

Statement of Government Policy Relating to Teaching Council Functions

Pursuant to section 482(1) of the Education and Training Act 2020 (“Act”), I hereby issue to the Teaching Council of Aotearoa (“Council”) the following Statement of Government Policy in relation to its functions under section 479(1). Section 482(5) provides that the Council is required to ‘have regard to’ this Statement of Government Policy.

I have consulted with the Council prior to issuing this Statement as required under section 482(2).

Delivering a world-leading education system

The Coalition Government is putting ambition, achievement and outcomes at the heart of the education system so that every child can achieve to the best of their ability and gain skills and qualifications to support them into further study and employment.

We recognise that fundamental changes are required to turn around declining achievement statistics. To achieve this, we have set six education priorities:

- 1. Clearer curriculum:** Establishing a knowledge-rich curriculum grounded in the science of learning.
- 2. Better approach to literacy and numeracy:** Implementing evidence-based instruction in early literacy and mathematics.
- 3. Smarter assessment and reporting:** Implementing consistent modes of monitoring student progress and achievement.
- 4. Improved teacher training:** Developing the workforce of the future, including leadership development pathways.
- 5. Stronger learning support:** Targeting effective learning support interventions for students with additional needs.
- 6. Greater use of data:** Using data and evidence to drive consistent improvement in achievement.

We have set the ambitious target of reaching 80 per cent of Year 8 students achieving at or above the expected curriculum level for their age in reading, writing and maths by December 2030. These priorities are focused on lifting achievement and meeting this important target. These priorities are inclusive of those students learning through te reo Māori, so that they achieve at or above the expected curriculum level for their age in pānui, tuhituhi and pāngarau.

Improving teacher training, including leadership development pathways - Priority Four

The quality of teaching is the most important in-school factor influencing educational outcomes. We need to enable teachers to excel, consistently, in their practice, and to be supported to succeed. Our current settings do not provide the right level of specificity in expectations for teachers and leaders about the key components of highly effective teaching and learning, nor do they deliver consistent pre-and in-service training and development, or provide sufficient ongoing regulatory oversight of quality teaching.

Recent research highlights the variability in competence and confidence in classroom practice, pedagogy and content knowledge of new teachers¹. This aligns with recent concerning data and evidence about student achievement, but also impacts on workforce retention and teacher supply.

Our vision is to raise the quality and status of the teaching profession, attract and retain great teachers to address teacher supply issues and support all students to achieve success.

One of the ways we will do this is through the provision of high-quality training opportunities that consistently set teachers up to excel in the classroom, no matter where they train, what type of programme pathway they choose, or what school they end up working in as a provisionally or fully certificated teacher.

The Government has committed to a work programme to develop the teaching workforce of the future with five focus areas:

- Improve the quality and reduce variability in Initial Teacher Education.
- Deliver more accessible, quality, work-integrated learning opportunities in Initial Teacher Education.
- Improve the initial training pathway from Initial Teacher Education to full certification status.
- Support ongoing professional learning and career development.
- Develop more strategic and proactive ways to support the principal pathway.

Attraction and retention of quality teachers underpins all five priorities.

The Teaching Council currently has legislative responsibility for functions directly related to aspects of each of these priorities. To help deliver on its education priorities, this Statement focuses specifically on what the Government considers important in the Teaching Standards, Principal Standards, and ongoing regulatory oversight to meet system needs.

The Teaching Council also has legislative responsibility for functions related to initial teacher education (“ITE”). I intend to issue a separate SoGP relating to ITE in early 2025.

1. What we want from the Standards for the Teaching Profession | Ngā Paerewa (Teaching Standards)

The Teaching Standards underpin some of the key elements of the regulatory system enabling quality teaching outcomes. They are a critical lever to direct the focus of Initial Teacher Education (“ITE”) programmes, registration, and ongoing certification requirements and professional learning and development focus areas.

The Government wants to strengthen ITE to ensure the system consistently delivers confident, capable graduates into the workplace and sets teachers up for success early in their careers.

The Government considers this can be achieved through Teaching Standards that better align to our education priorities, as reflected in the eight policy priorities outlined below.

The Government acknowledges that in having regard to this Statement, the Teaching Council will need to ensure that the Teaching Standards remain appropriate for newly certificated and overseas teachers who will be required to meet the Teaching Standards with support. This recognises that these teachers have not yet had the opportunity to demonstrate they can independently meet the Teaching Standards.

The Government notes that the current Teaching Standards are applicable to all teachers across the early learning and schooling sectors. In any new or revised standards, the Government acknowledges that the Teaching Standards will need to remain responsive to the needs of teachers across all settings. This may be through clear and distinct callouts within the Teaching Standards where elements apply specifically to certain sectors, for example, the requirements of curricula and curriculum frameworks in early learning and compulsory schooling.

The Government also acknowledges that the Teaching Standards sit alongside the Code of Professional Responsibility (Our Code, Our Standards). Although this Statement does not directly cover the Code, it recognises that the two documents complement each other and that any changes to the Teaching Standards may need to be reflected in the Code.

