

Language Competency Consultation 2024

Feedback Analysis Summary

September 2024



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Language competency consultation 2024 - Feedback analysis

Pacific teachers and communities identified barriers in our language competency policy that impacts on Pacific peoples		The Teaching Council identified two main ways the policy could be amended to address these concerns			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Teaching Council's requirements for English Language Competency (ELC) level 7 for entry into Initial Teacher Education (ITE), for teacher registration, or applications for a Limited Authority to Teach (LAT) is set at a level that is above what a Pacific bilingual or immersion teacher needs to work in these settings. Related to this is a concern that currently schooling or tertiary studies completed in the Pacific region is not recognised as evidence for ELC for entry into ITE, registration as a teacher, or applications for a LAT. In 2022 the Teaching Council did make a change to enable this evidence to be considered on a discretionary, case-by-case basis as an exemption to the policy. However, this process requires each application to be considered by the Exemptions Panel, adding additional time to processing applications from the Pacific region. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation 1: Introducing an indigenous Pacific languages pathway for entry into ITE, registration as a teacher, or for applying for a LAT: The Pacific Language Competency (PLC) pathway would include an evidence requirement for the Pacific language(s) but no evidence requirement for English. While this framework is developed, the Teaching Council's ELC requirement for entry into ITE could be amended for applicants who are speakers of indigenous Pacific languages, so that it is set at the same level for general academic entry. Recommendation 2: Expanding the English language competency evidence criteria to include: all primary and at least three years secondary schooling OR six years secondary schooling and at least two years tertiary education completed with English as the main medium of instruction while living in Tokelau, Niue, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Rotuma, Fiji, or Kiribati. If the applicant is unable to provide these evidence options, the other options in the Language Competency Policy (LCP) would apply, including taking one of a range of available language tests. This change would apply to any applicant from the Pacific who is applying for entry into ITE, teacher registration, or a LAT, using the ELC pathway. 			
Questions from consultation	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5
	Do you agree that the Teaching Council should develop an indigenous Pacific language competency pathway that requires evidence of Pacific language competency and has different expectations for English language competence?	If the Teaching Council introduces a Pacific language competency pathway as Phase 2 of this review, do you agree that as an interim measure before this is implemented, the Teaching Council's current English language requirement for entry into ITE should be reduced to Level 6 for applicants who are speakers of indigenous Pacific languages?	If the Teaching Council introduced a Pacific language competency pathway for entry into ITE, teacher registration, and LATs, what criteria for evidence of Pacific language competence could be used? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Testimonial (commenting on proficiency in listening, reading, writing, speaking). Language proficiency examinations in the relevant language(s). Interview with recognised proficient speaker. Other. 	Do you agree that the Teaching Council should add schooling and tertiary study completed in Tokelau, Niue, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Rotuma, Fiji, or Kiribati to the evidence list for demonstrating English language competency?	Do you have other ideas about changes that could be made to the language competency policy to support pathways into teaching in Pacific bilingual and immersion settings?

Highlights from the feedback

- There was good participation and engagement from across the teaching profession.
- The recommendation to introduce a PLC pathway was supported by more than half of survey respondents.
- Stakeholders and organisations also supported introducing a PLC pathway.
- Just under half of survey respondents supported reducing the ELC requirement for entry into ITE to Level 6 as an interim measure. This recommendation received strong support from stakeholders and other organisations.
- Including schooling and tertiary studies in specified Pacific countries was supported by more than half of survey respondents. This recommendation was strongly supported by stakeholder and other organisations.

What does the feedback tell us?

