, union delegates have specific rights to represent members and employees eligible to be members.

An IEU rep is a delegate but the additional roles of chapter chairperson and secretary are not considered to be the union representative, and therefore may not be a delegate for the purposes of the legislation. The IEU considers this one of the aspects of the legislation that could be open to testing.

Do I have to inform the principal if I'm elected rep?

The IEU rules state the "The union representative shall notify the IEU Secretary [the IEU office] of his or her election as soon as possible and shall also advise the school principal or other appropriate representative of the employer."

It stands to reason that, if a principal is going to afford an elected delegate their legal rights, they need to know their identity.

Can I email members and non-members?

Under the Act, delegates have a right to reasonable communication with members and prospective members in relation to their industrial interests. Delegates also have reasonable access to the workplace and workplace facilities where the enterprise is being carried on. This gives reps the right to use the school email system to contact members and prospective members.

In order to avoid any unnecessary issues reps are advised to:

- Ensure union correspondence is directly related to the workplace and/or current industrial campaign
- Consider whether non-members should be included in a particular email
- Avoid criticising or passing commentary on the employer, the leadership team or other individuals
- Blind carbon copy (BCC) members so as to avoid exposing private email addresses.

What training am I entitled to receive?

Under the Act, union reps (and other elected members of the chapter who might fall within the definition of a "delegate") must be provided with paid time for the purpose of union training.

Where necessary the union will assist you by contacting your employer to ensure you receive your release time entitlement.

Where a rep is attending union training it is expected that the school follow its usual processes for replacing the member of staff who is absent on school business for the day.

Posting union notices

You are entitled to post union notices relating to the holding of meetings on a common room/staffroom noticeboard. In some industrial agreements, the IEU has negotiated that a dedicated IEU noticeboard space should be made available.

Interviewing the employer/principal

You are entitled, in working hours (other than timetabled teaching time), to discuss union business with the employer or the principal. Such discussion should take place at a time and location convenient to both parties.

Inviting your organiser to the school

Each chapter is assigned a full-time officer of the union called an organiser. Union organisers have certain legal rights that enable them to visit members in their workplace.

For the most part, however, IEU organisers rely on being invited into the school or centre to speak to members and prospective members on a variety of issues. Your role as a rep is to facilitate arrangements for an organiser to visit, and to always ensure the principal is advised that the organiser will be on site.

Protection from adverse action

Reps are protected from adverse action when representing or acting on behalf of the union provided they do not act counter to usual workplace rules; eg, you must speak respectfully, not intimidate colleagues, etc.

Running a successful chapter**How often should I call a meeting?**

This will depend on what is happening in the school, the diocese/region/sector or the broader industrial landscape. You should commence each year with a chapter meeting to elect/re-elect the chapter committee members, including the rep. This is the ideal time to invite your organiser.

Why call a meeting?

While it is useful to hold regular meetings, it is also important to know why you are holding a meeting.

Today it seems that everyone is time poor, however, there are times when a meeting can't simply be replaced by an email. An in-person meeting might be useful if you wish to:

- Elect the rep/committee members for the year, welcome new members to the chapter, and introduce your organiser
- Vote on any motions required by the chapter or the union leadership (NewsExtra)
- Provide leadership and generate support for unionism
- Convey a sense of ownership of a workplace concern
- Educate members about their rights
- Distribute complex information about agreements or negotiations
- Formulate and pass motions to improve your working conditions.

