



Fit and Proper Person Assessment for Private Schools

Guidance for current private school managers

Introduction

Every current manager of a private school must be assessed as fit and proper for their school to meet, and continue to meet, one of the criteria for registration under the Education and Training Act 2020. School managers must be assessed as fit and proper every three years to provide ongoing assurance to the Secretary of Education that they are fit and proper persons.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide private school managers with information on the private school fit and proper person assessment and step-by-step instructions on how to submit a fit and proper person application.

How to read this guidance

If you are a current manager of a private school, please read this guidance in its entirety.

The guidance has been divided into the following four sections:

Section 1: General information - private schools: Provides general information for private schools on the fit and proper person assessment.

Section 2: General information - managers of a private school: Provides general information for managers of private schools on making a fit and proper person application.

Section 3: Application checklist: Provides a checklist for managers of a private school to help them confirm they have everything they need to submit a fit and proper person application.

Section 4: Step-by-step instructions on submitting a fit and proper person application: Provides managers of a private school with step-by-step instructions (including screenshots) to support with submitting a fit and proper person application.

The content in Sections 2 - 4 is directed to managers of private schools and refers to 'you' (the private school manager) throughout. Section 4 is directed to each individual school manager, as applications must be submitted individually and not on behalf of someone else or a group.

Section 1: General information - private schools

Key points for private schools

- All managers of a private school must be assessed as fit and proper under this new digitised assessment, and then again every three years.
- If the management or governance structure of a private school changes, the private school must let the Ministry know by emailing their Ministry point of contact. For information on who this is, refer to [here](#).
- A private school is responsible for ensuring that any newly appointed or employed school manager submits a fit and proper person application and is assessed as fit and proper.
- The Education Review Office (ERO) is responsible for reviewing and reporting on whether managers of a private school have been assessed as fit and proper when they carry out their reviews of private schools. If a manager of a private school has not been assessed as fit and proper, this will be recorded on ERO's report of that school.

Who are the 'managers of a private school'?

- Managers of a private school are defined in the Education and Training Act 2020 as all people who control and manage the school, whether or not they have a proprietary interest in it.
- The Ministry's advice is that you are deemed a school manager if you are at the level of Principal or above (e.g. Board members).
- Every manager of a private school must be assessed as fit and proper. This means, for example, every Board member of a private school must be assessed as fit and proper.
- If the manager of a private school is a company, each of the company's directors must be assessed as fit and proper. Each of the company's directors must individually submit their own fit and proper application.
- If the manager of a private school is an incorporated society or an incorporated trust board, each of its members must be assessed as fit and proper. Each member must individually submit their own fit and proper application.

What is a 'fit and proper person' and why is it assessed?

- When a private school manager is assessed as fit and proper, it means the Ministry has determined that they are suitable to be managers of a private school.
- The assessment is to support appropriate safeguarding of students and to maintain the integrity of the education system. It provides assurances to the Secretary of Education that a private school is being managed by people appropriate to do so.
- Under the Education and Training Act 2020, Schedule 7, *Private Schools*, Clause 6, *Managers to be fit and proper persons*, are a list of matters to be considered in assessing

whether a manager of a private school is fit and proper. These matters include, for example, whether a school manager has been convicted of serious criminal activity or whether they have previously been bankrupt.

- Managers of a private school being assessed as fit and proper is one of a set of criteria private schools are required to satisfy in order to meet registration requirements.

Section 2: General information - managers of a private school

When am I required to submit a fit and proper application?

If you are a manager of a private school, you must submit an application and be assessed as fit and proper. You are required to be reassessed as fit and proper every three years. You are also required to submit an application when your situation changes (e.g. you become a manager of a different private school).

The following list sets out all scenarios where you must submit a fit and proper person application:

- As part of the initial registration process for new private schools applying to be registered as a private school
- As an existing school manager applying to be assessed for the first time (under this updated digitised fit and proper person assessment)
- When first appointed or employed in a school manager role
- If appointed or employed as a school manager of a new school, regardless of whether you have been assessed as fit and proper in relation to a previous private school.
- Before an existing fit and proper person assessment expires (three years after the date it was approved)
- If there has been a change in your situation, that may mean what you declared on your statutory declaration (submitted as part of your application) is no longer correct or is likely to impact the status of your fit and proper person assessment. This means any situation that may change what was declared on your statutory declaration.

How do I submit a fit and proper person application?