Recommendation 1: Introducing a Pacific languages pathway			Recommendation 2: Expanding English language evidence criteria	
<p>The quantitative data from the online survey and submissions indicates a level of comfort for implementing this recommendation. A key theme in the feedback emphasised the importance of supporting and increasing the number of Pacific kaiako teachers in Pacific bilingual and immersion settings. There was also a strong signal about the value of Pacific languages and bi- and multi-lingualism within our education system.</p>			<p>The quantitative data from the online survey and stakeholder submissions indicated a level of comfort for implementing this recommendation. Allowing Pacific applicants to demonstrate their English language competency through their evidence of schooling and tertiary studies in an English medium setting while living in Tokelau, Niue, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Rotuma, and Fiji or Kiribati was well supported.</p>	
Question 1 responses	Question 2 responses	Question 3 responses	Question 4 responses	Question 5 responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 1 was supported by 54% of survey respondents and was strongly supported by all group and stakeholder submitters. However, 31% of survey respondents disagreed. • The qualitative responses indicate that those who disagreed were concerned that the command of English may not be sufficient to meet the demands of study and teaching. • These concerns highlight that building knowledge and understanding of the very different cognitive and linguistic framework that speakers of two or more languages bring to teaching and learning, and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question 2 saw a decrease in support from survey respondents to 47%, with 38% opposed. • However, again, this option was strongly supported by group and stakeholder submitters. • Qualitative responses from the survey supported lowering the ELC requirement, but responses were divided between those supporting the change (14) and those who thought it should be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The qualitative responses for Question 3 indicated that due to the complexities of Pacific languages, a range of options should be considered when developing an evidence framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey responses were 52% in support, with 25% opposed. • This recommendation was the most supported option, where respondents and the qualitative responses commented on the prevalence of English as the medium of instruction or as part of a structured bilingual approach for schooling and tertiary studies in the Pacific region. This recommendation would address an inequity in the current list of accepted evidence and give acknowledgment to the hard work that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents were able to provide additional comments and feedback. • For survey respondents, the most prevalent theme related to the view that English should be the main language used for teaching and learning and that kaiako teachers need to be competent in English (136 survey responses). Related to this theme was the additional theme that a lower level of

<p>valuable contribution such skill and knowledge brings is a work in progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the new pathway is introduced, it will be critical to frame the implementation within a context that benefits linguistic diversity across teaching and learning. Any risk associated with perceptions of kaiako teachers choosing the PLC pathway not being fully prepared for those aspects of teaching that may need command of English¹ will be addressed through the chosen pathway. • In addition, if the new approach is implemented, the information providing context for the change needs to emphasise that the Teaching Council is committed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ responding to a specific issue identified for Pacific bilingual teaching and learning ○ supporting increased numbers of Pacific peoples who are registered teachers. 	<p>extended beyond Pacific peoples to other applicants (15).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the response rate and the tenor of some qualitative feedback for this option, we understand it may need to be reframed so that it is clearer that it fits within ITE provider conditions when considering applications from candidates over the age of 20 years. • It is worth noting that many respondents commented on equality and ensuring these changes are also implemented for other language groups. 		<p>our Pacific teachers go through in their home country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents who opposed this recommendation based their concerns largely on whether a teacher’s command of English was sufficient for teaching across language mediums, and on potential impacts on teaching and learning. These concerns could be mitigated with further information or attestation from countries regarding English as the medium of instruction, but it also speaks to the need to build knowledge and understanding of the very different cognitive and linguistic framework that speakers of two or more languages bring to teaching and learning. 	<p>ELC could negatively impact on teaching (or study) (22 survey responses). This concern was not shared by group and stakeholder submitters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the proposed changes be approved for implementation, it will also be important to highlight that the new pathway aligns to what the Teaching Council already has in place for te Reo Māori.
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¹ See Ball, C.E, 2012 *The richness diversity brings: diverse languages and literacies in early childhood education* Master’s thesis. Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.

<https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/server/api/core/bitstreams/1b6878ff-2369-4fd8-a068-6867cd6ef890/content>

