

Frequently asked questions (for teachers)

1. Why did the Teaching Council propose increasing the fees paid by teachers for registration / certification?

Since its establishment on 1 July 2015, the Teaching Council has received a significant amount of establishment and transition funding from government on the understanding that the organisation was required to be independently financially sustainable from 1 July 2020.

The current three-yearly fee of \$220.80 paid by New Zealand teachers for registration / certification, or renewal of a practising certificate, was last increased in 2010, despite the significant expansion of the functions of the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand since 1 July 2015.

With the end of government transition funding on 30 June 2020, and current teacher fees only covering around 40% of the expenditure required to carry out its functions, the Teaching Council was concerned that it would be unable to deliver its statutory obligations with the current fee settings beyond June 2020.

2. Did you consult the teaching profession on changes to the fees they pay?

An extensive consultation process was undertaken between 28 January 2020 and 13 March 2020. Teachers and other affected parties were encouraged to provide feedback via an online survey that sought their views on several propositions including:

- Whether teachers applying for Registration and their first three-year practising certificate should pay a lower fee.
- Whether overseas teachers should pay a higher fee for Registration and their first Provisional Practising Certificate to reflect the additional costs involved in evaluating their applications.
- Whether Provisionally certificated teachers or teachers certificated 'Subject to Confirmation' should pay a higher fee when applying for full certification to reflect the additional costs involved in evaluating those applications.
- Whether the Late Fee for a teacher to renew their practising certificate after the expiry date of their current certificate should increase from \$50 to \$100.
- Whether Fee Rebates should discontinue for teachers who move from provisional certification to full certification.
- Whether they preferred proposed fees Option One, fees Option Two, or had no preference: They were also invited to submit their own suggestions through the comments field in the online feedback survey



I am...	What you currently pay	What's proposed you would pay under Option 1	What's proposed you would pay under Option 2
A Registered teacher renewing my current practising certificate:	\$220.80 for 3 years	\$470 for 3 years which includes a Professional Responsibility Levy of \$135	\$500 for 3 years which includes a Professional Responsibility Levy of \$135
A graduate from an approved New Zealand Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme applying for Registration and a Provisional Practising Certificate:	\$220.80 for 3 years	\$470 for 3 years which includes a Professional Responsibility Levy of \$135	\$300 for 3 years which includes a Professional Responsibility Levy of \$135

Beginning teachers and experienced teachers should pay the same amount.

Beginning teachers should pay a lower amount to support their entry into the teaching profession.

3. How was the consultation undertaken and how many responses were received?

Consultation with teachers took place over 25 days from 28 January 2020 to 5pm on 21 February 2020, with a further extension to 5pm on Friday 13 March for Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA) members and others where requested.

An email template was sent to 105,394 teachers and professional leaders using the email addresses held by the Teaching Council for registration/certification. The email template included information on the rationale for the proposed increase in fees, an outline of the proposed options for registered teachers renewing their practising certificates and for beginning teachers applying for registration and a provisional practising certificate, together with a request to provide feedback via the online feedback survey by 21 February 2020.

At the same time that the email was sent to teachers, the Teaching Council website was updated to publish all the key information and documents in relation to fees consultation (<https://www.teachingcouncil.nz/content/fees-consultation>), and provided an 8-page FAQ document to answer some common questions around the fees proposals, and 4 short Q&A videos. During the period 28 January to 21 February 2020 the fees consultation page(s) on the Teaching Council website had 12,842-page views.

The Teaching Council 'Matatū' e-newsletter sent to subscribers on 18 February 2020 included extensive information on the fees consultation (including FAQ's, Q&A videos, media articles, key information on the proposals, and information on how to provide feedback before the 21 February deadline) and was viewed or opened by 31,417 people.

A reminder email was sent to those teachers and professional leaders who had not identifiably already completed the survey on Wednesday 19 February 2020.

Of the 105,394 emails sent to teachers and professional leaders, analytics show that 103,774 were successfully delivered and that the email was opened by 41,572 people. 97,141 teachers and professional leaders received the reminder email, and 41,744 opened it.

When the consultation period closed at 5pm on 21 February 2020, over 22,000 submissions had been received via the online feedback survey. By the end of the extension period to 5pm on 13 March, over 24,000 submissions had been received.