Submitting an application for current private school managers using an Education Sector Logon (ESL)

You need to submit your application online using an ESL. You can request access to create an ESL account from the delegated authoriser (DA) for ESL in your school. If you already have an ESL account, you can ask your DA for access to the fit and proper person education sector application. If you don't know who your DA is, please refer to the information [here](#).

Anyone who requires access to the fit and proper person application portal can request access to ESL.

Every manager of a private school must submit their own fit and proper person application. This means every school manager must have their own ESL account.

For more information on ESL, please refer [here](#).

New private school applications

If this is a new application, an ESL user account will not be available.

Contact your regional Ministry office who will guide you through this process and provide you with the statutory declaration form – fit and proper person.

As part of the application, you must submit:

- a Criminal Record Check issued by the Ministry of Justice within 3 months prior to the date the application is submitted, or
- A teacher registration number if you are a registered teacher.

What documents am I required to submit as part of my fit and proper person application?

You must submit the following documents as part of your fit and proper person application:

- **A statutory declaration.** This must be downloaded from the [Ministry website](#), completed correctly, and signed by an authorised person.

If you are not a registered teacher, you must also submit:

- **A criminal record check.** This can be requested free of charge from <https://www.criminalrecords.govt.nz>. The criminal record check must be less than 3 months old from the date you submit your fit and proper person application.

Please refer to [here](#) for more details on how to submit these documents correctly.

How long does the application take to be assessed?

Your application will be assessed within 10 working days of it being submitted.

How will I know the outcome of my assessment?

You will receive an automated email letting you know the outcome of your application.

How often do I need to be assessed as fit and proper?

You need to be assessed as fit and proper every three years. This is to provide ongoing assurances to the Secretary of Education that you remain a fit and proper person.

Once assessed as fit and proper, you will receive an automated email notification three months before your assessment expires, letting you know that you need to submit a new application.

I have a question or need help - who can I contact?

You can contact the Ministry staff member in your region who is the point of contact for your school. This may be an Education Advisor, Senior Education Advisor, or a similar role. For the purposes of the fit and proper person assessment, we call this staff member your 'Regional Relationship Holder' (RRH).

If you don't know who your RRH is, you can ask for this information from:

- The Education Service Desk by phoning 0800 422 599, or
- The fit and proper person inbox at: safety.checking@education.govt.nz.

Section 3: Application checklist

Checklist for submitting my fit and proper person application

- ☐ I am a manager of a private school (this means I am at the level of Principal or above).
- ☐ I am submitting my own application. I am not submitting an application on behalf of someone else or a group of individuals.
- ☐ I have an ESL account and have requested access from my DA for the fit and proper person application, or I have requested from my DA, and received, an invitation to create an ESL account and have done so.
- ☐ I have downloaded the statutory declaration from the [Ministry of Education website](#), have filled this out correctly, and have had it signed by an authorised person.
- ☐ My statutory declaration is less than three months old from the date I submit my fit and proper application.

If I am not a registered teacher:

- ☐ I have requested and received a criminal record check from www.criminalrecords.govt.nz.
- ☐ My criminal record check is less than three months old from the date I submitted my fit and proper application.

Section 4: Step-by-step instructions on submitting a fit and proper person application

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Pre-application steps

In this document, actions for private school managers will be marked with a bullet point.

- Action required will be written like this.

Step 1: Get set up with an ESL user account

You must have an Education Sector Logon (ESL) user account to submit a fit and proper person application.

- Request an invitation to set up an ESL user account from your Delegated Authoriser (DA).

Your private school should have at least one ESL DA who is responsible for managing ESL user accounts and access to education sector applications.

Your ESL DA is a member of your school's staff. If you do not know who this is, you can request this information by phoning the Education Service Desk on [0800 422 599](tel:0800422599).

If your school is newly registered as a private school and does not yet have an ESL DA, you can request an invitation to set up an ESL user account by phoning the Education Service Desk on the number above.

If you already have an ESL account, you may need to request permissions to access the private school fit and proper person application from your DA.

Step 2: Download and complete the statutory declaration

- Download the statutory declaration from the fit and proper person page on the Ministry website: <https://www.education.govt.nz/education-professionals/schools-year-0-13/administration-and-management/private-school-registration/fit-and-proper-assessment-private-school-managers>
- Fill out the statutory declaration. Make sure that you strike out the correct word/s at the beginning of each statement so that the statement reflects the declaration you are making. For example, to declare that you **do not** have any convictions for a serious criminal activity, you would **strike out 'have'** as shown below:

a) ~~have~~ / do not have any convictions for a serious criminal activity

Your statutory declaration **must be signed by an authorised witness**. For example, a Justice of the Peace or a solicitor.