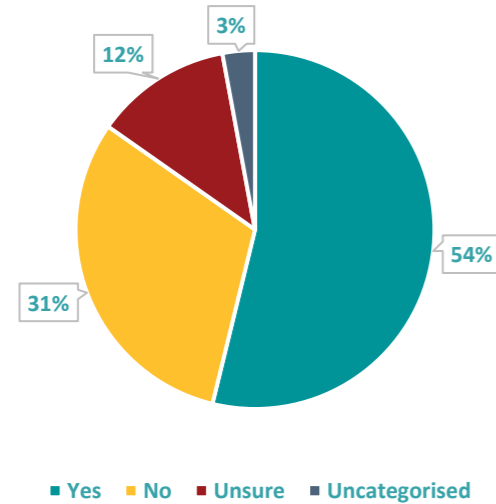
See Si’ilata R, 2018 “Multilingual Digital Translanguaging and Storying with New Zealand Pasifika Learners”. In *Multilingual Computer Assisted Language Learning* J. Buendgens-Kosten and D. Elsner (eds) Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters, 2018, pp. 213-254. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781788921497-014>

Survey responses

The survey published on our website received 2,228 responses to five key questions:

Q1. Do you agree that the Teaching Council should develop an indigenous Pacific language competency pathway that requires evidence of Pacific language competency and has different expectations for English language competence?

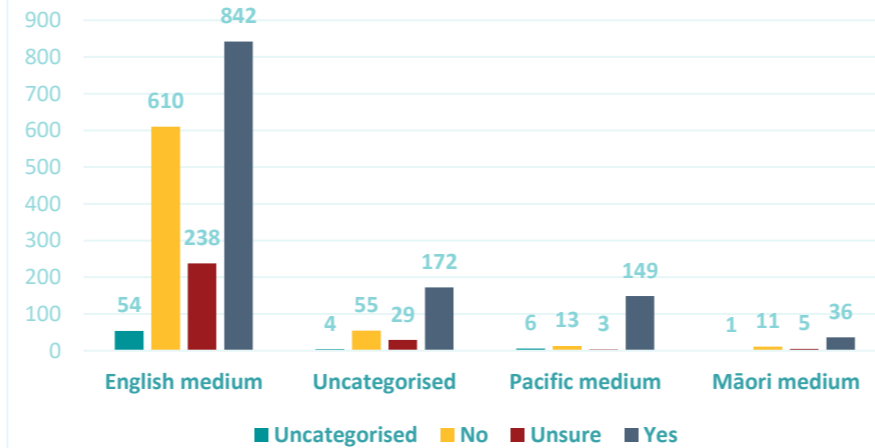
Question 1 - Overall responses



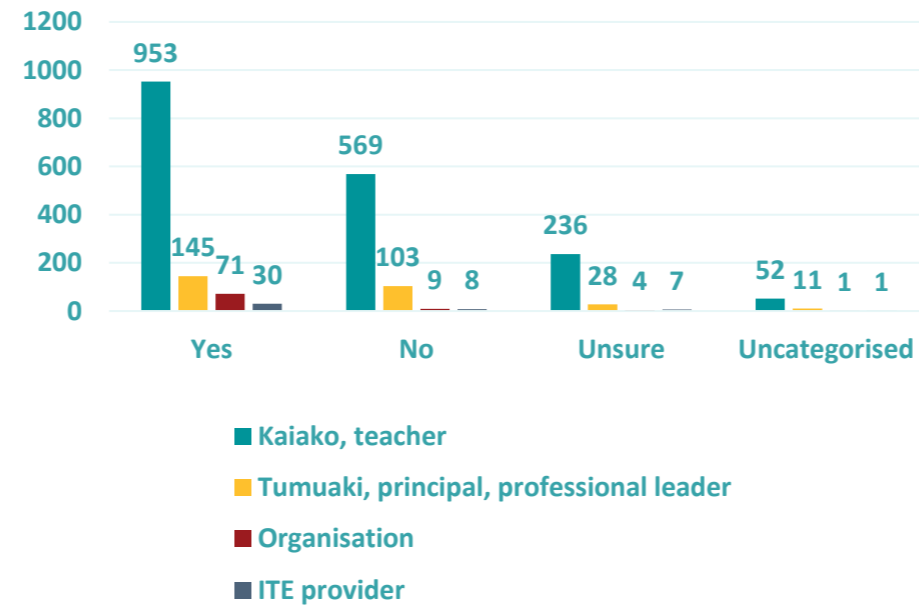
- Yes - 1199
- No - 689
- Unsure - 275
- Uncategorised comments – 65
- Total – 2,228

Respondents could add additional comments to 'Yes' 'No' or 'Unsure' which are those labelled as 'Uncategorised comments', which are included in the qualitative analysis.

