Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions

What are the Satisfactory Teacher Requirements?

The New Zealand Teachers Council in this policy lists the 'dimensions' of teaching. Satisfactory performance in each of these dimensions (a minimum level of acceptability) is all that the Council requires for its purposes under the Education Act. However learning centres may use these dimensions in a variety of ways to help them reflect the special character of their centre and the standards they desire from teachers.

- professional knowledge
- professional practice
- professional relationships
- professional leadership

Introductory Statement

Any teacher must show that acceptable learning occurs for all learners under their responsibility, within an environment that affirms the bicultural and multicultural nature of New Zealand. This is most likely to happen if the teacher:

- demonstrates knowledge of teaching and learning (including Maori and tauiwi values), based on teacher education programmes and ongoing study, research, reflection and practice; and
- promotes learning through good practice; and
- works by maintaining relationships of trust, co-operation and respect for learners, whanau, parents and colleagues; and
- demonstrates educational leadership relevant to the level of experience or responsibility being carried as a teacher or professional leader.

The dimensions derived from this are generic so they can be applied to teachers in a variety of teaching settings ranging from kura kaupapa schools and immersion classes to private church schools and community learning centres, and at levels in the general education system ranging from early childhood centres to universities and wananga. It is the responsibility of individual learning centres, to specify skills, understandings, behaviours and curriculum knowledge, relevant to the particular teaching position.

Interwoven with the dimensions of teaching in New Zealand is a fundamental requirement for the profession to respond to the increasing drive for quality Maori education. This involves affirmation of te reo me ona tikanga Maori within a holistic learning environment; empowering Maori to participate in the education of their whanau; and providing all Maori with access to quality learning.
The Dimensions of Being a Teacher in New Zealand

Note: Normally a teacher must demonstrate satisfactory achievement of the dimensions through the medium of an official language of New Zealand (Maori or English). There will be some multicultural or language teaching situations where some of the dimensions will be demonstrated in other languages.

Professional Knowledge

This is evident in the planning and preparation that goes into the teaching/learning programme and the willingness and commitment of the teacher to extend knowledge of content and theory throughout his or her career to provide quality activities and programmes.

A satisfactory teacher demonstrates knowledge of:

- Current curricula the subjects being taught and current learning theory*.
- The Treaty of Waitangi, te reo and tikanga Maori.
- The characteristics and progress of their students.
- Appropriate teaching objectives.
- Appropriate technology and resources.
- Appropriate learning activities, programmes and assessment.

(* In state schools this will be the N.Z. Curriculum requirements; in early childhood centres -Te Whariki and Desirable Objectives and Practices)

Professional Practice

This is demonstrated by the environment for learning established and maintained by the teacher and the actual teaching processes used every day.

The Learning Environment

A satisfactory teacher in practice:

- Creates an environment of respect and understanding.
- Establishes high expectations which value and promote learning,
- Manages student learning processes.
- Manages student behaviour positively.
- Establishes a safe physical and emotional environment.

Teaching

A satisfactory teacher in practice:

- Communicates clearly and accurately in either or both of the official languages of N.Z..
- Uses a range of teaching approaches.
- Engages students in learning.
- Provides feedback to students and assesses learning.
- Demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness.

**Professional Relationships**

These are demonstrated by the positive way in which the teacher sees his or her co-operative role in the learning centre, shares information with colleagues, families, whanau and caregivers, and respects the position of trust and confidentiality he or she has.

A satisfactory teacher in developing relationships:

- Reflects on teaching with a view to improvement.
- Maintains accurate records.
- Communicates with families, whanau and caregivers.
- Contributes to the life of the learning centre.
- Develops professionally.
- Maintains confidentiality, trust and respect.

**Professional Leadership**

All teachers display leadership in some aspects of their work. The context in which leadership is displayed will vary according to the position. A teacher with senior responsibilities will have developed all the dimensions of being a teacher to high levels and will be respected for his or her educational expertise and innovation.

A satisfactory teacher in showing leadership:

- Demonstrates flexibility and adaptability.
- Focuses on teaching and learning.
- Leads and supports other teachers.
- Displays ethical behaviour and responsibility*.
- Recognises and supports diversity among groups and individuals.
- Encourages others and participates in professional development.
- Manages resources safely and effectively.

(* Ethical behaviour may be determined by a specific code covering teachers in the learning centre)

Individual learning centres will establish their own specific standards to determine whether a teacher meets the above dimensions.