4. What did teachers tell you about the proposals to increase fees?

The Teaching Council received over 24,000 responses to its online feedback survey which sought their views on several propositions including:

- a. Whether teachers applying for Registration and their first three-year practising certificate should pay a lower fee. 60% of respondents agreed.
- b. Whether overseas teachers should pay a higher fee for Registration and their first Provisional Practising Certificate to reflect the additional costs involved in evaluating their applications. 60% of respondents agreed.
- c. Whether Provisionally certificated teachers or teachers certificated 'Subject to Confirmation' should pay a higher fee when applying for full certification to reflect the additional costs involved in evaluating those applications. 76% of respondents disagreed.
- d. Whether the Late Fee for a teacher to renew their practising certificate after the expiry date of their current certificate should increase from \$50 to \$100. 69% of respondents disagreed.
- e. Whether Fee Rebates should discontinue for teachers who move from provisional certification to full certification. 50% of respondents disagreed.
- f. Whether they preferred fees Option One, fees Option Two, or had no preference. 33% of respondents preferred Option One, 35% Option Two, and 32% expressed no preference.

In addition to the quantitative feedback from the survey, the Teaching Council engaged specialist research company PublicVoice to undertake a thematic analysis of all qualitative feedback received via the online feedback survey, 33 written submissions and 258 email submissions.

The key concerns expressed by teachers in the consultation were as follows:

- Implementation of any increase should be delayed as the notice to teachers was too short.
- Fee increases should be introduced more moderately over time.
- Disproportionate impact of proposed increases on beginning teachers, part-time/relief teachers, ECE teachers.
- Lack of value from / cost of current Teaching Council services should be addressed before any increases are proposed.
- Proposed increases likely to exacerbate the issues with recruiting and retaining quality teachers in particular relievers and teachers at the end of their career.
- Practising certificate fees should be borne by employers or government, not teachers.
- Conduct and competence processes and the Leadership Centre should be funded by government, not by teachers.
- Teachers want annual fees in place of having to pay a larger lump sum every three years.



5. Will fees increase and if so, by how much?

Yes. Fees will increase for teachers applying for registration / certification or renewing a practising certificate from 1 February 2021. The fee to renew a practising certificate will increase from \$220.80 for 3-years to \$157 for one year from this time.

Other fees will also increase as follows:

For:	New fee:
Applicants who are registered and apply to renew a practising certificate (this applies to any teacher renewing a current Practising Certificate).	\$157 for one year
Applicants who are graduates from an approved New Zealand initial teacher education programme and who apply for Kaiako Whai Rēhitanga Teacher Registration and a Tiwhikete Whakaakoranga Tōmua Provisional Practising Certificate.	\$157 for one year
Applicants who are overseas training teachers and who apply for Kaiako Whai Rēhitanga Teacher Registration and a Tiwhikete Whakaakoranga Tōmua Provisional Practising Certificate (this includes applications made under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement (TTMRA)).	\$257 for one year
Applicants who are provisionally certificated or certificated 'Subject to Confirmation' / Tiwhikete Whakaakoranga Pūmau Full Practising Certificate (Category Two) teachers and who now apply for Tiwhikete Whakaakoranga Tūturu Full Practising Certificate (Category One).	\$257 for one year
Additional Fee (Late Fee) for applicants who lodge their renewal applications after the expiry date of their current practising certificate.	\$100
Applicants who apply for a Tūranga Whakaako Whai-herenga Limited Authority to Teach (LAT).	\$157 for one year
Applicants who are Registered teachers who have not completed any teaching in New Zealand in the last 5 years and who apply for a Returning to Teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand Practising Certificate.	\$157 for one year
Applicants who are graduates from an approved New Zealand initial teacher education programme and who apply for Kaiako Whai Rēhitanga Teacher Registration only.	\$157



6. With so much opposition to an increase in fees, why is the Teaching Council going ahead and increasing its fees?

The governing Council of the Teaching Council carefully considered the feedback and alternate proposals that were provided by teachers and professional leaders during the consultation process with an open mind, and reached the following conclusions regarding these:

1. No fees increase	Without further government funding that can be specifically utilised to subsidise existing fees and/or a fees increase, the Teaching Council would become insolvent before the end of FY20/21 based on Council's financial modelling.
2. Defer fee increase	Based on current financial forecasts, the Teaching Council, using existing cash reserves would likely be able to fund the cost of deferring any fees increase to 1 February 2021.
3. Stage increase over a longer time period / in smaller increments	Without further government funding that can be specifically utilised to subsidise existing fees and/or a fees increase, the Teaching Council would become insolvent before the end of FY21/22 based on Council's financial modelling.
4. Lower fees for beginning and/or part-time/relief, and/or ECE teachers	Without further government funding that can be specifically utilised to subsidise existing fees and/or a fees increase, the Teaching Council either would become insolvent before the end of FY21/22 or other teachers would be required to subsidise those lower paid teachers by paying substantially more than proposed in the consultation based on Council's financial modelling.
5. Reduce costs / increase value before any increase considered	The Teaching Council continues to improve its operations to reduce costs, improve service levels to teachers, and offer services of value to the teaching profession. However, without further government funding that can be specifically utilised to subsidise existing fees and/or a fees increase, the Teaching Council is concerned that it would be unable to deliver all its statutory functions / maintain current service levels.
6. Will have negative impact on overall size of workforce	There are many factors which impact on teacher supply, with fees being just one consideration.
7. Practising Certificate fees paid by employer	Outside the scope of the Council's statutory powers to require others to pay on behalf of teachers.
8. Conduct and competence process (part)-funded by government	Outside the scope of the Council's statutory powers to require others to pay on behalf of teachers.
9. Annual fees instead of a large lump sum every three years	Moving to annualised fees would address many of the concerns expressed by teachers around the size of the increase proposed and the disproportionate impact on groups of lower paid teachers. Without further government funding that can be utilised to support a transition to annual certification and/or a fees increase, the Teaching Council would become insolvent before the end of FY20/21 based on Council's financial modelling.



7. In increasing its fees, has the Teaching Council taken into account the impact of COVID-19 on teachers?

Yes. Before reaching a final decision to increase fees, the Teaching Council made a case to the Minister to provide additional funding to recognise the extraordinary circumstances in which teachers, along with all New Zealanders, now face in dealing with COVID-19.

The Teaching Council are grateful to Minister Hipkins and the government for the \$16.5 million in additional funding given for the purpose of supporting the Teaching Council transition to annual certification and fees so teachers can pay a smaller fee each year compared with a bigger lump sum every three years.

In addition, the Teaching Council has committed to using nearly \$5 million of its own reserves to defer the date of increased fees from 1 July 2020 to 1 February 2021, in recognition of the extraordinary circumstances teachers now face.

8. I assume most teachers did not want a fee increase; did you listen to any of the feedback?

The Council got a lot of feedback from the profession. It was important that this process acknowledged and listened to that feedback and below are the key themes from the feedback:

- The scale of increases proposed is unreasonable and unfair
- Implementation of any increase should be delayed as the notice period for teachers is too short
- Fee increases should be introduced more moderately over a longer period of time
- Disproportionate impact of increases on groups of lower paid teachers including beginning teachers, part-time/relief teachers, ECE teachers
- Lack of value from / cost of current Teaching Council services should be addressed before any increases are proposed
- Proposed increases likely to exacerbate the issues with recruiting and retaining sufficient quality teachers
- Practising certificate fees should be borne by employers or government, not teachers
- Conduct and competence processes and the Leadership Centre should be funded by government, not by teachers

The additional government funding announced in the 2020-21 budget allows the Teaching Council to move to annual certification, and we think this approach best addresses many of the concerns raised by teachers in their feedback.

9. So are you changing anything from your original proposals to increase fees?

The council listened to the feedback and made changes to reflect that feedback including:

- Delaying the increase until 1 February 2021, this is a seven-month delay, giving teachers more time to prepare for the change
- Moving to annual certification, which will allow teachers to pay smaller amounts each year compared to a bigger lump sum every three years



10. But no one wanted this!

During the proposed fees increase consultation period we received a lot of well thought out, measured, polite yet still passionate feedback from teachers, it was a response worthy of their status as respected teachers and leaders.

11. When will it go up again?

We signalled in the consultation that we would need to consider annual increases in fees to reflect CPI-related cost increases (if any). This approach would avoid the situation we are all facing now where there have been no increases since 2010.

However, to provide teachers with certainty we are committing to no further increases in fees considered before 1 July 2022.