Question 1 - Language medium setting



Question 1 - Respondent category



Qualitative responses – Question 1

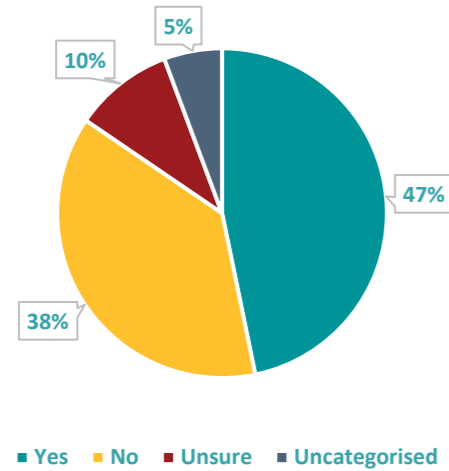
The most prevalent theme emerging from Question 1 related to concern about a lower level of ELC impacting on teaching (or study).

Table 1: Question 1 qualitative themes (survey)

Theme	Count
Supportive of proposed recommendation	3
Oppose proposed recommendation	1
Lower ELC level	2
Lower ELC level should apply to all	0
Concern about lower level of ELC impacting on teaching.	12
Remove ELC requirement	0
Also recognise schooling and tertiary study in other countries	0
Focus on increasing Pacific teacher numbers	0
Have a limited scope practising certificate	1
Recognise value of bilingualism/immersion	8
Keep current ELC Level 7	2
Provide additional ELC support package	1
Use alternative ELC assessment methods	0
Not only focusing on options for Pacific languages but all languages	6
A national language policy is needed for all languages.	2
Concern requirement for language tests discourages Pacific applicants	0
Other	6

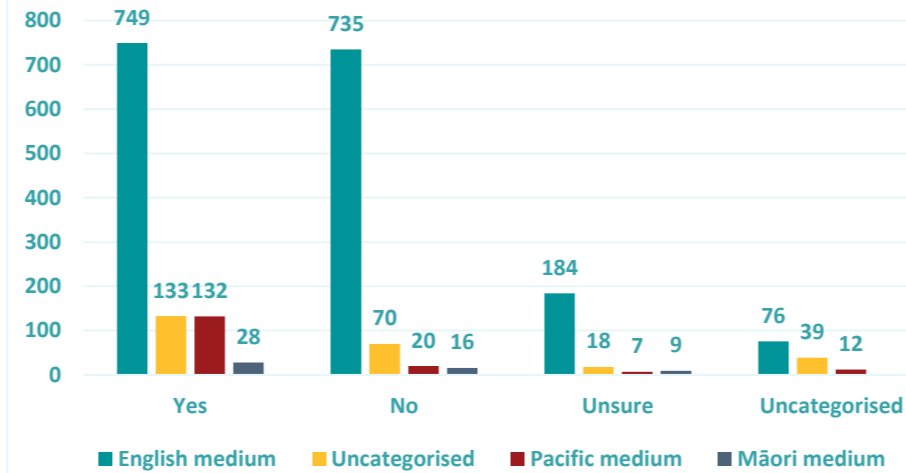
Q2. If the Teaching Council introduces a Pacific language competency pathway as Phase 2 of this review, do you agree that as an interim measure before this is implemented, the current English language requirement for entry into Initial Teacher Education (ITE) should be reduced to Level 6 for applicants who are speakers of indigenous Pacific languages?

