



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Background

#### 1. What is the Professional Growth Cycle for principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders?

The professional growth cycle (PGC) is the learning-focused process that has replaced performance appraisal for the purposes of determining whether principals, tumuaki, teachers, kaiako and early childhood education (ECE) professional leaders meet the *Standards for the Teaching Profession or ngā Paerewa mō te Umanga Whakaakoranga*.

Using the elements as a guideline, principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders can develop a PGC that works for them in their setting. The elements are intended to structure the growth cycle, while leaving room to craft a process that is authentic to the professional learning focus. The design of the PGC centrally positions the distinctive contexts of learning environments, and as such, allows meaningful growth to occur for principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders.

#### 2. Where did the Professional Growth Cycle come from?

In August 2019, NZEI Te Riu Roa, PPTA Te Wehengarua and the Ministry of Education signed an Accord to give effect to building a high trust environment for the teaching profession and additionally to remove performance appraisal for teachers. A working group of Accord partners and cross-sector representatives was convened by the Teaching Council (the Council) to address the intention of the Accord for teachers. Subsequently, a second group was formed to consider the implications for principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders. As the Council is the professional body for teachers, the working groups included voices from ECE, primary and secondary, English medium and Māori medium settings.

#### 3. What is the purpose of the Professional Growth Cycle for principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders?

The PGC demonstrates trust in the profession to meet the high expectations they set for themselves. This would be done by removing unproductive compliance activities, reducing workload and enabling a focus on professional growth whilst upholding the legal obligation to ensure that everyone holding a practising certificate meets the Standards I Ngā Paerewa.

It focuses on the professional aspects of these roles. The PGC should enable principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders to focus on their growth and support them to effectively undertake the complexity of their role in their unique setting.

#### **4. What is the relationship of the Professional Growth Cycle to other performance review or employment requirements?**

With its strong learning focus, the PGC will most likely be designed independently from these other requirements. Alternatively, a single process that addresses the professional and employment aspects of the role remains an option.

The presiding board member or ECE employer alongside the principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader will decide on the degree to which the PGC can address other aspects of performance management or employment processes of the context, such as Licensing Criteria GMA7 for ECE professional leaders.

#### **5. What is the relationship of the Professional Growth Cycle to the Leadership Strategy and Rauhuia?**

The PGC fully reflects the intention of the Leadership Strategy and the Council's overarching Rauhuia approach to building leadership. This can be seen through the recognition of networked leadership (focus area 4) as a way to foster and share quality practices and leadership knowledge. The PGC is designed to promote personalised professional learning (focus area 3) that recognises the importance of continual learning throughout the career of principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders. The Leadership Strategy for the teaching profession of Aotearoa New Zealand (Leadership Strategy) identifies participation in professional networks and engagement in collaborations for the benefit of their communities and young people as markers of educational leadership success.

### **Timeframe**

#### **6. When does this need to start?**

Feedback from the profession alerted us to the varied circumstances and readiness to support this change. For this reason, there is a flexible timeframe for starting the professional growth cycle. It allows those who are ready to begin their PGC at the time of the announcement to do so and it also allows those who prefer more preparation time until 1 February 2023 to begin implementation.

### **Designing a Professional Growth Cycle**

#### **7. Who is involved when designing a Professional Growth Cycle?**

The principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader plans the PGC. It is expected that they will do this in consultation with others within their setting and beyond who understand the Standards I ngā Paerewa, can bring a valued contribution to the plan that supports meaningful professional reflection, conversations and growth. As part of the design, it is expected that the endorser would be identified. Element b also indicates the importance of sharing the plan with the presiding board member or ECE employer. This is in order to honour that partnership, ensure that there is a good understanding of the benefits to learners and support needed for successful implementation and valuable learning.

#### **8. What role does a presiding board member or ECE employer play in the design and implementation of a Professional Growth Cycle?**

This PGC plan should be shared with the presiding board member or ECE employer so that they can understand and be effectively involved in planning the support needed for the PGC. It should enable the principal, tumuaki and ECE professional leader to focus on their growth as leader of learning to effectively undertake the complexity of that role in their unique context.

The Council is keen to provide some professional learning opportunity with NZSTA for Board members or with employers in ECE contexts to support their understanding of the role they may play in this PGC.