12. Why aren't fees lower for beginning teachers?

Feedback from the online survey shows strong support for the proposition that beginning teachers should pay lower fees, but weak support for the idea that other teachers should pay more as a result.

In setting new fees for registration, certification and other fees, Council has considered the desire to encourage new teachers into the profession alongside the need to ensure fees are fair and equitable and reflect the actual costs involved.

Council has decided to set registration / certification fees for all teachers at the same level on the grounds that there is no clear rationale for having the cost of registration / certification of one group of teachers substantially subsidised by another.

13. What about lower fees for teachers who are paid less, like part-timers and relief teachers?

The same considerations applied to beginning teachers have been applied to feedback that other groups of generally lower paid teachers including part-time / relief teachers, and early childhood teachers should pay lower fees - that this would require an unreasonable level of cross-subsidisation from other teachers.

14. Why are overseas teachers paying more?

In setting new fees for registration, certification and other fees, Council has considered the desire to encourage overseas teachers into the teaching profession in New Zealand alongside the need to ensure fees are fair and equitable and reflect the actual costs involved. 60% of respondents to the online feedback survey agreed with the statement that "Overseas teachers should pay a higher fee for Registration and their first Provisional Practising Certificate to reflect the additional costs involved in evaluating their applications". Council has decided to increase registration / certification fees for overseas teachers to \$257 to reflect the additional costs involved in processing these applications.

15. What about provisionally certificated teachers what will they pay to move to full?

In setting new fees for registration, certification and other fees, Council has considered the desire to encourage career progression alongside the need to ensure fees are fair and equitable and reflect the actual costs involved. Council has decided to increase the fee for teachers moving from provisional or subject to confirmation to full certification to \$257 to reflect the additional costs involved in processing these applications.



16. Will you be increasing the late fee?

In setting new fees for registration, certification and other fees, Council has considered its obligation to ensure that all teachers comply with the law in that they must have a current practising certificate if employed by a School, Kura or centre.

Council has decided to increase the late fee to \$100 from 1 February 2021 to incentivise teachers to take timely action to ensure they remain in full compliance with the law and have invested a significant amount in a new online system (Hapori Matatū) to make it easier for teachers to do so.

17. What will happen to fee rebates?

Council has decided to discontinue the fees rebate on the grounds that, it was a transitional arrangement only and was not intended to continue on an indefinite basis; a significant number of teachers who have been offered the rebate have not uplifted it and because the administrative cost of offering the rebate outweighs the potential benefit to any individual teacher whose circumstances may qualify for the offer under the current practice.

18. Which of the two options proposed for fees was preferred?

There was no clear preference for either of the two proposed options for fees with 33% of respondents to the online feedback survey preferring Option One, 35% preferring Option Two, and 32% expressing no preference.

Analysis of the qualitative feedback however showed a significant majority of all respondents, which represent around 23% of all teachers or professional leaders holding a practising certificate opposed or strongly opposed an(y) increase in fees.

19. How many teachers responded to the survey?

We sent an email with information outlining proposals for fees increases and the rationale to 105,394 teachers and professional leaders on our database. Here's some more information:

- 103,774 or 98.5% of those emails were successfully delivered.
- 41,572 or 40% of recipients opened the email.
- 19,876 or 82% complete responses and 4,455 or 18% partial responses to the online feedback survey were received during the consultation period.
- Responses to the online feedback survey were received from New Zealand (99%) and 45 other countries (1%).



20. Where were most of the respondents located?

Within New Zealand, responses to the online feedback survey were received from 300 discrete locations including:

- Auckland (37%)
- Wellington (8%)
- Christchurch (12%)
- Hamilton (5%)
- Tauranga (4%)
- Dunedin (3%)
- Palmerston North (3%)
- New Plymouth (2%)
- Nelson (1%)

21. Who responded?

It is good to know who responded to the survey! Here is that information in more detail:

- 17,981 or 83% of all respondents to the online feedback survey identified themselves as teachers, while a further 2,726 or 13% identified themselves as professional leaders.
- 9,176 or 39% of respondents to the online feedback survey identified themselves as working in the secondary sector, 7,982 or 34% identified themselves as working in the primary sector, and 3,676 or 16% identified themselves as working in the Early Childhood sector (n=23,645)
- 33 written submissions were received during the consultation period
- 258 emails to feedback@teachingcouncil.nz were received during the consultation period