Question 2 - Overall responses

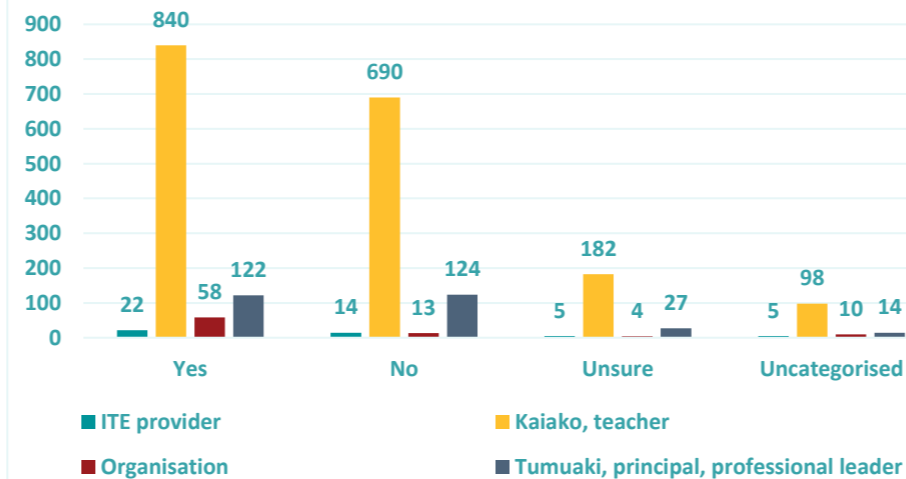


- Yes - 1042
- No - 841
- Unsure - 218
- Uncategorised comments - 127
- Total - 2,228

Question 2 - Language medium setting



Question 2 - Respondent category



Qualitative responses - Question 2

The most prevalent themes emerging from Question 2 were:

- Support for a lower level of ELC (14)
- A lower level of ELC should apply to all (15)

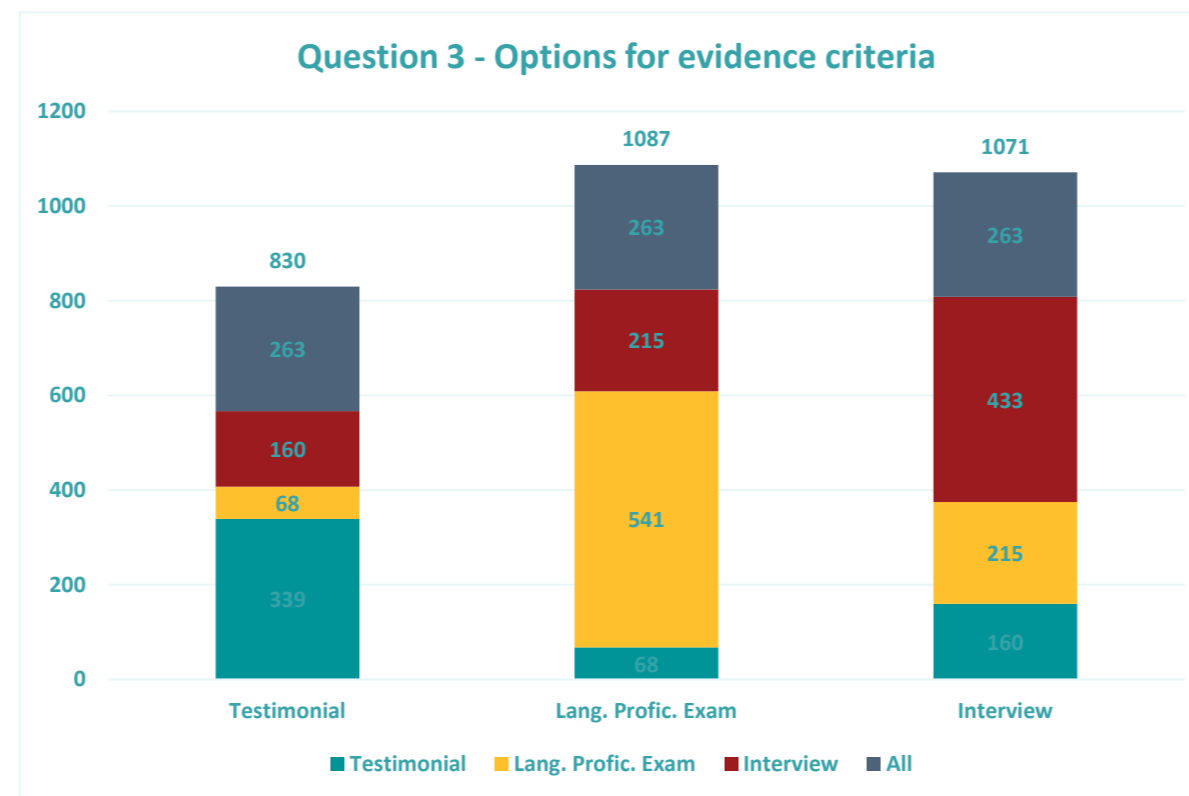
Table 2: Question 2 qualitative themes (survey)

