



**New Zealand
Teachers Council**

Te Pouherenga Kaiako o Aotearoa

**LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR THOSE TEACHING IN
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND**

POLICY STATEMENT

Ū ki te ako, tu tangata ai apōpō

Excel in teaching so our learners will excel in the future

Policy on language requirements for those teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand

Introduction

1. The NZ Teachers Council *Te Pouherenga Kaiako o Aotearoa* (the Council), as part of its legislative purpose, contributes to a safe and high quality teaching and learning environment for children and other learners (s139AA Education Act 1989). A teacher's ability to understand language, to communicate well and to respond to learners' work, are key requirements.

Policy Purpose

2. The Council must be satisfied that teachers are able to communicate effectively with the diverse nature of the children and young people they teach, with parents, whānau and caregivers and with the colleagues they work with. Evidence of a high level of written and oral proficiency is required in at least one of New Zealand's official languages, English and / or Māori.

Legislative Context

3. The functions of the Council are set out in the Education Act 1989 and Part 10A of the Education Standards Act 2001. Those functions specific to this policy are section 139AE:

- (c) To carry out functions under Part 10 relating to teacher registration,
- (d) To determine standards for teacher registration and the issue of practising certificates, and
- (j) To exercise the functions in this Part relating to teacher competence.

4. The applicable sections of the Education Act (1989) to this policy are s122, 123, 124 & 130 which address both the *fitness to teach*:
 - (a) Section 122(b) for full registration.
 - (b) Section 123(1)(b) for provisional registration.
 - (c) Section 124(1)(b) for registration of experienced teachers.
 - (d) Section 130B(2)(b) for Limited Authority to Teach applicants.

And the *satisfactory teaching experience* and / or likely to *be a satisfactory teacher*:

- (a) Section 122(d)(ii) for full registration.
- (b) Section 123(1)(d)(ii) for provisional registration.
- (c) Section 124(1)(d)(ii) for registration of experienced teachers.
- (d) Section 130C(1)(c) for Limited Authority to Teach applicants.

5. The legislation does not limit any other matters that the Council may take into account in determining good character and fitness to be a teacher (S124B(2) and S130(c)(3)).

The Policy

6. The policy applies to all those making an application for either teacher registration or a Limited Authority to Teach.

7. The Council is satisfied that teachers making their initial application hold a sufficient level of English or Māori proficiency, if:
- (a) They have completed initial teacher education in New Zealand, **or**
 - (b) Any overseas applicants have completed teacher education in the medium of English **and** in a country where English is an official language, **or**
 - (c) English or Māori is their first language **and** it has been the medium of instruction in their primary and secondary schooling, **and** all schooling qualifications have been completed in English or Māori.
8. That the Council require all teachers making an initial application, who **do not** meet the above requirements, to satisfy the requirements of (a) and (b) below:
- a) Undertake and pass an approved test of language proficiency.
 - b) That the approved tests and required pass rates in these tests be;
- For English*
- i) IELTS: A minimum score of 7 in each category of the **academic** version of the test.
 - ii) ISLPR: accept 4 in all modules (not available in NZ).
 - iii) CAE: Grade B.
 - iv) CPE: Grade B.
 - v) PEAT: Band A (not available in NZ).
- For Te Reo Māori*
- vi) NMLPT / Whakamātauria Tō Reo: accept level four.
9. If after the second sitting of a language test (within a time frame as determined reasonable by the Teachers Council since the first sitting) the applicant has not achieved the desired score for that test, the application for registration or Limited Authority to Teach (LAT) may be declined.
10. The applicant may apply again at a future date when requirements have been met.
11. Teachers re-applying for teacher registration [when it has expired], who do not meet the exemptions in **#7** and who have not previously had to demonstrate that they can communicate effectively, must do so by:
- (a) Completing a recognised English or Māori language test, and obtaining the required test scores (as noted in **#8**), **or**
 - (b) Providing evidence of work in a country, and in a teaching institution, where English was the primary language for a period of two years within the five years immediately prior to the application, **and**
 - (c) Providing two written testimonials on school letterhead from the school's professional leader and from a senior teacher, who are able to attest to the applicant's ability to communicate effectively in English in a teaching setting.