Your statutory declaration must be **less than three months** old from the date you submit your fit and proper person application.

Step 3: If you are not a registered teacher, request a criminal record check

If you are not a registered teacher, you are required to submit a criminal record check as part of your fit and proper person application.

Your criminal record check **must be less than three months** old from the date you submit your fit and proper person application.

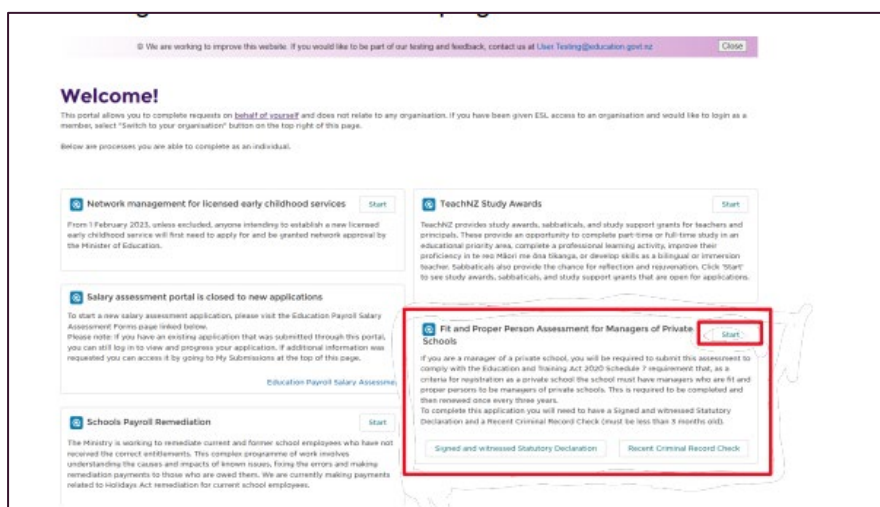
- You can request a criminal record check free of charge from www.criminalrecords.govt.nz.

The Ministry of Justice advises that most criminal record check requests take less than one week to process.

Submitting an application using ESL

Step 4: Log in to ESL and select the fit and proper person app

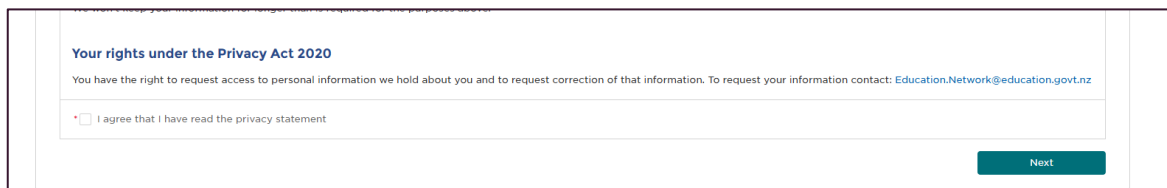
- Open this site: <https://takueducationnz.my.site.com/individual> and log in using your ESL username and password.
- Locate the '*Fit and Proper Person Assessment for Managers of Private Schools*' app and click the start button in the top right corner of the box.



There will be a reminder at the top of the next screen about the documents needed for upload.

Step 5: Read and acknowledge the privacy statement

- Read the privacy statement and click the tick box to indicate that you have read it, and then click on the 'next' button in the bottom right.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Your rights under the Privacy Act 2020". Below the title, it states: "You have the right to request access to personal information we hold about you and to request correction of that information. To request your information contact: Education.Network@education.govt.nz". There is a checkbox labeled "I agree that I have read the privacy statement". At the bottom right, there is a green button labeled "Next".

