



# Language competency for teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand

**Effective from 11 January 2021**

## Why we have language competency requirements

Teaching is a linguistically demanding profession. High-quality teaching demands command of a wide range of language skills. These include establishing and maintaining rapport, providing effective feedback, listening, prompting, evaluating, responding, reinforcing, giving praise, eliciting comments and providing instructions<sup>1</sup>. Teachers need to be highly flexible with these skills, modifying their approach to suit individual needs as they arise; and need to be able to use these behaviours to establish strong, collaborative relationships with whānau.

These skills require a high level of language competency in speaking, writing, reading and listening. Every child is entitled to high quality teaching and learning, therefore every member of the teaching profession must be competent in the one of languages of New Zealand's national curricula - English or te reo Māori.

Our Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession capture the importance of language and communication for high-quality teaching. Through the Code and Standards, teachers commit to engage in positive, collaborative relationships, to communicate effectively with others, to engage in problem-solving, to communicate clear and accurate assessment information and to seek and respond to feedback from learners. Once a teacher has registered and has received their practising certificate they agree to work to our Code and Standards.

## Our approach

The Council focuses on evidence of a teacher's language competency. Many people seeking to register as teachers speak a number of languages. They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to our profession. We recognise this in our approach to language competency by providing opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their competency in English or te reo Māori, rather than focusing on whether English or te reo Māori are additional languages. We accept a broad range of specified evidence, informed by the requirements of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and Immigration New Zealand.

Please note that we may still ask for additional information such as results from one of our approved language tests if there are concerns, including about language competency or about the documentation provided.

<sup>1</sup> Freeman; D, Katz; A, Garcia Gomez; P & Burns; P. (2015). English-for-teaching: Rethinking teacher proficiency in the classroom. *ELT journal*. Published online. Hollo; A & Wehby; J. (1998). Teacher talk in general and special education elementary classrooms. *ELT Journal*. ( Volume 52, Issue 3), 179-187.

## Our requirements: English Language

These requirements are for Initial Teacher Education and Registration.

One of the following types of evidence must be provided to demonstrate English language competency:

- The New Zealand University Entrance literacy credits at either NCEA level 2 or 3 **OR**
- New Zealand University Entrance **OR**
- New Zealand tertiary entrance qualification gained on completing senior secondary school prior to the introduction of current University Entrance **OR**
- International Baccalaureate full diploma in English medium (24 points minimum) **OR**
- Cambridge International Examinations minimum 120 points on the UCAS Tariff plus meeting the CIE literacy requirements **OR**
- All primary schooling and at least three years secondary schooling completed in the English language and while living in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America or South Africa\* **OR** \* candidates from South Africa must also provide South African Matriculation Certificate Minimum D pass in English (higher grade) **OR** South African Senior Certificate Minimum D pass in English (higher grade)
- Six years of education comprising secondary schooling to at least year 12 and at least two years of successful tertiary education, taught in English as the primary language of instruction and through face-to-face learning and assessment such as tutorials and labs completed in the English language and while living in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America or South Africa\* **OR**
- Awarded a Bachelor's degree (with or without Honours), Master's degree or other qualification at NZQF level 7 or above which took two or more years of full-time study to complete and
  - Was taught in English as the primary language of instruction and through face-to-face learning and assessment such as tutorials, presentations, seminars, and supervisory meetings and
  - Was gained while living in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States or South Africa\***OR**
- Awarded Cambridge Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) **OR**
- Awarded Trinity College London Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CertTESOL) **OR**
- Achieved an outcome in one of the approved tests which is equivalent to or better than those specified (see table) within the past two years:

Test	Listening	Reading	Writing	Notes	Overall Mark (in one test)
Cambridge English exams C2 Proficiency (CPE) or C1 Advanced (CAE) or Cambridge English exams B2 First (FCE)	minimum of 185	minimum of 185	minimum of 185	minimum of 185	minimum of 185
International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
International Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ISLPR)	4	4	4	4	4
Pearson Test of English (PTE) Academic	65	65	65	65	65

TOEFL Internet-based test (iBT)	24	24	27	23	minimum of 94
Trinity ISE III (3)	Pass with Merit	Pass with Merit	Pass with Merit	Pass with Merit	Pass with Merit
LanguageCert C2 Mastery IESOL	No less than 25/50	No less than 25/50	No less than 25/50	No less than 25/50	No less than 25/50
LanguageCert C1 Expert IESOL	No less than 35/50	No less than 35/50	No less than 35/50	No less than 35/50	No less than 35/50

## Our requirements: Te Reo Māori

One of the following types of evidence must be provided to demonstrate te reo Māori competency:

- Achieved Whakamātauria Tō Reo Māori Level 3 (National Māori Language Proficiency Examinations) OR
- All primary schooling and at least three years secondary schooling in te reo Māori OR
- Five years of secondary schooling in te reo Māori

## Exceptional cases for English language

The Council considers exceptional cases where the specified evidence cannot be provided but there is other evidence of a high standard of English language competency. We consider exceptional cases to ensure we accommodate high-quality applicants with the right level of competency. We will consider other evidence on a case by case basis. Exemptions requests for Initial Teacher Education must be made by the provider. Please email [exemptions@educationcouncil.org.nz](mailto:exemptions@educationcouncil.org.nz) in the first instance.

## Disclaimer

This version of Language competency for teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand (the policy) replaces the previous version. This policy may be reviewed and updated or amended from time to time. Revisions to this policy are listed below.

## Policy revisions

Version	Amendment
1.1 11 January 2021	Amendment to LanguageCert requirements to reflect changes that organisation has made the way it reports results.