Arranging your organiser visit

- Contact your organiser early – they have many schools to visit and their diaries fill up quickly
- Once you have confirmed the date make sure you advise your principal that your organiser will be on site.
- Offer to arrange a meeting either before or after the meeting if your principal is new to the school or there are specific issues to discuss
- Consider arranging an alternative time for your organiser to meet with support staff, separate to the general chapter meeting
- Book a suitable venue. For a general update meeting from your organiser, the staffroom is often the most appropriate place, but clear this with your leadership team before you do
- Place the visit in the weekly bulletin. This is a great way to increase the profile of the IEU in the school or workplace
- Invite non-members to the first meeting of the year. You may wish to insist they join before attending future meetings
- Meet your organiser at reception or let the front office staff know they are arriving and where the meeting will be held
- It's your school and it's your meeting. By taking control of the meeting you make your organiser feel more comfortable and you reinforce the professional image of the IEU in the school or workplace
- Call the meeting to order, briefly outline the agenda, then introduce the organiser and invite them to speak to the relevant agenda items
- When the organiser asks for questions you might assist, as the meeting chair, by inviting people by name
- At the conclusion of the meeting, thank the members and the organiser for their attendance
- Where possible, most organisers are happy to remain behind and deal with individual issues privately. If not, they will have their contact details available.

Overview of the meeting process

- Distribute an agenda and any previous minutes.
- You can obtain a chapter email list from your organiser.
- You should always use the BCC (blind carbon copy) facility when emailing members – some members have their personal email address listed and might not appreciate having it publicly displayed.
- You are entitled to use the work email facility to send out meeting notifications.
- You might consider inviting non-members to the first meeting of the year. You should encourage them to join if they wish to attend further meetings
- List the time, location, and agenda items to be discussed
- Advise the principal of your intention to have a meeting. This is essential if you are inviting your organiser onto the work site
- If the organiser will be on site, you might offer to arrange a meeting with the principal prior or post the meeting
- Use chapter activists to spread the word
- Identify people within a stage, a KLA, or a section of the school or workplace whom you can ask to assist in getting members to the meeting. Give them a specific and manageable job. Don't forget to thank them!
- Start on time. As mentioned above, everyone is time poor. Starting on time shows respect for the people who have made the effort to show up on time. Those who were unavoidably delayed will understand
- Follow the agenda and keep minutes, this is a good reason to form a committee so that the rep is not required to do everything
- Any minutes that are taken or motions that are passed should reflect the substance of the discussion but should avoid identifying individual members.
- Ensure that minutes or motions which deal with school-based issues are carefully worded to avoid misinterpretation or offence. Consider approaching the principal on the issue before moving to a chapter motion.
- A good meeting should have a lively discussion and does not have to be overly formal, but it should not degenerate into a free for all. If necessary, insist that members be recognised by the chair before they address the meeting
- If a pressing issue is being discussed, as the last item you should look to set a date for the next meeting
- Ensure all members of the chapter receive a copy of the minutes. This creates a sense of collegiality among the chapter, especially for members unable to attend
- Follow up any actions from the meeting in a timely manner.

Who can attend a meeting?

All financial members of the union who are employed at the school or centre, other than the school principal, are entitled to attend the chapter meeting.

Principals have their own chapter which usually meets once a term.

Chapter motions

Passing a chapter motion is the process a chapter can choose if it wishes to take a formal position on a particular issue.

When dealing with a local issue, it is strongly recommended that careful consideration be given to raising the matter with the principal or other relevant members of the leadership team before proceeding to a chapter motion.

Drafting a motion

A motion, when passed, should present the agreed position of the chapter on an issue and request an action.

Unless the purpose of the motion is to commend an action or an individual, the motion should not identify or critically reflect on any specific person.

Types of motions: procedural and substantive

Procedural motions deal with matters affecting the conduct of the meeting. Examples of procedural motions include:

- That the agenda be adopted
- That the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the last meeting.

Substantive motions call for action from or by the chapter. Elements of a motion include:

- Begin with "That" – an abbreviation of "It is moved that ..."
- Identify from where the motion has come
- Identify what problem or issue the motion addresses
- Identifies what action will be taken including:
 - Who?
 - What?
 - When?

An example of a motion wording

"That the All Saints chapter directs the IEU rep to raise the issue of large class sizes at the next sub branch meeting and request that the sub branch take an audit of large class sizes across the region."

In this instance, the intention of the motion is clear, although it could be argued that some definition might be given to large classes (eg large primary classes, large practical classes).