Step 6: Check your details

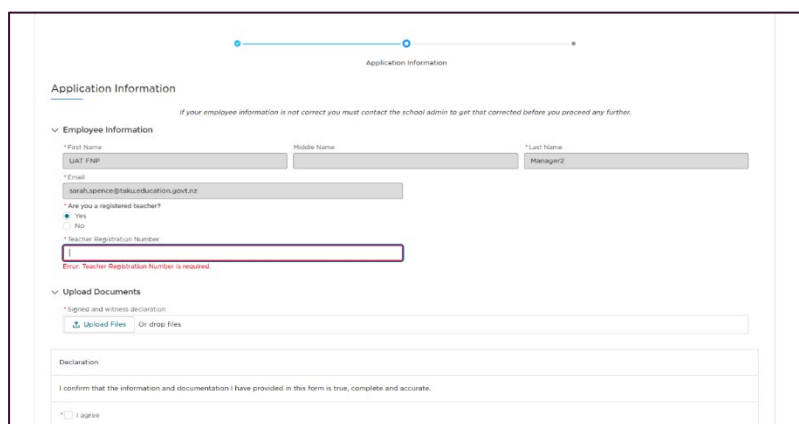
Your details should appear in the grey boxes at the top. These are the details you provided to your DA or to the ESL service desk when you requested access to an ESL user account.

If they are incorrect, please contact your DA or the Education Service Desk to amend them.

Step 7: Confirm whether you are a registered teacher and either enter your registration number or upload your criminal record check

If you are a registered teacher:

- Input your teacher registration number.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Application Information". Below the title, it states: "If your employee information is not correct you must contact the school admin to get that corrected before you proceed any further." There are two sections: "Employee Information" and "Upload Documents".

Employee Information

- *First Name: SARAH
- *Middle Name: Manager2
- *Last Name: Manager2
- *Email: sarah.apene@esl.education.govt.nz
- *Are you a registered teacher?
 - ☒ Yes
 - ☐ No
- *Teacher Registration Number: [Redacted]
- *Email: Teacher Registration Number is required

Upload Documents

- *Signed and witness declaration:
 - Upload Files
 - Or drop files

Declaration

I confirm that the information and documentation I have provided in this form is true, complete and accurate.

☐ I agree

If you are not a registered teacher:

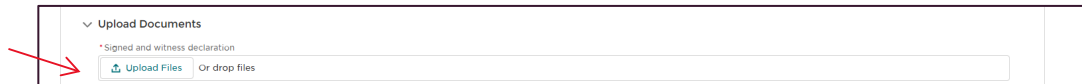
- Upload your Criminal Record Check. To do this, follow the instructions for uploading files in step 9 below.



A screenshot of a web form section titled '*Recent Criminal History check'. It contains a text input field and two buttons: 'Upload Files' (with a cloud icon) and 'Or drop files'. A red arrow points to the 'Upload Files' button.

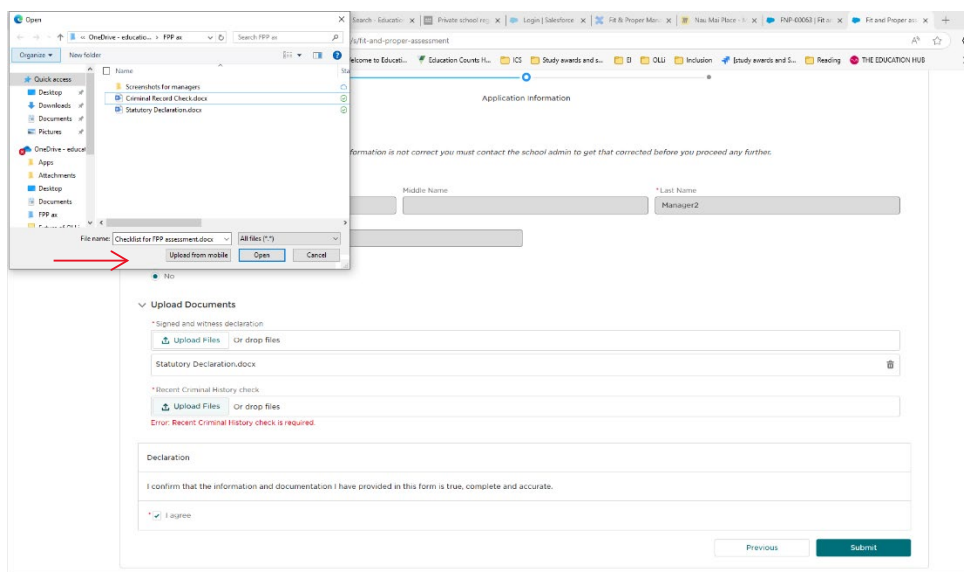
Step 8: Upload your statutory declaration

- Click on the 'upload file' button, and it will open a pop-up box.



