

Dealing with Queries from Established Teachers

Teachers who are not members of the NASUWT can often raise issues about joining a union that are based on misconceptions. Workplace Representatives and Local Association Officers undertaking one-to-one recruitment in the workplace need to be prepared to challenge any misconceptions and present a positive image of the NASUWT. It is important to remember that the best way to challenge what teachers may raise is to understand the issues and be prepared to challenge them.

This resource sheet highlights some general objections that may be raised by teachers when approached about joining the Union.

Objections will not always be phrased or raised in the same way as those below, but using and adapting the information below should enable you to deal with objections and explain the benefits of NASUWT membership.



Hello. I would like to talk to you about joining the NASUWT.

Ok, but I'm not sure what the Union can do for me?

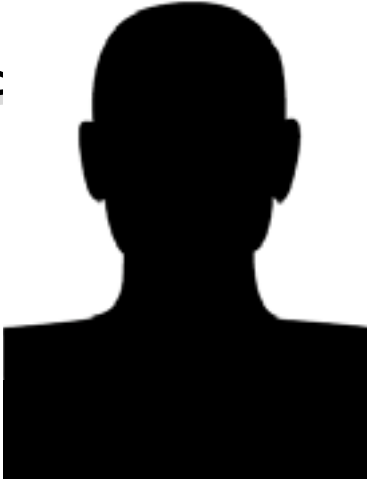
The NASUWT negotiates your pay and conditions at a national level if you are in a state maintained school, only members have a say in what is negotiated. We also offer you legal and professional cover, meaning that you would receive individual representation in the unfortunate event of facing difficulties or formal procedures at work. We want to make sure your working environment is healthy and safe and we are always here to give you general advice and update you on current developments. Should you ever face any type of difficulty, the NASUWT has a whole structure of legal and professional staff to support you and represent you.



But don't unions just go on strike all the time?



Going on strike is always the last resort. Where strike action is taken, it is not entered into lightly and every other option is completely explored before strike action is taken. Strike action is only ever taken with the support of members. You would always have to vote in an independently administered secret ballot. Industrial action can be an effective way of protecting members' interests, for example, to refuse to teach a violent or disruptive pupil – or to protect previously established terms and conditions.



Ok, but I'll get everything a union member gets even if I don't join.

Not true. There are some things that only NASUWT members get. Only NASUWT members get the legal and professional cover we provide. As a member you also have access to local representatives and regional/national centre staff who can advise and support you. As an NASUWT member, you have a say in how the Union conducts its business and the policies it develops. As the NASUWT is the largest teachers' union in the UK and is directly negotiating with employers and Government, we influence education policy and what happens to teachers' terms and conditions and pay. Isn't it better to have your voice heard?



I can look after myself at work.

We are glad to hear that, but none of us ever know what's around the corner. The NASUWT is the largest teachers' union in the UK and campaigns tirelessly on our members' behalf about behaviour in the classroom, working hours and conditions. Wouldn't it be better to be part of an organisation that deals with the issues that face all teachers collectively and has the strength of thousands of other members behind you?



Ok, but I'm too old. There is no real point in me joining the Union at this stage in my career.

Older workers are one group who need the Union. Age discrimination can be a problem in employment and if you are on the receiving end of it you will want the support of the NASUWT and the members in your workplace.



But the Union doesn't seem that strong in this workplace

Individuals are not as influential as working collectively with others. How much would the headteacher listen and how much could be achieved if all the teaching staff in your workplace were members of the NASUWT? By joining us today you will be making the Union even stronger and at the same time you will be ensuring that you have professional and legal cover through the NASUWT.