

This resource has been developed for the purposes of assisting in the identification and development of rehabilitation programs for injured or ill employees, and to provide detailed information about **common** job demands. When supporting an injured employee in their return to work this document is used in conjunction with Workplace Specific Details to ensure information is customised.

Description of the role of the School Counsellor:

The school counsellor is a teacher with a major in psychology who has responsibility for providing schools with advice and support in matters relating to student academic, personal and social development, welfare and discipline and provides psychological and other testing as required.

It is the role of the school counsellor to provide a comprehensive student support program within the school environment offering counselling with students on a one to one basis or in a group setting assisting the students with specific issues, acting as a mediator or providing information on other life skills. They may be required to liaise with parents, teachers, or other external health providers as needed as part of the counselling process regarding mental health issues.

This document indicates the average time spent across a working day on common work activities/physical work demands that have been identified as essential to the successful performance of the role. The frequency of performance of work tasks is described by either the Descriptor, Percentage of Time, or Amount of Time based on the average working day of 7 hours as follows:

Descriptor	Percentage of Time	Amount of Time based on 7 hours per day
Not present	0%	0
Rare	1% - 7%	From 4 mins to 30 mins
Occasional	8% - 33%	35 mins to 2 ¼ hours
Frequent	34% - 66%	2 ½ hours to 4 ½ hours
Constant	67% - 100%	4 ¾ hours to 7 hours

This table is derived from the US Department of Labor Physical Demand Characteristics of Work, 1996

Hours of Work and Scheduled Breaks

Hours of Work: Employees work during the normal daily hours of operation of the school during which classes are conducted; this is commonly Monday to Friday. Generally teaching employees may be required to be present half an hour before school starts and half an hour after the dismissal in the afternoon. Where special circumstances arise which, in the interests of the school necessitate attendance beyond these hours, the attendance of the employees may be required.

Meal Breaks: Employees are entitled to a lunch break of not less than 30 minutes.

Job Profile – Functional Summary for the Position of a School Counsellor

Frequency of Physical Job demands (Average % of Full Time Work Day)

Demands	Not Present	Rare (1% - 7%)	Occasional (8% - 33%)	Frequent (34% - 66%)	Constant (67% - 100%)	Demands	Not Present	Rare (1% - 7%)	Occasional (8% - 33%)	Frequent (34% - 66%)	Constant (67% - 100%)
Sitting				X		Reaching				X	
Standing - Static			X			Handling		X			
Standing - Dynamic			X			Pushing		X			
Walking - Flat Terrain				X		Pulling		X			
Walking – Slippery/ Gravel Terrain		X				Lifting		X			
Climbing – Step Stools/ Ladders		X				Carrying		X			
Climbing – Stairs		X				Fine Motor			X		
Stooping			X			Tactility			X		
Kneeling		X				Driving			X		
Crouching – One Off			X			Visual Function					X
Crawling		X				Speech					X
Balancing – Above Ground		X				Auditory					X

Tools/ Equipment Handled

Pens/pencils/whiteboard markers and books

Computer workstation/telephone

Test resources – approximately 5 – 8kg. Use of trolley bag when travelling to complete testing.

Loads Lifted & Carried (Average % of Full Time Work Day)

Weight range	Not present	Rare (1-7%)	Occasional (8-33%)	Frequent (34 -66%)	Constant (67 – 100%)
0-5 kg			Floor to waist to shoulder		
6-10kg		Floor to waist			
11-15kg	X				
15-20kg	X				
21-25kg+	X				

Note: - Loads are a guide of maximum required in a full time work day.

Job Profile – Functional Summary for the Position of a School Counsellor

Common Job Activities (used in conjunction with Workplace Specific Details)		Average Time	Critical Job Demand
1	<p>Counselling Students who are referred to the counsellor may require counselling regarding difficulties that they are experiencing at school, relationship or family issues, and concerns around student protection. Counselling generally occurs on a one to one basis of varying duration as determined appropriate by the Counsellor. As part of this process the School Counsellor may act as a mediator between parties, may implement specific training programs or may liaise with Welfare Services including non government organisations. The Counsellor may also refer students to external health professionals for ongoing specific health based treatment. School Counsellors may partake in interviews with specific senior students which have been identified to not be performing well at school and to liaise with teachers and parents as deemed appropriate. Counsellors also conduct a range of psychometric or cognitive testing in a one-to-one situation with identified students, and write extensive reports to meet staff and departmental requirements. Counsellors may need to take an active role across the school in crisis management such as when a parent, teacher or student dies or when there is another serious school based incident.</p>	Up to 4 periods per day (8 students generally seen in a day); Cognitive assessments can take 2 hours	Yes
2	<p>Parent liaison School counsellors liaise with parents via telephone or in meetings as required to discuss specific issues. In some cases counsellors involve parents in counselling sessions with their child.</p>	Parent meetings can take 30 – 60 minutes each	Yes
3	<p>Computer based tasks Include emails, test scoring, research, and writing reports. Report writing forms a large component of the role, including reports for students with long suspensions and tertiary reports.</p>	As required	Yes
<p>In support of the above activities performed during rostered duty time, the activities below are performed by most counsellors.</p>			
4	<p>Meetings Staff meetings/liaison with teaching employees: involving face to face meetings at which day to day operational issues, short term and long term strategic planning for the school occur.</p>	Varies according to school	Yes
5	<p>Committee meetings School counsellors may also be required to, or choose to, participate in certain school based committees (for example the school’s professional learning committee).</p>	Varies according to school	No
6	<p>Extra curricula activities Counsellors also participate in extra-curricular activities most of which are of a voluntary nature. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight camps (attended by some School Counsellors, voluntary) • Senior camps 		No