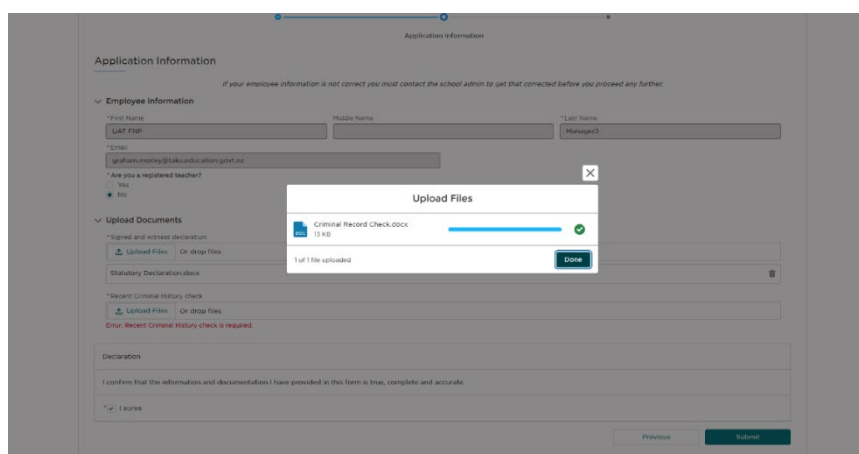
A screenshot of a web form section titled 'Upload Documents'. It includes a sub-header '*Signed and witness declaration' and a text input field. Below the field are two buttons: 'Upload Files' (with a cloud icon) and 'Or drop files'. A red arrow points to the 'Upload Files' button.

- Choose the files you need one at a time and upload them.



This block contains two screenshots. The top screenshot shows a Windows File Explorer window open to the 'Documents' folder, with files 'Criminal Record Check.docx' and 'Statutory Declaration.docx' selected. A red arrow points to the 'Open' button. The bottom screenshot shows the 'Upload Documents' section of the web form. It has two upload areas. The first, for '*Signed and witness declaration', shows 'Statutory Declaration.docx' has been uploaded. The second, for '*Recent Criminal History check', shows an error message: 'Error: Recent Criminal History check is required.' Below these is a 'Declaration' text area with a confirmation statement and a 'I agree' checkbox.

- Once you have uploaded the document, it will show that it has been uploaded, and you can click 'done'. Please check that you have uploaded the correct document.

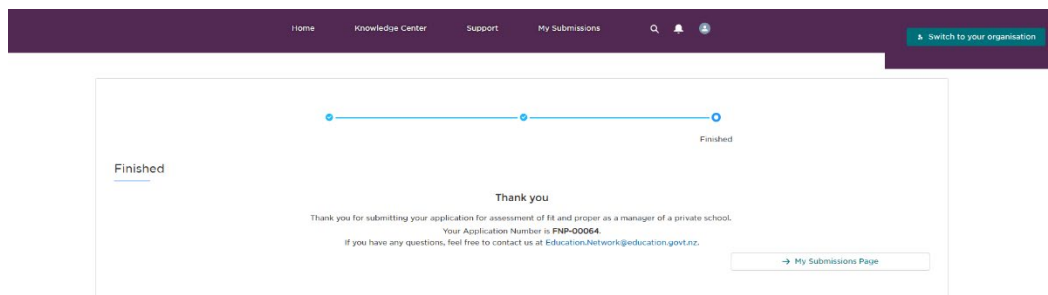


A screenshot of the 'Upload Files' pop-up box. It shows a file named 'Criminal Record Check.docx' (11 KB) with a progress bar and a green checkmark. A 'Done' button is at the bottom right. The background shows the 'Application Information' form with sections for 'Employee Information' and 'Upload Documents'.

Step 9: Submit your application

- Once you have uploaded your documents, ensure that the information uploaded is true and correct and tick the declaration box.
- Click the 'submit' button at the bottom right of the form, and this will complete the application.