Theme	Count
Supportive of proposed recommendation	0
Oppose proposed recommendation	0
Lower ELC level	14
Lower ELC level should apply to all	15
Concern about lower level of ELC impacting on teaching.	5
Remove ELC requirement	1
Also recognise schooling and tertiary study in other countries	1
Focus on increasing Pacific teacher numbers	0
Have a limited scope practising certificate	0
Recognise value of bilingual and immersion	0
Keep current ELC Level 7	3
Provide additional ELC support package	4
Use alternative ELC assessment methods	0
Not only focusing on options for Pacific languages but all languages	0
A national language policy is needed for all languages.	0
Concern requirement for language tests discourages Pacific applicants	3
Other	3

Q3. If the Teaching Council introduced a Pacific language competency pathway for entry into ITE, teacher registration, and LATs, what criteria for evidence of competence could be used?

- a. Testimonial (commenting on proficiency in listening, reading, writing, and speaking)
- b. Language proficiency examinations in the relevant language(s)
- c. Interview with recognised proficient speaker
- d. Other

Graph 5: Criteria options for evidence framework (multi choice question)



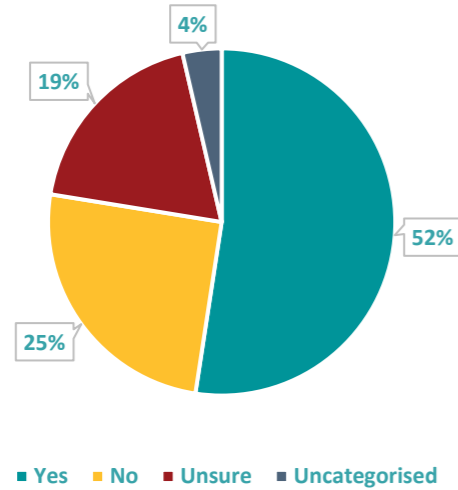
Note that this graph does not include suggestions for other approaches in the 'Other' category which are analysed by themes. We received 171 comments in the 'Other' category.

Qualitative responses – Question 3

- The qualitative responses for this question indicated that a range of options should be considered when developing an evidence framework.
- A small number of respondents raised concerns that introducing this pathway would contribute to a perceived reduction in the standard of English used in teaching.

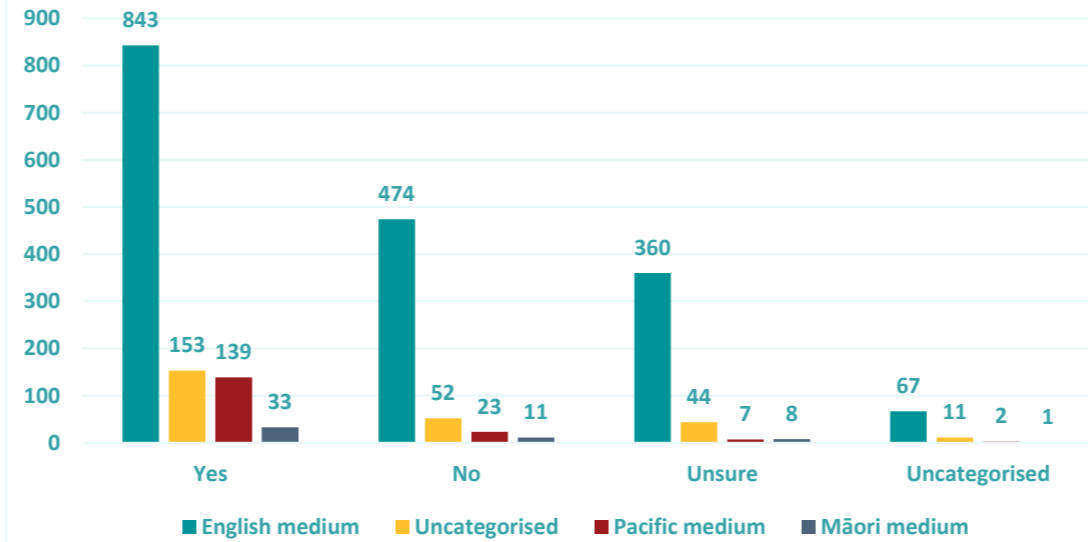
Q4. Do you agree that the Teaching Council should add schooling and tertiary study completed in Tokelau, Niue, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Rotuma, and Fiji or Kiribati to the evidence list for demonstrating English language competency?