Note: Evidence for (b) above could be incorporated in the testimonials.

12. Teachers applying for full registration may be required to demonstrate language proficiency if they have not previously done so.
13. In all cases the Council retains discretion for exceptional or compelling cases to be considered on a case by case basis.
14. Applications made for a LAT to teach languages other than English or Māori, where the applicant is not required to teach other subjects in English or Māori, will be considered on a case by case basis.

Compliance

15. The Council's compliance register will audit this policy against all legal requirements.

Policy Review

16. The policy may be reviewed, and consulted on, as required by the Council. Any changes to the policy will be communicated in the *Education Gazette* and on the Council website.

Related Policy References

17. This policy should be read in conjunction with policies on:
 - (a) Good Character & Fitness to Teach (*draft 2006*).
 - (b) Police Vetting.
 - (c) Limited Authority to Teach (*in review 2006*).
 - (d) Requirements for gaining and maintaining registration.
 - (e) The settings for gaining and maintaining full registration.

Effective Date

18. The new requirements apply from 31 March 2006

Authorising Signature

Signed:	
Date signed:	<hr/> Chair New Zealand Teachers Council

Appendix 1 – Contacts

NZ Teachers Council:

For inquiries regarding this policy please contact the Council on:

Phone: (04) 471 0852, or

Email: inquiries@teacherscouncil.govt.nz or

Visit our website www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz

English language testing:

For inquiries regarding relevant language tests:

The following website links into three of the English tests identified by the Council and that are administered in New Zealand: IELTS, CPE & CAE

<http://cambridgeesol-centres.org/centres/index.do>

- **The International English Testing System (IELTS)**

Phone: (09) 302 1735 (Auckland)

Email: ielts@auckland.ac.nz

Visit their website: www.ielts.org

- **Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE): Grade B**

The CPE is the highest level Cambridge ESOL exam and ideal for those with a career which requires language skills.

Phone: (09) 849 4461 (Auckland), or
(03) 379 5452 (Christchurch), or
(03) 546 9175 (Nelson), or
(04) 801 6010 (Wellington)

Email: training@ila.co.nz or celta@cla.co.nz

Visit their website <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/cae.htm>

Or <http://www.lincoln.ac.nz/ic/langreq.htm>

- **Certificate in Advanced English (CAE): Grade B**

The CAE is the second highest level Cambridge ESOL exam and ideal for those that require confidence in English communication to deal with most aspects of everyday life.

Phone: (09) 849 4461 (Auckland), or
(03) 379 5452 (Christchurch), or
(03) 546 9175 (Nelson), or
(04) 801 6010 (Wellington)

Email: training@ila.co.nz or celta@cla.co.nz

Visit their website <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/cae.htm>

Or <http://www.lincoln.ac.nz/ic/langreq.htm>

Te Reo Māori Testing

- **Whakamātauria Tō Reo (NMLPT)**

The Māori Language Commission *Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori* administer the National Māori Language Proficiency Test for all applicants wanting to claim written and oral proficiency in Māori. Those working in the Public Service require a level 3 pass, for those teaching require a level 4 pass.

Phone: (04) 471 0244

Email: info@tetaurawhiri.govt.nz

Visit their website: www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/english/index.shtml

The following tests are not administered in New Zealand but are acceptable to submit at the level indicated

- **The International Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ISLPR)**

Phone: (0061) 7 3875 7200, or

Fax: (0061) 7 3875 5280, or

Email: guic@ic.gu.edu.au or

Visit their website: www.griffith.edu.au/international

Another contact is to Adelaide English Language Services

Phone: (0061) 8 8207 8805

Visit their website: www.trb.sa.edu.au/english_tests.htm

- **The Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT)**

Only offered to those applicants who are residing in New South Wales

Contact the University of New South Wales

Phone: (0061) 2 9385 0339

Visit their website: www.trb.sa.edu.au/english_tests.htm

- **English Language Skills Assessment (ESLA): Pass**