

Dealing with Queries from School Leaders

School leaders may have a variety of reasons why they have not joined a teachers' union. It may be that they were a union member before becoming a school leader, but now believe that being a school leader and a union member are incompatible. The leader may never have been a union member, or it may be that the leader believes that they can deal with their own workplace issues. School leaders may therefore raise issues about joining the Union that are based on misconceptions. Workplace Representatives and Local Association Officers that undertake one-to-one recruitment in the workplace need to be prepared to challenge these misconceptions in a way that presents a positive image of the NASUWT. It is important to remember that the best way to challenge misconceptions of the Union is to be aware of them.

This resource sheet highlights some general queries that may be raised by school leaders 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.

As I occupy a leadership position, I do not think it is appropriate that I join the Union.



The NASUWT is the largest teachers' union in the UK and many of those members occupy leadership positions within their workplaces. The NASUWT values our members in leadership roles and we are dedicated in providing support, advice and guidance to them. The NASUWT firmly believes that all teachers, including those in leadership positions, deserve the support that is provided by the NASUWT as the most influential teachers' union. Leadership challenges are often reduced when teachers see that leaders are part of the union to which they also belong.

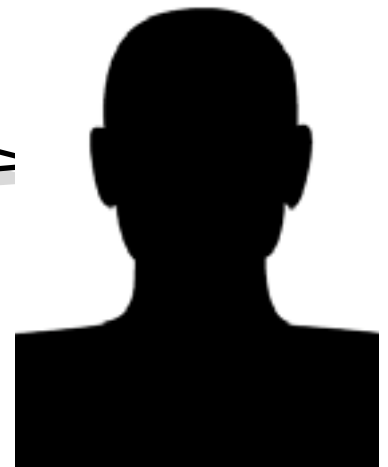


I think I would have difficulties with being represented by one of my own members of staff.

All of the NASUWT Workplace Representatives are trained by the Union to undertake their role and they all understand the importance of maintaining member confidentiality. All of our local representatives are part of a Local Association with dedicated Local Association Officers. We also have a number of professional regional and national employees and all of these Representatives of the NASUWT can offer you advice, guidance and support.

Wouldn't it be a conflict of interests for someone like me who occupies a leadership position to be a member of the same trade union as the teachers I manage?

Not at all! If all the teachers within a workplace, including those undertaking leadership roles, are in the NASUWT, there is every chance that it will improve communication and working practices. It will also mean that conflict will be less likely to occur as you will all be receiving the same information from the NASUWT. Should difficulties arise between union members, the NASUWT has a procedure in place to ensure that all parties are represented independently and confidentially.



What if a teacher wants the Union to get involved in a workplace issue that involves me in my leadership capacity?

You should rest assured that our NASUWT Representatives and employees are trained to try to resolve workplace issues through informal mediation in the first instance. The vast majority of workplace issues are resolved in this manner. However, if a workplace issue progressed beyond this point, a member in a leadership position would be entitled to have an NASUWT Representative or NASUWT staff member to represent their interests.