Question 4 - Overall responses

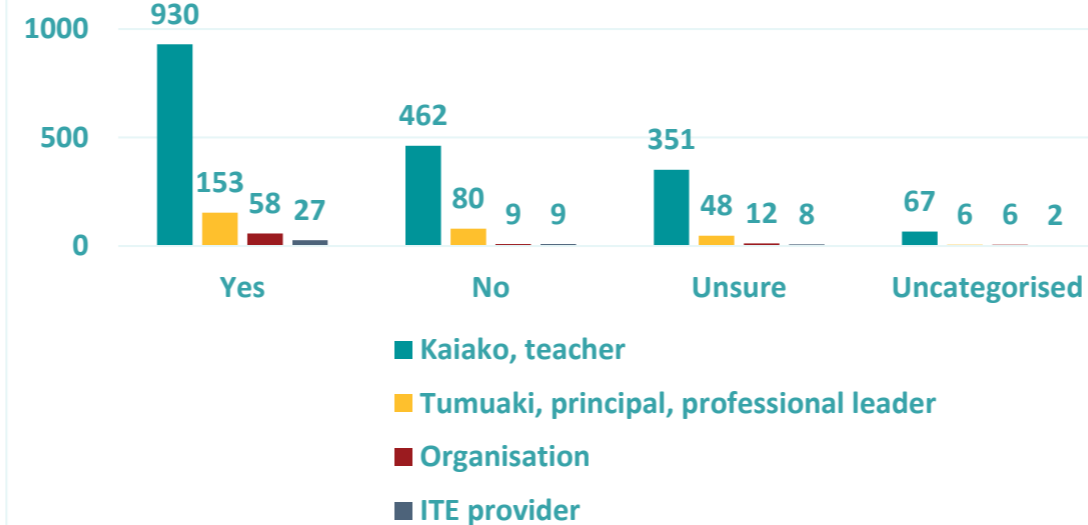


- Yes - 1,168
- No - 560
- Unsure - 419
- Uncategorised comments - 81
- Total - 2,228

Question 4 - Language medium setting



Question 4 - Respondent category



Qualitative responses – Question 4

- The most prevalent theme emerging from Question 4 was that evidence would be needed from each country, confirming the use of English as a medium of instruction or part of a structured bilingual approach.

Table 3: Question 4 qualitative responses (survey)

Theme	Sub-theme	Count
Support	Supportive comments	5
	Add other countries	5
	Need evidence from countries	30
	Option for additional support	1
	Should be all Pacific countries	1
Oppose	With a trial	1
	Alternate suggestion	1
	Doesn't demonstrate competence	1
	Need evidence from countries	2
	Should be all Pacific countries	1
	Should include other countries	1
	Unsure	Depends on English language level
Other	Depends on tertiary study	1
	Need evidence from countries	2
		3

Q5. Do you have other ideas about changes that could be made to the language competency policy to support pathways into teaching in Pacific bilingual and immersion settings?
Here we provided the opportunity for respondents to provide free-form comments or suggestions.

Note that some responses included more than one theme. We included an additional theme when coding this question “English should be the main language/teachers need to be competent in English”.