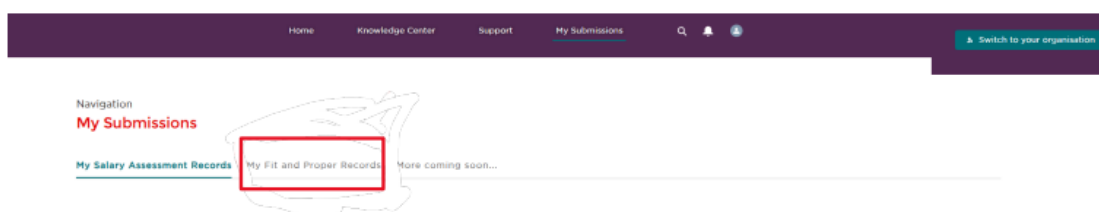
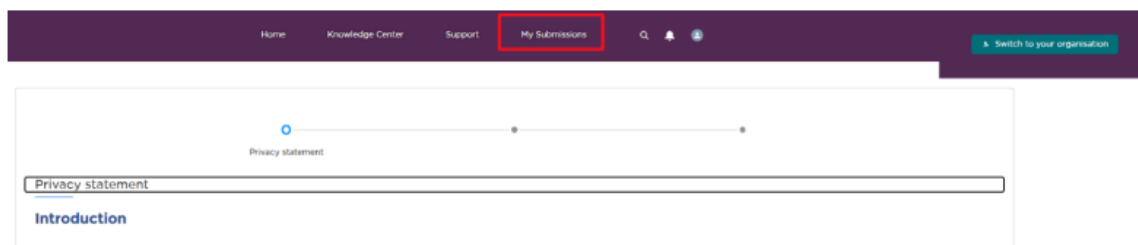
A confirmation screen will show that you are finished and provide you with your application number. You will also receive a confirmation email.



You don't need to do anything else unless you receive an email from the assessor requesting more information. If this occurs, follow the instructions in **Step 10: Providing more information if requested.**

Where can I see my application once it has been submitted?

You can see it in the Fit and Proper app under the 'My Submissions' and then 'My Fit and Proper Records' - <https://takueducationnz.my.site.com/s/>.



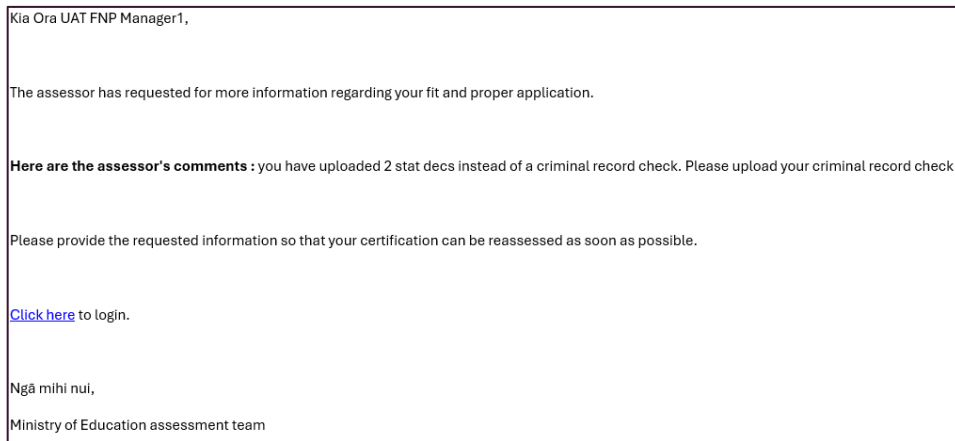
Application follow-up action

Step 10: Providing more information if requested

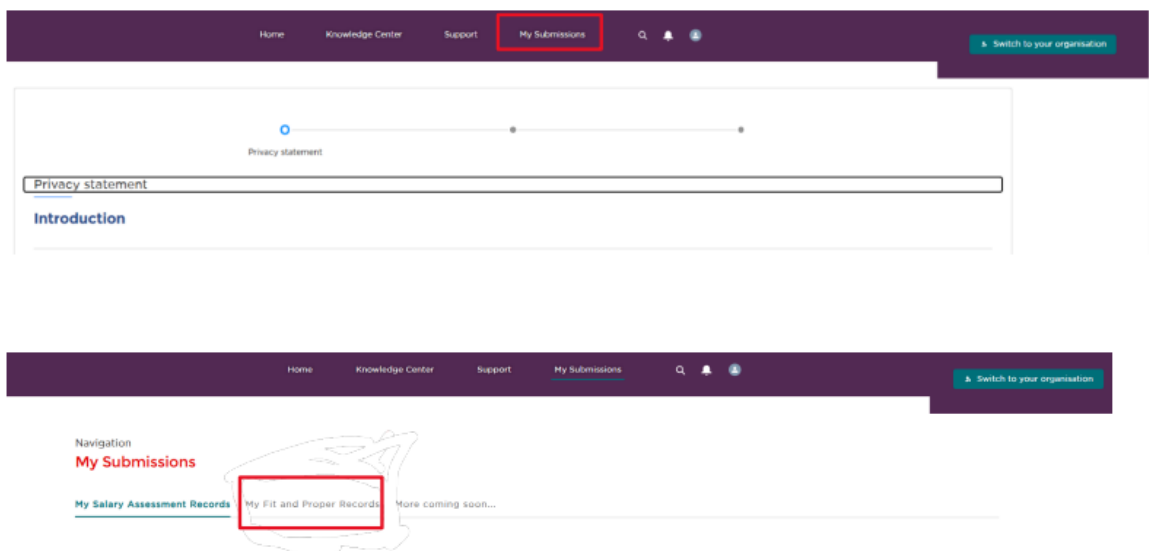
When an assessor is assessing your application, they may request that you provide additional information. If so, you will receive an email notifying you of this. **Additional information is to be added to your current application. Do not submit a new application.**

