

Peripatetic

Teacher Guidelines

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wamta.org.au



A peripatetic teacher in the context of music is defined as an instrumental teacher who travels between schools, often more than one.

These guidelines outline many of the considerations that instrumental teachers need to take into account when evaluating the suitability of working in any school in a peripatetic capacity.

Please note that this document merely serves as a guide and is in no way enforceable as every school is different. It is intended to provide teachers with useful insights and questions to ask their potential employers during an interview process before engaging in any working agreements.

These guidelines have been compiled based on survey data collected about the the experiences of local peripatetic teaching members, and provide reasonable benchmarks and suggestions for each consideration.

To view the survey results please visit wamta.org.au.

Rates of Pay

When undertaking a peripatetic position at a school, rates of pay will likely vary depending on factors such as whether the school is a government or independent private school and whether you are teaching group or individual lessons.

Most teachers reported in 2019-20 receiving **\$60-\$70 per hour**.

Peripatetic teachers will typically be employed as a casual contractor. In this instance, it is unlikely that you will be entitled to any kind of paid leave, including annual or sick leave, however it is worth discussing with your school whether long service leave may be an entitlement.

Be aware that under the Superannuation Guarantee, it is mandatory for employers to pay superannuation contributions of 9.5% when an employee is paid at least \$450 before tax in a month.

For more information about your legal entitlements, see the Fair Work Ombudsman: fairwork.gov.au

Missed Lesson Policies

Every school has its challenges when it comes to missed lessons, so it pays to be very clear on what the school's policy regarding remuneration is for the following reasons for missing a lesson:

- Illness
- Excursions
- Tests / Assessments
- Athletic Carnivals and Sporting Events
- Pupil Free Days & Public Holidays
- Staff Meetings
- Evacuations

It is also important to note the policy of sufficient notification from both the school and the student / family to ensure adequate time to reschedule if feasible. Generally 48 hours to a week is considered reasonable notice.

Most schools provide a handbook for the families of the students enrolled in the lessons, which should outline the policies of missed lessons circumstances. You should have access to this for reference.



Additional Commitments & Considerations

Many schools will expect commitments outside of the standard teaching obligations for which remuneration should be considered and communicated accordingly. These include, but are not limited to:

- Assemblies
- Accompaniment (for pianists)
- Rehearsals for school productions
- Ensemble direction
- Parent-Teacher interviews
- Reporting
- Timetabling / scheduling
- Group teaching



Additionally, Duty of Care is often required with the collection and return of younger students from their regular classes to their lesson room for safety reasons. **It is reasonable to insist that collection time be included in the lesson time** and that all parties are aware that this should be remunerated accordingly.

If the school policy does not allow adequate time for this, it is worth negotiating with your employer that a 40 minute lesson is scheduled instead of a 30 minute lesson, taking into account the location and distance from the classroom to the lesson room.



Scheduling

Scheduling for peripatetic teachers can be one of the most challenging aspects of the work.

Many schools will have an administrator who may handle / assist with scheduling, however this is not guaranteed.

Schools may operate on a rotating schedule to minimise disruption to the student's regular classes.

When considering working at a school, be sure to ask:

- whose responsibility it is to schedule lessons
- what systems and policies there are around scheduling limitations such as room availability and reasons for potential missed lessons

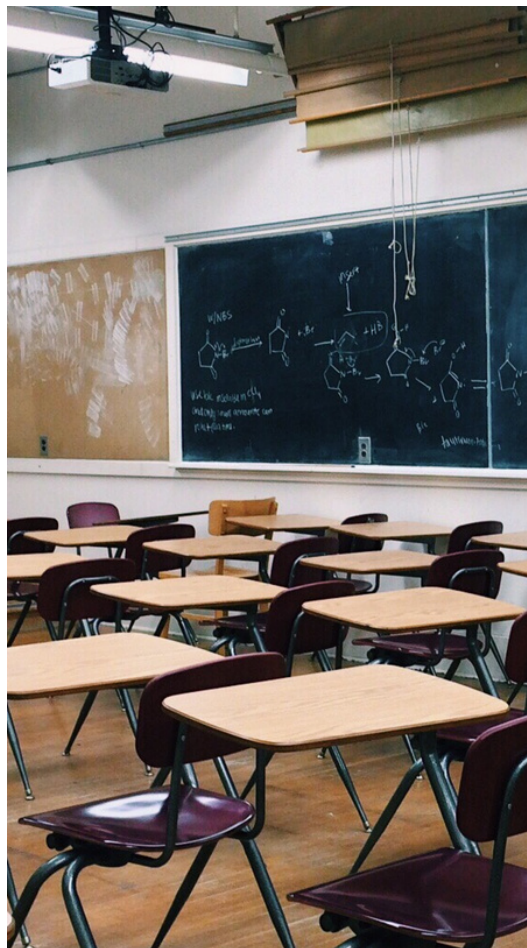
It is advisable to have a system for reminding students/families about their lesson times to minimise schedule disruptions or absentees.

Lesson Rooms

When evaluating the suitability of a lesson room at a school, consider:

- Windows for visibility
- Ventilation
- Heating / cooling
- Distance from classrooms
- Space for physical distancing
- Background noise
- Lighting
- Access to a tuned piano or keyboard in good working condition (it is reasonable to ask the school to pay for piano tuning at least once a year)
- Availability on days outside of regular teaching schedules.

If employed at a school in a peripatetic capacity, it is **unreasonable for a peripatetic teacher to be expected to pay rent for the teaching room**. Agreements of this nature move into an independent contract as a private teacher and you will no longer be considered an employee of the school.



Communication

Every school has strict guidelines around communication with families and it is important to adhere to these to ensure you have adequate reference for any potential disputes.

It is worth discussing with school authorities such as the Head of Department or Principal how a school handles disputes and what levels and systems of support they can provide to peripatetic teachers, as well as who is the first point of call.

Transparency in communication is essential with other members of the school and the families and students.

It is recommended that teachers prepare and send a welcome letter to all student families, to not only provide a little background information, but also to outline the expectations of communication: when and how it's appropriate to be contacted, student progress, rescheduling, and dispute handling.

It is always helpful to copy in Heads of Department when sending this information where applicable, to keep everyone on the same page.



Professional Development

When entering into a peripatetic teaching role, a school may require the peripatetic teacher to undertake extra development, such as Mandatory Reporting and First Aid Training, due to the nature of the work.

In such cases, it is reasonable for the school to fund and facilitate this training. Often this essential training requires revision every few years to remain current.

In addition, some schools may contribute and encourage attendance of field-related professional development opportunities such as conferences, courses and workshops, however this is often funded by the teachers rather than the school.



Need Extra Support ?

If you have any questions, feel you need any extra support in your peripatetic journey or are seeking further professional development, please don't hesitate to reach out to the West Australian Music Teachers' Association (WAMTA).

WAMTA is not a union, and cannot assist with legal disputes, however with no award or legislation in place to cover music teachers, we assist where we can with guidelines, networking and professional development. Please consider joining as a member if you haven't already.

<http://www.wamta.org.au>