Qualitative responses

The most prevalent themes for this question included:

- English should be the main language and that teachers need to be competent in English.
- Concern about lower level of ELC impacting on teaching.
- Recognise value of bilingualism and immersion.

Table 4: Question 5 qualitative responses (survey)

Theme	Count
Supportive of proposed recommendation	3
Oppose proposed recommendation	4
Lower ELC level	0
Lower ELC level should apply to all	0
Concern about lower level of ELC impacting on teaching	22
Remove ELC requirement	0
Also recognise schooling and tertiary study in other countries	0
Focus on increasing Pacific teacher numbers	1
Have a limited scope practising certificate	2
Recognise value of bilingual and immersion	8
Keep current ELC Level 7	1
Provide additional ELC support package	1
Use alternative ELC assessment methods	1
Not only focusing on options for Pacific languages but all languages	0
A national language policy is needed for all languages.	0
Concern requirement for language tests discourages Pacific applicants	0

Individual submissions

- We also received 12 individual written submissions – these tended to raise specific issues rather than responding to all the questions. Note that some responses included more than one theme.

Table 5: Individual qualitative responses

Question	Theme*	Count
1	Supportive of proposed recommendation	3
	Not only focusing on options for Pacific languages but all languages	1
	Concern about lower level of ELC impacting on teaching.	1
	Use alternative ELC assessment methods	1
	Other	7
2	Supportive of proposed recommendation	1
	Concern requirement for language tests discourages Pacific applicants	1
3	Supportive of proposed recommendation	1
4	Supportive of proposed recommendation	2
	Other	1

Stakeholder and other organisation submissions

- We received nine submissions from stakeholder groups or other organisations.
- These submissions indicated broad support for the proposed recommendations and provided additional specific feedback (note that some responses included more than one theme).

Table 6: Group and stakeholder qualitative responses

Question	Theme*	Count
1	Supportive of proposed recommendation	9
	Other	1
2	Supportive of proposed recommendation	7
	Remove ELC requirement	1
	Provide additional ELC support package	1
	Other	4
3	Testimonial or exam	1
	Range of options	3
	Interview	1
4	Testimonial	1
	Supportive of proposed recommendation	6
5	Supportive of proposed recommendation	1
	Other	2
5	Supportive of proposed recommendation	1
	Remove ELC requirement for all	1
	Provide additional ELC support package	1

English should be the main language, and teachers need to be competent in English	136		Use alternative ELC assessment methods	2
Other	1		Other - Query about why some Pacific countries were selected and not others	1
			Other - Query about timeframe for phasing of implementation	1
			Other - Recommend using LAT process to help fill shortage in short term	2
			Other - Teaching Council undertakes a review of level of academic English required for teaching and applies this across language competency requirements	1
			Other - Investigate a pathway for New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) users to become registered teachers	1
			Other - Need to work closely with ITE providers to implement any changes	1

Appendix 1: References

- Ball, C.E., 2012 *The richness diversity brings: diverse languages and literacies in early childhood education* Master's thesis. Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand. <https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/server/api/core/bitstreams/1b6878ff-2369-4fd8-a068-6867cd6ef890/content>
- Education Review Office 2018 *Responding to Language Diversity in Auckland* Wellington, New Zealand. <https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/responding-to-language-diversity-in-auckland>
- Si'ilata R, 2018 "Multilingual Digital Translanguaging and Storying with New Zealand Pasifika Learners". In *Multilingual Computer Assisted Language Learning* J. Buendgens-Kosten and D. Elsner (eds) Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781788921497-014>
- Tapusoa, E, Podmore, V.N, Tuafuti, P, Taouma, J, Crichton, M. 2016 "The A'oga Fa'a Samoa: A Samoan-immersion centre" in *Teachers voyaging in plurilingual seas: Young children learning through more than one language*. NZCER, Wellington, New Zealand. <https://www.nzcer.org.nz/nzcerpress/teachers-voyaging-plurilingual-seas-young-children-learning-through-more-one-language>

Appendix 2: Glossary terms

Glossary Terms	
ELC	English Language Competency
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LAT	Limited Authority to Teach
PLC	Pacific Language Competency
LCP	Language Competency Policy



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