Amending a motion

Once a motion has been moved and seconded, it becomes the property of the meeting. Occasionally there will be those who support the general thrust of the motion but who want to include something extra or modify some part of the motion. To achieve this, they will move an amendment. In the case of the above motion, it might be:

"That the words 'large class sizes' be replaced by the words 'practical classes in excess of 24 students'"

The meeting should then debate and vote on the amendment before continuing with the original motion (if amendment defeated) or the original motion in its amended form (if amendment carried).

Graduate your chapter's response

Going in hard from the beginning may win the immediate battle but it might be unnecessary and could burn political capital for the chapter.

Before agreeing to a course of action, carefully consider the range of options available and consider escalating your chapter's actions or responses over time. In most cases there will be several options available before refusing to carry out a directive.

Before resolving to refuse to participate in a program, the chapter might consider:

- Asking for an explanation/justification/the evidence base for a program or policy
- Agreeing to trial a program for a clearly defined period
- Insisting on a review of the program or policy after a specific time
- Suggesting alterations or alternatives to a program or policy.

This will show that the chapter is using its collective professional judgement to look for solutions and is not obstructionist.

Who should communicate with the principal after the meeting?

Only the chapter rep or the other elected committee members should report the business discussed at the chapter meeting and any motions passed back to the principal.

Additional resources (ask your organiser)

- Setting and agenda, running a meeting, taking minutes (proformas)
- Online meeting resources (Zoom background, Acknowledgement slide etc).

Recruiting members to the chapter

Recruiting members to our union is one of the most important functions of the rep. The more members the IEU has, the greater is our bargaining power. Greater density means greater strength and invariably results in stronger industrial outcomes.

Recruiting members to the union can be frustrating. Not everyone understands immediately why belonging to a union is good for them personally, and why it is also good for the collective power of the employees at the workplace.

Before you begin recruiting, it is a good idea to formulate a plan about how to get people to join the union.

Who can join?

Teachers working in early childhood centres and anyone who is employed in a non-government school is entitled to join and be represented by the IEU. This includes staff working in the following areas: teaching, support/admin, maintenance/outdoor, catering, boarding, nursing and early childhood services attached to the school.

Being prepared

- Map your workplace. Identify all current members and non-members. Use your IEU printout list of members. Contact your organiser to obtain a copy
- Check with any people who are new to your school or workplace to see if they are existing members. Encourage them to update their membership details
- Be sure to include support staff, maintenance staff, casual and part-time staff
- Use your workplace map to identify areas of your staff that need attention and areas with strong density or active members who might assist you in spreading the word
- Have recruitment material from the union available (membership forms; Join the union poster).

Making the approach

- Approach people who seem easiest to recruit first
- See people individually
- Adopt a friendly approach
- Ask questions, listen to their concerns
- Give information about the union – don't assume they know what a union is or does!
- Give them a membership form/show them the Join Online page
- As a last resort, leave a note and a form in their pigeon hole/email. A personal approach is always better.

Reasons to join the union

It's not uncommon to receive pushback when asking people to join. Having some prepared responses is always useful. Some points you might make include:

- It's Industrial representation when you need it
- It's our way of making sure our voice gets heard in the workplace
- It's our way of being able to effect change in the workplace
- You never know when you will need confidential advice and support
- It's assistance for graduate teachers seeking proficiency
- It gives you access to free NESA accredited professional development
- We are enjoying the benefits won by the efforts of previous and current members
- It's tax deductible
- First year out teachers receive three months free (25% discount)
- As your life circumstances change you will often need assistance in negotiating flexible/alternative work arrangements
- Member benefits – Union Shopper, Teachers Health and Teachers Mutual Bank.

Follow up

- Go back to potential members. It is often the case that they only need another gentle nudge to get them over the line
- Answer any questions/concerns
- Ask them to sign the form and offer to send it off for them or show them the 'Join' page on the IEU website: ieu.asn.au/join

Talking about membership fees

Membership fees can be a touchy subject. When times are tough, almost any expense can seem burdensome to workers.