Policy Priorities

Curriculum

Aligning the Teaching Standards with the Government’s priorities for curriculum will set clear expectations for effective teaching and give consistent direction to the sector regardless of what setting someone teaches in.

The Government’s view is this is best achieved by:

- placing strong emphasis on the importance of the national curricula² for teachers (where applicable³) as a foundational part of our education system;
- being clear about the responsibility of teachers to have a deep understanding of, and subject knowledge mastery in, the learning areas set out in the national curricula for schooling, and the ability to teach the relevant curriculum effectively in a way that supports every learner to succeed; and
- being clear about the responsibility of early learning teachers to understand and be able to effectively implement Te Whāriki – the curriculum framework for early childhood education

Pedagogy and Science of Learning

The Government is establishing a knowledge-rich curriculum for the schooling sector that is grounded in the science of learning. The updated curriculum will set out what to teach during each year of schooling (from years 0–13) and the evidence-based teaching and assessment practices to use to make sure every child develops the knowledge, skills, and competencies they need to progress and succeed.

The Government’s view is this focus is best achieved by:

- reflecting the expectations set out in the national curricula and underpinned by robust evidence and the science of learning – this will enable teachers to focus on designing creative and engaging teaching and learning activities to bring the curriculum to life through rich contextualisation to learners’ culture, backgrounds and interests;
- reflecting the importance of adaptive teaching to ensure that learning is designed in response to individual learner needs;
- reflecting the need for explicit and structured instruction to provide effective support for learners, particularly those who may be struggling – specific practices should also be used to challenge and deepen learning for all students, including gifted and highly proficient students; and
- for early learning, reflecting that the practice of teaching is in line with the expectations set out in the curriculum framework for early childhood education, including numeracy, literacy and important socio-emotional skills.

Literacy and mathematics | te reo matatini and pāngarau

To set teachers up to deliver the curriculum priorities outlined above, it is the Government’s view that the Teaching Standards should emphasise literacy and mathematics and te reo matatini and pāngarau requirements.

The Government’s view is this is best achieved by:

- focusing on core knowledge requirements in these areas for appropriate teachers;
- including a clear ongoing shared responsibility and commitment for all teachers to promote high standards of student capability, proficiency, and accuracy in literacy and mathematics, or pāngarau and te reo matatini, throughout their schooling journey whatever the teacher's specialist subject or learning level taught; and
- focusing on oral language and literacy, mathematics and social and emotional learning for early learning teachers.

Teaching for diverse learning needs

The Government recognises that children and young people have diverse learning needs. It has a priority focus on better responding to the needs of all learners and their whānau to ensure all students can progress and succeed and expects the Teaching Standards to reflect this focus.

The Government's view is this is best achieved by:

- reflecting an understanding of learners with learning support needs, including disabilities, and neuro-diverse learners, and being able to teach these learners effectively and appropriately;
- focusing on learners with high ability and an ability to use and evaluate distinct teaching approaches to engage and support them;
- reflecting an understanding of how to establish learning environments that support different physical, social and intellectual development needs; and
- reflecting an understanding of appropriate use of responsive and trauma informed teaching practices.

Behaviour and the learning environment

The Government considers that the Teaching Standards should reflect a clear focus on responding to behaviour effectively and supporting a positive learning environment.

The Government's view is this is best achieved by:

- having clear rules and routines for behaviour in the classroom or learning environment and taking responsibility for promoting positive behaviour;
- setting high expectations for positive behaviour and establishing a framework for effectively responding to challenging behaviour with a range of strategies, including preventative and restorative approaches that are appropriate to individual needs; and
- maintaining positive and respectful relationships with learners and their whānau, exercising appropriate authority and acting decisively where necessary.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The Government is committed to giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The Government considers that having high aspirations for all learners and delivering equitable progress and achievement outcomes for Māori students, should be a priority for all teachers that is reflected in the Teaching Standards.

The Government's view is this is best achieved by:

- including a commitment to te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, as part of teachers' commitment to achieving equitable educational outcomes for Māori. This may be demonstrated through a focus on:
 - having an appropriate level of proficiency of and pronunciation in te reo Māori, and common words and phrases that are suited to the relevant classroom or early learning environment, and
 - having an appropriate level of knowledge of tikanga Māori to support positive engagement with Māori learners and their whānau and communities, including engaging in local and national cultural events, for example Matariki.

Assessment and aromatawai

The Government believes that assessment for learning and aromatawai are vital to quality teaching and monitoring progress.

The Government's view is this is best achieved by:

- reflecting a focus on effective and regular use of high-quality assessment and aromatawai practices in alignment with required tools and relevant expectations set out in the national curricula – this includes both formative and

- summative forms of assessment and aromatawai;
- effective use of formative and summative student assessment data to support the consistent measurement of student progress and achievement outcomes;
 - reflective teaching practice that responds to trends and features of student achievement data to support teaching practice;
 - enabling teachers to be able to effectively utilise standardised assessment and aromatawai tools, resources, data and analysis, relevant to the age group they teach to;
 - regularly set and monitor student learning goals,
 - analyse and monitor the effectiveness of teaching programmes, including to identify students who need additional support, and/or extend highly proficient students by deepening and broadening their knowledge – with an aim to accelerate progress, and,
 - report to parents and whānau on student progress, strengths, and areas for development.