## 9. Who else can be involved in my Professional Growth Cycle?

In the development phase of the PGC, other professionals (peers of the principal or ECE professional leader from other settings) who can support the learning within the cycle should be identified. Other people who can offer valuable input should also be involved. It can be whānau, family, kaumātua, iwi, hapū or community members. It could be your senior colleagues from your setting.

Other professionals from outside the setting could be identified for the specific expertise and experience that they have. This would be done in order to support an area of growth for the principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader or to provide mentoring or coaching as part of the cycle. This would not be a requirement.

## 10. What resources could be used?

A range of resources and frameworks such as the Educational Leadership Capability Framework or Tū Rangatira are available to inform the design and implementation of the professional growth of the principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader. As the PGC is implemented across settings, it is anticipated that a list of references that are recommended as valuable to the design process will be created using information from the profession and made available.

## Networks

### 11. What is the purpose of the professional network?

The PGC encourages teachers and kaiako to learn, share new knowledge and grow practice through collaborations with peers. In the same way, the principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader is strongly encouraged to participate within a learning network of peers (locally or using distance technologies). These networks may already exist or could be created specifically for the PGC in the interests of improved professional practices and enhanced outcomes for learners. Within such a group, participants could:

- engage in collegial professional conversation where ideas can be tested and critique offered,
- collaborate in thinking, learning, generating new understandings as part of using the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* and
- support innovation.

The principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader would be reciprocating in support of the learning of their network peers.

### 12. What if I do not have a network?

During 2022, the Council will be exploring ways people can be supported to access or form networks for this purpose. We will also continue conversations about the PGC with the profession using the experience and knowledge they have of successful professional learning networks to design guidance on how these can be set up and maintained for the PGC.

### 13. Can we have more than one network?

A principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader may have several networks that can be used at various times to support their professional growth. Their setting may be part of a Kāhui Ako or a network of learning that they have created with colleagues. From the survey feedback, we learned that there are a variety of networks that are seen as suitable for PGC work. However, when creating a network for this purpose, it is important to realise that it does not need to be formalised, facilitated or locally based (distance technologies provide opportunities for remote networking).

## Feedback

### **14. Who gives feedback? How do we ensure that as network colleagues we can give, receive and use the feedback for its maximum advantage?**

It is envisaged that peers within the principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader's network would provide feedback as part of their on-going interaction and collaboration. Similarly, feedback could come from other professionals with specific expertise. The range of feedback/feedforward sources that are 'naturally' available to the leader should be used in the PGC. The sources could include parents, whānau, hapū, iwi or the presiding board member or ECE employer.

Feedback to the Council about the PGC has indicated that this will be an area of development for some people as they discuss within their networks how to gain the benefits of feedback. Throughout 2022, the Council will continue conversations with the profession and facilitate opportunities for focusing on this aspect of learning in a network as part of PGC.

## Endorsement

### **15. Who is the endorser? How do they know enough about my practice to endorse me? What evidence do they need to collect?**

An endorser must hold a Tūturu Full (Category One) practising certificate and is expected to come from within the network that is used as part of the PGC. It is expected that the decision as to who will be the endorser will be made by the principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leaders with the presiding board member or the ECE employer.

The endorsement decision is not intended to be a summative assessment. Rather, it is a professional judgment about the PGC participation and the way the principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader's practice meets the Standards or ngā Paerewa.

We do not envisage that the endorser must visit the school, centre or service. Instead, having collaborated within the network and engaging in evidence-based conversation, they would be able to make the decision about the practising certificate renewal. It is not expected that the endorser would 'collect evidence'; however, they would have been involved in conversations throughout the cycle that gave them the confidence that the colleague meets the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* and has participated in a PGC. This can be thought of as knowing the practice and the 'naturally occurring evidence' used by their teachers or leadership team members in their own context.

### **16. Would endorsement be reciprocal between two principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders?**

As the PGC is designed to promote collaboration and learning between networks of principals, tumuaki and ECE professional learners, it is not intended that the endorsement process would involve only two people each endorsing the other.