Responses you might provide include:

- It is a widely acknowledged fact that union negotiated agreements outperform non-union negotiated agreements
- Membership fees should be viewed as an investment rather than an expense
- Fees are tax deductible/first year out receive three months free
- There is a cost to negotiating awards and agreements. It requires research analysts, negotiators, Industrial Officers and organisers to build support on the ground
- Defending members using legal help is expensive, but ultimately a win for an individual member is invariably a win for the entire membership
- Members receive access to free accredited PD which invariably costs money elsewhere
- Members have access to a dedicated organiser who can assist with specific concerns and issues.

Recruitment is not my strength, what can I do?

For some reps, the recruitment aspect of the role is the most challenging. If you find it difficult to recruit members to your chapter, you might consider:

- Arranging for your organiser to attend during recess or lunch to talk to prospective members – consider putting on a morning tea to attract people
- Ask the prospective member if you can pass on their school contact details to your organiser
- Ask the principal if you or your organiser can briefly address a staff meeting
- Look for influencers within sections of the school or centre whom you might ask to assist in approaching people – start with the longest serving members first if there are no obvious candidates. Ask your chapter committee to assist.
- Use the recruitment material your organiser can supply. Remember, however, that a personal approach is always more effective.

Identifying and dealing with a workplace issue or grievance

As a rep, your members will come to you for all sorts of information and help. They will only do so if they believe you will treat their inquiry seriously and confidentially.

For example, you may get questions about:

- Some of the services provided by the IEU
- Questions on how to access parental/carers/long service leave
- Do you think my mother should be getting a pension?
- “What is the IEU doing about ...?” or “What are you doing about...?” and dozens of others.

Before responding, you should consider the following:

1. Is this a union matter or is it a management issue? Has the member followed the usual school processes to address the concern?
2. Why the question is being asked? Is it just a passing interest or is it an important problem for the individual?
3. Is it something that matters to an individual or a larger group of members?
4. Can it be used as an organising issue?

Sometimes the issue might present as a pressing concern for an individual or small group of members and could require immediate intervention. This could include working with your organiser or the union industrial staff.

Only give an on the spot answer if you are absolutely sure it is correct. If in any doubt, say that you will check. When you have checked (from your own resources or through contacting your organiser) get back to the person as soon as possible.

PLEASE NOTE: If the issue is a child safety issue or is likely to involve a criminal matter, the member should be advised to contact the organiser immediately.

Keep a brief note of the question and answer:

- As a reminder if you have to check the answer
- So that later you can ask the person “Is everything OK now?”
- Because you may be asked the same question again, and
- Because your records may, over time, uncover a more general issue.

Don't let members think you have a magic wand

While the IEU presents employers with a formal enterprise agreement (EA) claim at every round of negotiations, it is often possible for significant improvements to working conditions for IEU members to be achieved at the school or workplace level. This is usually best done through chapter action.

It might appear to be the quickest and easiest solution for the union office to resolve a problem in the short term. In the long term, however, it can lead to a passive membership which views the union as a service provider.

Members need to understand that they are the union. If they want the issue resolved, they need to get involved!

If you believe the issue is deeply and broadly experienced across your school or workplace, it might be useful to activate the chapter to achieve a successful and sustainable outcome.

Activating and engaging the chapter when addressing a workplace issue shows members that they can make a difference when they all work together. It also encourages the leadership team to routinely check in with the rep or the chapter when making future decisions that will have a broad impact across the workplace. Strong chapters can make a positive difference.

Before proceeding, you should establish the following:

1. The facts
 - What happened?
 - Where?
 - When?
 - Who is involved?
2. What does the award/agreement say?
 - Has this happened before? Was it a one-off incident or is it an ongoing situation?
3. What is the issue? This can often be separate to the fact/s. This is an important distinction as it allows members to address the concern in a professional and objective manner which provides them with a sense of control over their working conditions. For example:
 - The fact – members of a Catholic systemic primary school have been instructed to attend a whole school assembly
 - The issue – this exceeds the Work Practices Agreement “Professional Duties” hours for the week.

