

Can a teacher 'donate' their time to someone else?

No.

Is it the school's / the principal's / or the teacher's time?

The school receives the staffing, the principal, in consultation with the teachers, designs the policy for use, and the teacher receives the time.

Will it mean principals will end up covering CRT?

No. The school is provided with staffing to cover the classroom release time.

Will schools/kura be able to cluster their CRT to cover the classroom release time?

Schools/kura have the ability to transfer staffing. Schools/kura considering this should talk to NZSTA and NZEI to receive advice and information before taking this action. An example of this may be a group of kura wishing to employ a Te Reo specialist teacher.

I am the DP and already get release time for my management responsibilities. Am I entitled to another 10 hours CRT?

If you also fit the definition of a classroom teacher (in these guidelines) in addition to your management role, then you do have an entitlement to CRT.

I already get classroom release time provided by the school. Is CRT in addition to this?

The school is entitled to review all its release time provisions at any time, and the introduction of CRT is likely to trigger those reviews. One possible outcome of that review is that the school will revise its previous release time provisions.

Will classroom teachers have to plan the programme for the teacher providing the release?

CRT should not create extra work for the classroom teacher, but it may change the planning processes. Over time a professional relationship between the classroom teacher and the teacher providing the release will develop to ensure the continuity of learning.

If a school has a specialist teacher releasing the classroom teacher, this will be straightforward (e.g. a P.E. teacher will provide the programme within the school plan). If a school uses a generalist teacher to provide the release, then it is expected that the teacher providing the release will deliver a component of the classroom teacher's term/unit plan. The teacher providing the release will be expected to liaise with the classroom teacher before they undertake the release time. This is to ensure their planned activities fit with the teacher's long term and/or daily plan. The teacher providing the release would normally be expected to plan the detailed activities they will teach within the parameters of the classroom teacher's unit plans. The classroom teacher should receive feedback on how the programme went to enable them to pick up where the teacher providing the release finished. Continuity for the class should be the objective for both teachers.

For more information on classroom release time, contact NZEI or NZSTA.

Classroom Release Time Frequently Asked Questions

What is CRT?

Classroom Release Time (CRT) is available to full-time classroom teachers from Term 4 2005. It was negotiated as part of the NZEI Collective Agreement for Teachers in 2004. Schools will be provided with staffing to cover the release time. Initially CRT is available only to full-time teachers for 10 hours per term. From 2007 it is extended to those teachers working 0.8 or more on a pro rata basis. CRT is not available to principals.

How much time do teachers get?

Classroom teachers (as per the definition in the guidelines) will be entitled to 10 hours per term.

Are job sharers entitled to CRT?

Yes, provided this is a genuine approved job share and the time will be allocated on the on the job share basis.

Who decides how it can be used?

Each school must have a policy on the use of CRT. This policy will have a list of what CRT is to be used for. The process for designing the operational policy is through consultation between the principal and teachers. Prior to starting the process the principal should provide a briefing for the Board, confirm that the Board has delegated responsibility to the principal and the final policy should be presented to the Board and minuted at a subsequent meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Is there a requirement in the guidelines for the need to enhance students learning rather than it just be coverage while the teacher is out of the room for an hour?

Yes, the purpose of CRT is that it should be implemented in ways which address teacher workload while maximising benefits for student learning.

Emphasis should be given to identifying and implementing the use of classroom release time so that it is professionally meaningful for the school's teaching and learning programmes, teachers' professional growth and the needs of the students.

Can the hours be accumulated?

Yes - The 10 hour must, wherever possible, be allocated within the term. This could be by giving 1 hour per week or even by giving two full days per term. The policy will say how it is allocated. In certain circumstances, part or the whole amount may be carried over into the next term but cannot be carried over into another school year. Again, the policy will describe those situations.

What happens if I change schools mid-term? Do I take my entitlement with me?

Each school will have its own policy, and those teachers joining that school mid-term will need to fit into the policy in place. For some teachers that may mean a change in the way CRT is allocated to them, particularly for the remainder of that term.

What happens if it is a regular slot and the class teacher is on camp or a trip or some other planned activity?

The school should take account of planned events and activities when allocating CRT time to teachers and organise CRT accordingly.

If the release teacher or myself are unable to take the CRT because of sickness, do I get double release the following week or later in the term?

There is a failsafe for schools in the provision of CRT to ensure that schools are not tasked with doing the impossible. If it is possible to reschedule CRT following unplanned events or incidents, then schools are obliged to do so. However, this may not always be possible due to unavailability of the teacher providing the release.

Can CRT be used to provide physical education (P.E.) in the school?

The staffing provided to schools to deliver CRT can be used in a range of ways (including recruiting a P.E. teacher) provided that it is confirmed policy and the CRT is available to all the full-time classroom teachers.

How could it be used?

The template policy contains a list of ideas of how CRT could be used. The two key things that schools must decide are: What teachers will use the CRT for and what the class will be taught during the provision of each teacher's CRT. The answer to these will vary from school to school depending on their needs and availability of teaching staff.

Is it planning time?

That is one possible use.

Could a school employ, for example, 3 teachers to release 3 classroom teachers at the same time to enable them to plan co-operatively for the coming term or year?

This would be a possible use.

Can a teacher be employed to teach a specific subject?

If the school policy decides this is how CRT will be provided and they have the staffing to do this.

Does the teacher have to remain on the school site?

All teachers are required to remain on school grounds during the day unless the principal has agreed otherwise. The same rules apply for the CRT time unless the school policy includes an agreement that CRT might be taken off site for specific tasks.

Will this time end up being used for additional and/or management responsibilities?

It should not be. It is classroom release time, and the policy needs to define what it can be used for. The policy should be consistent for all teachers.

Will there be enough teachers to provide release time?

That is an unknown. There may be areas where there are not enough teachers, and some schools may struggle to deliver CRT particularly in the fourth term of 2005. This may be an unavoidable teething problem.

What does the school do if no registered teacher can be found to provide release for the teacher receiving classroom release time?

If the school cannot find a registered teacher to employ in the classroom release teacher position, then it may be possible for the school to employ a suitable person who applies to the Teachers Council for a Limited Authority to Teach (LAT).

It is important to note that the LAT will be granted only for a specified short period of time, for that school, for that specific position as outlined in a job description, and will not be granted for permanent employment. The principal must provide evidence to the Council that a registered teacher cannot be found.

Any employment arrangement of this nature should be used only until a registered teacher can be found.

Can CRT staffing be used to provide smaller class sizes rather than release time?

No – NZEI policy supports smaller class sizes, but the two initiatives should not be confused. Schools are required by the PTCA to provide CRT with the staffing they receive.

Can schools increase class sizes to help provide CRT to each teacher?

Schools should not have to do this. They will be provided with additional staffing for the specific purpose of providing CRT.

Is the CRT time additional to the 0.2 and 0.1 FTE beginning teacher time allowance provided to schools for provisionally registered teachers?

Yes, the 0.2 (and 0.1 in the second year) provided to schools for the advice and guidance programme of provisionally registered teachers is in addition to the staffing schools will receive to provide the CRT.

How should it not be used?

The policy should focus on how it should be used. As a guide to how it should not be used, test any proposed agreed use against the purpose of CRT (i.e. It should be implemented in ways which address teacher workload while maximising benefits for student learning). If a proposed use fails either of those tests it is probably not a legitimate use.