## 17. Why do we need to have annual endorsement when practising certificates are renewed triennially?

Any teacher holding a Tūturu Full (Category One) practising certificate is expected to be demonstrating the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* in an on-going manner, as they are holistic descriptions of high quality teaching. Confirmation of this is one aspect of the annual endorsement. Confirmation of annual participation in the PGC as a replacement for appraisal is also expected (refer element e.). This confirmation is referred to here as annual endorsement.

For all teachers who are seeking endorsement as part of their practising certificate renewal, having the annual confirmation statements (which replace the lengthy summary report previously required by the Council in appraisal) gives them and their endorser the confidence that they can make the endorsement based on the previous three years. These statements are particularly important when endorsers change, often as a result of people changing their employment place or role within the three year cycle.

## 18. What is an endorser going to be endorsing annually?

Annual endorsement for a colleague in your network involves providing a statement confirming that they:

- have participated in a PGC
- meet the Standards | ngā Paerewa for Tūturu Full (Category One) or likely to meet for Pūmau Full (Category Two).

## 19. What am I going to be endorsing for the renewal of the practising certificate triennially?

Endorsement for the renewal of a practising certificate includes confirmation that the applicant:

- has participated in a Professional Growth Cycle annually
- meets the Standards | ngā Paerewa for Tūturu Full (Category One) or likely to meet for Pūmau Full (Category Two)
- has developed and practised te reo me ngā tikanga Māori
- undertaken satisfactory professional learning and development (this is met through the engagement in a PGC).

## 20. What if a network colleague is not a suitable option for endorsement in any year?

If endorsement by a professional learning network colleague is not suitable in any year, the following options may be selected:

- the presiding board member or ECE employer
- an external person with a Tūturu Full (Category One) practising certificate.

## **21. Why has this changed from past practices where we have been able to use a consultant, our presiding board member or ECE employer?**

The PGC for teachers, kaiako, principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders places increased focus on the use of the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* in each context. It is unusual for a presiding board member or an employer to hold a Tūturu Full (Category One) practising certificate. Without that practising certificate, there is no guarantee of current knowledge and understanding of what the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* look like. This places an unrealistic expectation on many presiding board members or ECE employers.

The use of professional networks to encourage the sharing of professional knowledge and learning across settings makes endorsement conversation amongst colleagues an increasingly natural and valuable practice. It is believed that as principals, tumuaki and ECE professional leaders know what the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* look like in use within their setting, that engaging in conversation about this topic with colleagues from other settings will enhance knowledge sharing.

The use of consultants has been believed in some instances to be a Council expectation and resulted in expenditure that has been unnecessary and also highlighted inequities. This change does not preclude the involvement of consultants as experts to engage within the PGC to support a learning focus, but they would not be expected to be an endorser.

## **22. Will the Council continue to explore the option of endorsement by someone holding a Pūmau Full (Category two) Practising Certificate?**

The Council has been asked if they will consider the option of an endorsement being undertaken by someone who holds a Pūmau Full (Category Two) practising certificate in some circumstances. This is an area that we wish to explore further with the profession using an evidence based approach over the upcoming year, to understand any advantages that this may bring to the principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader and their PGC.

## **23. If my colleague has concerns about my practice, what do they do?**

If the endorser has concerns about the practice of the principal, tumuaki or ECE professional leader's practice as meeting the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa*, they will discuss that with them. The Endorser Guideline (section to be added) will outline any subsequent steps in the process for this occurrence.

## **24. Do I need to be going to more courses or conferences?**

The PGC recognises that professional learning comes from formal and informal experiences with learners, teacher colleagues and others. Decisions about the kinds of professional learning experiences engaged in that are additional to the PGC will be made when the principal, tumuaki and ECE professional leader plan with the presiding board member or ECE employer the support they receive for their learning.

## **25. Is it necessary to record what the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* look like in these roles?**

The PGC for teachers and kaiako (element a.) ensures that the principal, tumuaki or professional leader works with teachers to know what these look like in their unique context. This process of interpreting the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* is an act of trust in the profession, recognising that a range of contextual factors influence what quality practice looks like in each learning environment.

Moreover, it is understood that for the leader of learning these will look different. Being able to talk about this to colleagues and in reference to professional growth will make endorsement decisions transparent. There is no expectation that this must be recorded in addition to what is recorded for teachers (often using a setting wide quality practice template or similar document).