The issue, therefore, is not that members are unwilling to support the principal or are reluctant to be part of the school community. The issue is that existing industrial conditions are not being upheld.

The options:

- **Low level response:** The rep might ask the relevant leadership person for clarification as to how the request sits within the agreement
- **Mid-range response:** Members might insist, via a motion, on their existing conditions being upheld
- **Ideal outcome:** The principal might choose to excuse those members affected or provide them with time in lieu.

Supporting or representing individual members

Supporting a member in a meeting is one of the most important roles you can perform as a rep. It can also be quite challenging. Always remember, however, that your organiser is there to assist if you believe it is appropriate.

Not surprisingly, members can be very upset when called to a meeting and they often forget to call the union to find out their rights and obligations.

What should I do if a member has been called to a meeting?

If a member is called to meeting, remind them that:

1. They have a right to know the reason for the meeting being held. This does not have to include the details, but it should be specific enough to allow the member to establish if they require a support person eg "There has been a parent complaint"
2. If the member is not given a reason for the meeting they should ask "Do I need to bring the IEU rep or a support person?" This often prompts a more appropriate response from the employer
3. They have a right to a support person to accompany them. This might be you as the rep, another trusted member of their staff, a family member, or your organiser.

If you choose to support the member, you should consider the following:

4. Clearly establish the nature of the meeting. If necessary, hand the matter over to the organiser at this point

Please note: if it is a child safety matter or is likely to be a criminal matter, the member should contact their organiser immediately.

5. If you decide you will accompany the member to the meeting, with their permission, you might consider speaking to your organiser prior to the meeting
6. Ensure the member has gathered any appropriate documentation or other evidence before entering the meeting.

Typically, members are advised that there are usually three response options when addressing a complaint:

7. Yes, it happened. In this instance the member should acknowledge their mistake and provide a genuine undertaking that the behaviour will not reoccur
8. No, I deny this happened. The member should provide reasonable evidence that the incident or action did not occur
9. Yes, it happened, but not in the way it has been described. The member should rectify the facts or explain how the incident has been mischaracterised.

It is useful at this point to remind the member that, if they acknowledge that they have made a mistake and give a genuine undertaking that the behaviour will not reoccur, this usually resolves most issues.

If the matter is serious it may be more appropriate for the member to listen and provide a response in writing after the meeting.

A refusal by the member to acknowledge any mistake can often cause the principal to have ongoing concerns. Advise the member that, during the meeting you will:

10. Take notes and provide them at the conclusion of the meeting
11. Try and give them a non-verbal cue if you think they should carefully consider their response or even refrain from answering immediately
12. Call a break if you think there is a need.

What can I do during the meeting?

1. Yes, you can speak! Often the employer will advise a support person that they can only sit and listen. You are entitled to ask clarifying questions, either of the member or of the employer.
2. Sit near the member or so you have eye contact with them. This might allow you to discretely tap them on the elbow or nudge their foot if they appear to be providing unhelpful information.
3. If you sense that the member is becoming flustered or has missed a vital piece of information, you might ask a clarifying question to bring them back on track.
4. If it appears that the member is digging themselves into a hole you can ask for a break and discuss the direction the meeting is headed.
5. The meeting should only address the issue/s identified in the request to attend. If the employer brings in additional allegations or issues, you should suggest that the meeting be terminated and rescheduled to allow the member time to adequately address the new concerns.
6. Take notes – this is where you can ask clarifying questions. One way to do this is to respectfully request, “Just for my notes, can you please confirm ...”
7. At the end of the meeting, clearly establish any agreed actions. For example, you might say “So, to be clear, the Deputy Principal will meet with the member on the next two days to establish what supports can be put in place to allow them to meet the performance plan outcomes.”
8. Debrief the member and provide them with your meeting notes. You might even consider sending the meeting notes to the employer with the agreed actions clearly identified.
9. Follow up with the member to ensure any agreed actions have taken place.
10. Debrief with your organiser. Supporting members is an important but demanding task and self-care is something that can often be overlooked.