Relationships – professional and student

The Government considers relationships as critical to quality teaching and successful student outcomes.

The Government's view is that this is best achieved by:

- building professional and collaborative relationships with leaders, colleagues, staff and other professionals, for example with agencies and community groups where required to effectively meet the needs of students; and
- building positive relationships with students and their parents and whānau with a focus on learning and engagement, including, as outlined above, effective use of assessment to provide high quality reporting to parents and whānau.

2. What we want from Professional Standards for Principals (Principal Standards)

The Government has a vision for a high-quality and effective leadership system across all stages of the principal pathway. It is undertaking a work programme to achieve this vision with an initial focus on aspiring principals.

To support this vision, it is the Government's view that professional standards, that are used for the purpose of certification or registration for principals, are appropriate.

The Government's view is this is best achieved by developing Principal Standards that reflect the unique role and additional skills, knowledge, and responsibilities of a principal above that of a teacher. It is important this includes a focus on both the leadership and operational elements of the role, including:

- professional leadership, including of the curriculum to deliver effective teaching and learning;
- raising achievement, for all learners, including in bicultural, Māori medium, and Kaupapa Māori settings
- organisational responsibilities, including management systems and data analysis, finance, employment, health and safety, and strategic planning and reporting,
- relationships and networks, including managing teachers and other staff, promoting and supporting ongoing staff development, with other agencies, and with parents and the wider community.

In alignment with the Teaching Standards, the Government's view is that giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi would be best achieved through a focus on achieving equitable progress and achievement outcomes for Māori.

The Government is aware that there are existing 'Standards for Principals' that are set out in the relevant collective agreements, and any new Principal Standards, if developed, should avoid contradiction with other guidance principals are subject to. The Government therefore supports heavily drawing from existing professional standards included in collective agreements as the basis for any new Principal Standards.

3. What we want from the Teaching Council's broader regulatory levers to meet system needs

The Government considers that any newly developed Teaching and Principal Standards will be more effective if appropriate regulatory oversights and supports are in place.

The Government recognises that strengthening or increasing requirements and processes for certification and registration requires availability of resources such as PLD and increased monitoring, and that the Teaching Council does not have access to all of the levers required to do this work. The Teaching Council holds a key regulatory lever in ongoing quality teaching, training and development once teachers are in the workforce through its requirements for registration and certification. The Government is committed to working with the Council to deliver stronger regulatory system settings.

The Government considers it will be important to consider any potential impacts of new standards and any strengthened regulatory settings on those who seek employment as a teacher in New Zealand through all avenues

including overseas teachers and those on a Limited Authority to Teach.

Provisional to full certification

It is the Government's position that the transition from provisional to full certification could be strengthened to address the current inconsistency of support and mentoring experienced by beginning teachers, and this could be best achieved by:

- a. Considering requirements for quality induction, mentoring, and training, including a consistent assessment to determine if a teacher proceeds from provisional to full certification status.

3.1 Any new requirements would need to be developed in consultation with the profession, and the Ministry of Education, to ensure these requirements are fit for purpose and feasible to implement, taking into account system resource constraints.

Ongoing competency requirements

It is the Government's position that ongoing oversight of the teaching workforce could be strengthened, and this could be best achieved by:

- a. Considering strengthened system levers to determine if competency requirements are being met on an ongoing and consistent basis, recognising that the current system relies mostly on judgement by teachers' professional leaders.
- b. Considering whether specific PLD should be required for re-certification, beginning with early literacy and mathematics in line with the Government's curriculum priorities.

Relief teacher registration requirements

It is the Government's view that more fit-for-purpose regulatory settings for relief teachers could help to alleviate current supply pressures facing the workforce and this could be best achieved by:

- a. Considering alternative registration and certification requirements for relief teachers with the aim of improving flexibility and addressing relief teacher supply challenges.

This could include creating a specific relief teacher practicing certificate category or scope of practice with more relevant requirements than a full practicing certificate, with appropriate limitations.

Endnotes

- [1.](#) Ready, set, teach: How prepared and supported are new teachers? Education Review Office. April 2024. Fit for purpose: Teachers' own learning experiences and lessons about standardisation from the health sector. NZIER (2024). Pāngarau Mathematics and Tauanga Statistics in Aotearoa New Zealand Royal Society (2021).
- [2.](#) National Curricula refers to national curriculum statements and foundation curriculum policy statements issued under section 90 of the Act, which make up the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and the curriculum framework for early childhood education refers to Te Whāriki as the early childhood curriculum under section 23 of the Act.
- [3.](#) This recognises that some schools are not required to follow the New Zealand Curriculum or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa. For example, Charter schools and Private schools are required to develop and deliver a curriculum for teaching, learning and assessment that has regard to any statement of national education and learning priorities, and that meets tuition standards at least equivalent to those at State schools of the same year level.