



A brief outline of the implementation of the 2026 Standards for the Teaching Profession

Introduction

This is one of three documents about a revised set of standards for the teaching profession being released on 26 June 2025. It should be read alongside the other two:

- *Introducing the 2026 Standards for the Teaching Profession* sets out the standards, focus areas and domains that have been approved as comprising the new Standards.
- *Consultation on a revised set of standards for the teaching profession: What we heard and how we responded* presents a summary of the feedback received and the way the standards have been refined from the consultation version.

This document doesn't deal with the content of the 2026 Standards, but instead outlines how the implementation of these new standards is set to occur, and signals the kinds of support documents that the sector can expect to see in 2025, and beyond.

Timeframe for coming into use and coming into effect

The consultation document raised the suggestion that it might be feasible to have the new standards fully in effect for 2026. This suggestion attracted some adverse comment, with a number of respondents drawing attention to the demanding processes of change that the sector is already contending with.

Considering both these responses and the practicalities of implementation, the Teaching Council has decided on a phased approach to bringing in the new standards, as follows. We feel that this achieves much of the benefit of full commencement in 2026 without the disadvantages of that approach.

- **During the second half of 2025 the Teaching Council will develop and publicise resources to help explain the 2026 Standards and guide their implementation.** More details on this are set out in *Support for implementation* below.
- **The 2026 Standards can be used by and socialised with teachers from now onwards, and throughout 2026.** During 2026 we expect to see teachers and professional leaders moving to use the 2026 Standards as the basis of Professional Growth Cycle (PGC) activities. However, in a formal sense, endorsement for re-certification in 2026 will still be on the basis of the 2017 Standards.
- **The 2026 Standards will come into formal effect from 1 January 2027.** This will entail Teaching Council use for practising certificate renewal, endorsement and requirements on Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes.



In practical terms, for the PGC process, this means:

- For 2025, PGC annual summary statements will continue to be based on the 2017 Standards.
- When schools and ECE services begin their PGC in 2026, they will need to firstly facilitate a common understanding of the 2026 Standards and what meeting and using them in their practice looks like in their setting (PGC Element A).
- When it comes time for PGC Element E to be enacted, i.e. each teacher's annual summary to be completed, the recognition that a teacher's practice meets the Standards will be according to the Standards used in Element A for that year.
- Endorsement decisions for the renewal of practising certificates are made every three years. Principals and professional leaders will use the most recent annual summary statements of the previous three years to endorse teachers for their practising certificates. This means that for a time, endorsement decisions will be made from annual summary statements that represent practice from both the 2017 and 2026 Standards.

Status of the focus areas

The proposal that “giving the focus areas standing as part of the standards, and therefore a key part of the Professional Growth Cycle” would “provide clarity to teachers' effective practice” received majority support (65%) in the online survey. However, this was a lower level than the other aspects of the standards proposal (see *Background Information* below). Moreover, free-text responses and written responses revealed disquiet about the practical implications of needing to take account of the full range of focus areas when a teacher is assessed.

We remain of the view that strengthening the role of the ‘second tier’ of the standards will have benefits in terms of both effectiveness and consistency (many organisations do use the current elaborations but likely with quite diverse approaches, many of which are not visible to us). We also feel that the post-consultation standards contain a clearer and more cohesive set of focus areas that will improve implementability.

Nevertheless, we think it is important to take a measured approach here that minimises the risk of unintended consequences.

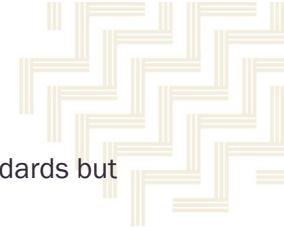
Therefore, while the focus areas will be considered part of the standards, the particular ways that focus areas are to be used to interpret the eight standards will be set out in Teaching Council policy and guidance. For the PGC and re-certification, this will be the *Elements of the Professional Growth Cycle* and the *Endorser Guidelines*, underpinned by the Registration and Certification Policy. For ITE, it will be the Initial Teacher Education Requirements Policy.

We see this as a valuable way of optimising the usefulness (and mitigating the risks) of focus areas for each process.

Towards a new Ngā Paerewa

Leading up to the release of the standards consultation document, we began the process of engagement with leaders of the profession in Māori medium settings to develop a new expression of the standards in te reo Māori, i.e. a successor to the 2017 Ngā Paerewa. However, other challenges facing Māori medium settings mean that it will now not be realistic to complete this work in 2025.

Nevertheless, we consider that it will be feasible for work to be undertaken with Māori medium leaders, as well as Māori leaders in English medium settings, to enable these standards to be approved in 2026. This would allow them to come into effect in 2027 alongside the standards as expressed in English.



Current thinking is that the new standards in te reo Māori might be similar to the English standards but not a direct translation.

Support for implementation

During the second half of 2025, the Teaching Council will develop and publicise the following:

- *A Guide to the 2026 Standards and Focus Areas*, which provides some context on the intent of the drafting.
- *Transitioning from the 2017 Standards to the 2026: What's Similar and What's Different?*, which will provide an accessible guide to the points of continuity between the old and new standards, along with slight changes of nuance or emphasis, and those aspects which are more fundamentally new.
- Refreshed written and audiovisual resources on the *Elements of the Professional Growth Cycle*, which take account of the 2026 Standards (including the new role of the focus areas) and identify how to recognise these standards in teaching practice, in a meaningful yet accessible way.

We will commence updating the *Endorser Guidelines* in 2025, in consultation with interested stakeholders, but the work may continue into 2026.

Implications for ITE and induction and mentoring

As noted above, the 2026 Standards will come into formal effect from 1 January 2027, including for ITE programmes. The Teaching Council will work with ITE providers to develop a plan to update and approve programme changes that prepare graduates to meet the 2026 Standards (in a supported environment).

The Teaching Council is looking to reduce monitoring and review obligations of existing programmes while updates are made. More information will be available to ITE providers shortly.

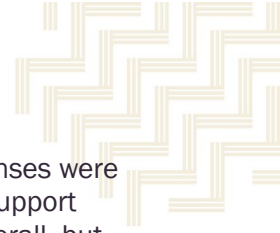
We will also work to help providers 'dovetail' the impacts of our changes with those of other processes that they need to respond to (in particular curriculum change).

The *What's Similar and What's Different?* document referenced above will be designed to be a valuable resource for providers in considering to what extent programme content and structure needs to be adapted for the 2026 Standards.

Following the current consultation on the discussion paper *A nationally consistent Induction model to support new teachers*, revised documentation to support the induction and mentoring process will also be developed. This will also take account of the shift to the 2026 Standards.

Background information

On 12 March 2025, after signalling for around a year that it would be timely to consider revisions to the Standards in 2025, the Teaching Council released the consultation document, *A revised set of Standards for the Teaching Profession*. The proposal set out in this discussion document also had regard to priorities set out in the recent *Statement of Government Policy Relating to Teaching Council Functions* (<https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2024-go6031>).



Consultation ran from 12 March to 2 May 2025. 1,642 survey responses and 64 email responses were received, and 25 discussions undertaken, during the consultation. There was a high level of support (above 75% in the survey) for each of the proposed standards and for the set of standards overall, but also a wealth of detailed comments and drafting suggestions that were used to refine the standards.

The Governing Council of the Teaching Council approved the 2026 Standards on 29 May 2025.