Keeping members engaged

The ideal member is an engaged and informed member. Engaged and informed members create a positive union environment which assists in recruiting new members and make union campaigns for improved salary and working conditions more effective.

What you can do:

- Hold regular, well run union meetings
- Distribute information from the IEU office and keep an up to date IEU noticeboard
- Leave a copy of Newsmoon, Bedrock or IE in the staff common room
- "Talk union" at recess and lunch – let them know what their union is currently trying to achieve
- Bring a potential activist to sub branch meetings or invite them to Council
- Encourage them to attend broader union and social justice events such as May Day etc
- Consult with your Chapter, either formally or informally, to find out what issues currently concern them most. Pass this information on to your Organiser.

If you have an action or activity which you believe will keep members involved:

- Use informal groups or networks to spread information or foster support (use your mapping)
- Identify natural leaders within these networks and work to get them involved
- Recognise different levels of involvement – don't ask for an all or nothing commitment. Everyone has a level at which they are willing to be involved
- If you are setting an active member a task, make it manageable and explain the purpose of the action clearly. For example, if you want to get a member involved in distributing a leaflet as part of an IEU or broader union campaign, don't just give them a bundle to distribute. What is likely to happen is the leaflets will end up in a locker or closest garbage bin. Instead use levels of involvement:
 - Ask the member to take one leaflet
 - Take a moment to talk to the member about what the leaflet says
 - Have the member agree to take a few copies to pass onto friends, faculty members etc
 - If they seem confident, ask the member to agree to talk to other people about the information and to try and convince other members to pass out leaflets.
 - Follow up with discussion/evaluation/praise/thanks for the member.

Your aim should be 100% membership, and, once you have them signed up, to ensure that they become active and committed union members, not just card holders.

What we've achieved so far

Improvements to long service leave accrual (Catholic systemic schools)		
Time frame	Teaching staff	Support Staff
1955 to 1985	0.866 weeks per year	0.866 weeks per year
1/8/85 – 30/1/95	1.05 weeks per year 1.5 weeks per year after 10 years	0.866 weeks per year
31/1/95 – 31/1/01	1.3 weeks per year 1.9 weeks per year after 10 years	0.866 weeks per year
1/2/01 – 29/1/06	1.3 weeks per year 2.0 weeks per year after 10 years	1.3 weeks per year
30/1/06 – present	1.3 weeks per year 2.0 weeks per year after 10 years Pro-rata for part-time periods of service	1.3 weeks per year Pro-rata for part-time periods of service

This page will be updated in the coming months to reflect the full scope of our achievements.

Membership services we offer today

The IEU exists to protect and advance its members interests. Every financial IEU member is entitled to the support of the union on any industrial or professional matter.

IEU officers provide information, advice and representation on all issues affecting employment and working conditions, from dismissals through to salary and payment matters, leave, legal liability and the general rights and responsibilities of teachers and school staff, within the school, centre, or college environment. We provide information, advice and representation on disciplinary matters, Working With Children/Vulnerable People Checks, and NESATQI accreditation issues.

Other benefits of IEU membership include access to educational representation, union training, online professional learning for teachers, professional reading and resources, and access to Union Shopper, Teachers Health, and Teachers Mutual Bank.

Health and safety representatives

A health and safety rep (HSR) must be appointed if one or more workers make an IEU request. Your employer is obligated by law to facilitate the election of an HSR within 14 days of the request being made.

HSR should be a union member and form part of the workplace IEU committee.

For more information, contact your IEU organiser.

Rep checklist

An effective rep is one who:

- Is enthusiastic about the union and unionism
- Recruits new employees
- Keeps their chapter informed by distributing notices and holding regular meetings
- Encourages members to be active and engaged
- Keeps in regular contact with their organiser
- Is familiar with their agreement or award
- Attempts to deal with issues at the local level wherever possible
- Seeks help and guidance when necessary
- Attends sub branch and other meetings
- Networks with other reps
- Has a succession plan.



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