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Environmental Factors

The following environmental factors exist in the workplace.

Low- level ambient noise (from students, traffic, school activities e.g. music practice etc) on occasion requiring moderate voice projection to be heard.

Often offices have limited space which makes it difficult to maintain personal space or to hold group sessions.

Worker/ team relationships – the work environment may require the employee to adjust to different management or working styles, and demonstrate an ability to work cooperatively.

Shortened work breaks may be taken on a voluntary basis.

While deadlines exist for many tasks, the level of demand is dependent upon the school environment and staffing level. School Counsellors may also be required to address multiple demands and a large number of unplanned interruptions may occur throughout the working day.

The nature of this roles means that the School Counsellor may need to deal with people who are undergoing stressful or emotional events.

Core Workplace Expectations (Organisational, Interpersonal, and Psychosocial).

The following major workplace expectations have been identified with reference to DEC Policies and Guidelines, the NSW Institute of Teachers website and O*NET (the Occupational Information Network, a comprehensive database of worker attributes and job characteristics).

All employees have a responsibility to comply with legislation, departmental policy, procedures and the DEC Code of Conduct, perform their duties effectively, provide impartial and accurate advice and act in a manner that promotes a productive and harmonious working environment.

Negotiating with others - In dealing with other people, employees should be able to accommodate and tolerate different opinions and perspectives, and sort out their disagreements by rational discussion.

Departmental employees have a duty to take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of the students in their charge.

Establishing and maintaining effective communication – includes appropriate communication with supervisors, peers, subordinates, students, parents and community members

Employees who work with students have a special responsibility in presenting themselves as appropriate role models for those students.

Training and Teaching Others – Includes identifying the educational needs of others, developing formal educational or training programs or classes, and teaching or instructing ,and assessing and reporting for effective learning

High school counsellors create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills. Effective strategies for the management of student behaviour and the maintenance of a safe working and learning environment include WHS procedures, student welfare procedures, curriculum and environmental management.

Investigations – participate in reporting investigation and resolution processes, including mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect, and participation as a witness or party to performance, discipline, grievance, WorkCover or other processes.

Have the capacity to be flexible, adaptable and willing to work in an environment where the day-to-day priorities and tasks may vary considerably. Have the capacity to maintain their own mental health and a balanced approach to life when constantly dealing with challenging situations.

Job Profile – Functional Summary for the Position of a School Counsellor

The use of this terminology, referred to in Frequency of Physical Job demands table on page 2, helps to establish a common language for key stakeholders when describing job demands in terms of frequency of activity performance, type of posture or movement and the level of strength/ lifting required.

Definition of Physical Job Demands	
LIFTING	Raising or lowering an object from one level to another (includes upward pulling and/or exerting upward force to hold an object in static position).
CARRYING	Transporting an object, usually holding in the hands, arms or on the shoulder.
PUSHING	Exerting force upon an object so that the object moves away from the force (including stooping, striking, kicking, treading and exerting force to hold an object in static position).
PULLING	Exerting force upon an object so that the object moves toward the force (including jerking and exerting force to hold an object in static position).
SITTING	Remaining in a seated position.
STANDING	Remaining on one's feet in an upright position without moving greater than three steps.
WALKING	Moving about on foot greater than 3 steps.
CLIMBING	Ascending or descending ladders, stairs, scaffolding, ramps, poles and the like, using feet and legs, or hands and arms.
BALANCING	Maintaining body equilibrium to prevent falling when walking, standing, crouching, or running on either elevated and unguarded, narrow, slippery or erratically moving surfaces.
STOOPING	Bending the body forward and downward by bending spine at waist, requiring full use of lower extremities and back muscles.
KNEELING	Bending legs at knees to come to rest on knees.
CROUCHING	Bending body forward and downward by bending legs and spine.
CRAWLING	Moving about on the hands and knees.
REACHING	Extending arms(s) in any direction.
HANDLING	Seizing or grasping, holding, turning or otherwise working with the hands. Fingers are only involved to the extent that they are extensions of the hand.
FINE MOTOR	Picking, pinching, or otherwise working with the fingers, other than with the whole hand or arm as in handling.
TACTILITY	Perceiving attributes of objects, such as: size, shape, temperature, or texture by touching with skin; particularly that of finger tips.

This table is derived from the Queensland Department of Education and Training Job Dictionary