If you receive an email requesting more information, it will contain a link to a login page.

- Click the link, and it will take you to your active application.



- Once logged in, you can find your application within 'My submissions' and 'My fit and proper records.'



- In 'My Fit and Proper Records', you can find your application. In the 'Assessor notes' box, you will find details on what additional information you need to provide.
- Click on the 'update application with more information' button in the top right of the screen.

The screenshot shows the 'My Fit and Proper Records' page for application FNP-00065. The status is 'More Information Requested'. A red arrow points to the 'Update Application with More Information' button in the top right. The 'Assessor Notes' section is highlighted with a red box, containing the text: 'Assessor Notes: you have uploaded 2 stat decs instead of a criminal record check. Please upload your criminal record check.' The 'Files' section shows two uploaded files: 'Statutory Declaration' and 'Statutory Declaration', both dated 5/02/2025 01:37 pm and with a .docx extension.

- Upload the additional information and submit.

The screenshot shows the 'Application Information' modal form. It includes a warning message: 'The assessor has requested more information. Please ensure you upload the correct document as this will impact your assessment.' The 'Upload More Documents' section has a warning: 'Please Upload at least one file'. There are two 'Upload Files' buttons with 'Or drop files' text. Below these are fields for 'Signed and witness declaration', 'Recent Criminal History check', and '*Applicant's comments'. A 'Declaration' section contains a checkbox for 'I agree' and a 'Next' button.

Once you submit the additional information needed, you will see a confirmation 'Thank you' message on the screen with the option to go back to your submissions.

The screenshot shows the 'Thank you' confirmation modal. It contains the text: 'Thank you. We have received your information and we'll be in touch with you shortly.' Below this is a button labeled '← Back to My Submissions'.

Application outcome – approved.

Application approved

Once your application is assessed, you will receive an email informing you of the outcome and the date of the decision, as shown below. This usually takes 10 business days from when all necessary information has been submitted. No additional steps are required following this approval.

Kia ora UAT FNP Manager1,

Thank you for submitting your application for assessment of fit and proper as a manager of a private school. Your application has been assessed and been approved.

Here are your application details

- Application number: FNP-00065
- Decision date: 5 February 2025

Application outcome – declined

Look at the rationale for the decline

If you are **not** assessed as fit and proper, you will be informed via email. To ascertain the rationale for the decline, follow the same steps set out in **Step 10: Providing more information if requested**, up to:

- 'In 'My Fit and Proper Records' you can find your application.'

The 'Assessors notes' box will tell you why the application has been declined.

If you wish to, submit additional information in support of a reassessment

- If you wish to provide additional information in support of a reassessment of your application, let your RRH know (for information on who this is, refer back to [here](#)).

They will facilitate your application being reopened.

- You will then receive an email requesting that you submit additional information. Follow the instructions in **Step 10: Providing more information if requested** to provide additional information for application reassessment.

PRIVACY NOTE: Your Ministry point of contact may not be the same person who assessed your application. If they aren't, they will not have access to information relating to your application, including why your application was declined. Do not provide any additional information directly to them. You must submit this information in the reopened application, following the instructions in **Step 10: Providing more information if requested**.

After the additional information you have provided has been considered, you will receive an automated email letting you know whether your application has been approved or remains declined. If it is declined, you and the managers at your private school will be notified.

- If your application is declined after a reassessment, you must remove yourself as a manager of your private school.