

## **CLASS SIZES**

### **[including Potentially Hazardous Class Sizes and Special Education Class Sizes]**

#### **1. Current class size arrangements:**

Members of the AEU are not required to teach classes which contain more than the number of pupils specified in the following schedule:

Preschools	25
Kindergarten – 3	21
Years 4 – 6	30
Years 7 - 9	32
Year 10	30
Years 11 – 12	25

#### **2. Target Class Sizes**

Council endorses the following policy to form the basis of the Union's claim to decrease existing class sizes to the following levels:

Preschool	21
Kindergarten	21
1-3	21
4-6	25
7-10	25
11-12	25

In achieving the target class sizes referred to in this policy, Council and Executive should determine strategies which continue the high priority given to the reduction of class sizes in all sectors. Any campaigning conducted by the AEU to reduce class sizes should encompass the following features:

- (a) The involvement of the ACT community as appropriate.
- (b) The staffing formulae should provide sufficient staff to ensure that AEU members are not required to teach in excess of the above number of students. There should be no loss of working conditions.
- (c) No reduction in other services to achieve lower class sizes.
- (d) No redistribution of resources between the sectors.
- (e) There will be an incremental strategy which will target areas of need in order of priority, beginning with the reduction of class sizes in high schools.
- (f) The AEU will make Budget submissions and undertake EBA negotiations and election campaigning which reflect this policy.
- (g) An analysis of the impact of the Class Sizes Campaign on the provision of non teaching time and curriculum offerings in schools.

#### **3. Special Education Class Sizes**

The AEU recommends the following student to teacher and Special Teaching Assistant (STA) ratios for special education classes. These numbers are not to be considered absolute: there may be a need for flexibility in certain situations, eg where combined or composite classes are formed, or in classes where the profile of student needs (eg where students have multiple diagnoses or where challenging behaviours are extreme) is such that additional staffing is required.

Where the terms “high needs” and “moderate needs” are used in this policy, it is critical that there be a transparent understanding of what these terms mean, ie what level of points generated by the appraisal process places a student in one or the other of these categories.

- Autism units:  
High needs students: 1 teachers and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 4 students.  
Moderate needs students: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 6 students.
- General Learning Support Units: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 8 students
- Learning Support Centres (Primary): 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 8 students.
- Learning Support Centres (Secondary): 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 10 students.

- Communication Disorder Classes: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 8 students,
- Special Schools: High need students as identified by a modified appraisal (SCAN) process: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 4 students. Moderate need students as identified by a modified appraisal (SCAN) process: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 6 students.
- Early Childhood classes within Special Schools: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 6 students.
- Early Childhood Centres (ECCs; Special Schools' outreach settings): 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 8 students.
- Early Intervention Units: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 12 students.
- Autism Intervention Units: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 4 students.
- Mainstream Classes: Where students with special needs are placed in mainstream classes, the AEU believes that, in accordance with our "Integration of Students with Special Needs", adequate resources must be identified and given prior to placement.

#### **4. Potentially Hazardous Classes (PH Classes)**

The AEU will continue to negotiate implementation of the following with the Department and in schools:

1. That a class be defined as a potentially hazardous class if a significant amount of the teaching time places students/staff in a potentially hazardous environment which may affect the health and safety of those individuals.
2. PH classes are to contain no more than 24 students or the number of pupils that the teaching space and equipment will safely cater for, whichever is the less. Alternatively a risk assessment may be done to ascertain the appropriate number of students.
3. PH classes are to be identified by the school prior to the commencement of each school year. If there is disagreement about what a PH class is, then the school should seek an independent and objective analysis of the class by a panel consisting of the Department's OH&S Officers, a specialist in the field (eg consultant) and a representative of the AEU.
4. PH classes receive extra staffing points as part of the secondary schools staffing formula for practical classes. These staffing points are to be used only for PH classes and are not to be used to reduce class sizes in other classes or to give flexibility elsewhere in the school.
5. The Branch will negotiate with the Department a separate component within the staffing formula for PH classes. This component will vary with the number of PH classes in a school.