

UNION MEMBERSHIP

Why you should belong

The AEU - ACT Branch covers all teachers and Schools Services Officers [eg LSA, Youth Liaison Officers etc] employed by, or within, the ACT Government Service in government schools, [including preschools] and the Canberra Institute of Technology. Our Union is responsible for pursuing improvements in the pay and conditions of all public school and TAFE teachers. Consequently, it is critical that all teachers are members to ensure that the policies and practices of our Union reflect the views of the teaching workforce.

Our Union spends substantial time and energy pursuing adequate salaries and improving the profession for its members. This work is paid for by subscriptions from members. Persons who choose not to belong and still receive the benefits of our Union's work are benefiting from the commitment of others.

For an employee to refuse to belong to a union is not to exercise a democratic freedom. It is to accept benefits that others have worked for without contributing to the costs. Democracy flourishes only when freedom is accompanied by responsibility.

Our Union continuously campaigns on behalf of members' interests. It campaigns to:

- improve staffing and protection for teachers;
- increase overall funding for public education;
- implement Branch policies on all aspects of education.

It is only through the maximum possible membership and involvement that our Union is able to operate most effectively in the interests of all.

1. Eligibility

All teachers and Schools Services Officers employed in government schools, secondary colleges & TAFE institutions, whether permanent, temporary or casual, are eligible to join the Australian Education Union - ACT Branch. Teachers working in the ACT system on secondment from other Teaching Services are also eligible.

Teachers who are registered for ACTGS employment and student teachers are also eligible to become members of our Union.

2. Application

Teachers and Schools Services Officers wishing to join our Union must complete an application form obtainable from Sub-Branch Secretaries or the Union Office.

3. Subscriptions

Annual Conference 1994 determined that Union subscriptions be based on .85% of a members' income. [See separate link on the Handbook page for Salary Scales and Fee Structures for both the Schools and TAFE sectors. **Note:** All fees are tax deductible.]

Members wishing to have their subscriptions deducted automatically from a bank account or credit card on a monthly basis should complete the appropriate section on the membership application form and forward it directly to the Union Office.

Part time or full time members wishing to pay subscriptions through cash payments (annually, half yearly or quarterly) should complete the relevant section of the membership application form and forward this, together with payment, to the Union Office.

Our Union also has facilities for payments to be made through credit card, ie Bankcard, Mastercard or Visa. Authorisation appears on the application form or phone charge can be used.

Union membership officially dates from the receipt of the form and payment to the Branch Secretary.

4. Changes in Membership

Rule 34C: MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF BRANCH FUNDS

1. Members are required to notify the Branch in writing of changes to their membership within 28 days of the change occurring.
2. Where a member fails to notify of a change in circumstance in writing and fees continue to be received by the Branch, upon written request from the member the Branch Secretary will authorise a refund to the member of overpaid fees for a maximum of 3 months, or the period of the over-payment, whichever is the lesser. Circumstances in which this provision may apply include, but are not limited to:
 - [a] resignation [in accordance with Federal Rule 17 resignations must be submitted in writing]
 - [b] leave without pay
 - [c] reduced workload
 - [d] half pay leave.
3. A member affected by this clause who believes they have exceptional circumstances in respect of failure to notify the Branch of any change to their membership status may submit a written case for consideration by the Branch Executive.
4. A member dissatisfied with the decision of Branch Executive may request that the matter be referred to Branch Council for final determination, and may elect to address the Branch Council when the matter is listed for consideration.
5. In exercising responsibility under Federal Rule 9 2A, regarding informing applicants for membership of their financial obligations arising from membership, the Branch Secretary will ensure that correspondence to new members of the Branch will include specific reference to these provisions of the Branch Rules.

5. Resignations

In accordance with Federal Government legislation, a member's notice of resignation takes effect:

- (a) If you are ceasing to be a teacher or a Schools Services Officer in the ACT Government sector entirely, from no earlier than the date you leave.
- (b) In any other case [ie you are remaining a teacher or a Schools Services Officer in the ACT Government sector], no earlier than two weeks after you have notified our Union.

All notices of resignation must be in writing, specify the precise date of resignation and be delivered to the AEU - ACT Branch Secretary.