



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education

TEACHING COUNCIL

NEW ZEALAND | Matatū Aotearoa

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

**Between the Ministry of Education and
the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New
Zealand**



**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government

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1. Purpose and scope

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) sets out the shared understanding between the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) and the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (the Teaching Council) following the transfer of specified functions from the Teaching Council to the Ministry.

Its purpose is to support a coherent, credible and workable professional regulatory system during the transition period by outlining the principles, objectives, roles and ways of working that will guide the relationship between the parties while longer-term arrangements are developed.

This includes how the parties will coordinate in practice, share information, and identify and escalate system risks and stewardship issues to support effective operation of the regulatory system.

This MoU does not override, limit or fetter the statutory responsibilities, independence or decision-making authority of either organisation.

This MoU does not create any form of legal relationship between the parties and neither party intends to be bound as such.

2. Context

The Education and Training (System Reform) Amendment Act 2026 transfers responsibility for specified standard-setting functions from the Teaching Council to the Ministry. These include:

- Standards for qualifications that lead to teacher registration (ITE programme requirements)
- Criteria for teacher registration (including for limited authority to teach)
- Criteria for issuing practising certificates of different kinds
- Standards for ongoing practice (Teaching Standards)
- Code of conduct for teachers (Code of Professional Responsibility)

Following the transfer:

- the Ministry is responsible for setting standards and other requirements and associated authoritative guidance, ensuring that these are consistent with policy intent
- the Teaching Council continues to apply and operationalise those standards through its regulatory decision-making functions, ensuring procedural fairness for regulated parties

The parties acknowledge that the effectiveness of the system depends on:

- a clear alignment between policy settings, regulatory standards, and regulatory practice, including the distinction between standard setting and regulatory application
- early and ongoing consultation on policy changes by both parties
- a strong interface between standard setting and application
- coordinated engagement and clear communication with the education sector

3. Shared objectives and outcomes

The parties acknowledge that, although they will have distinct statutory responsibilities, those responsibilities form part of a single professional regulatory system.

The parties contribute to ensuring that teachers are fit to practice, qualified and competent, so that children and young people are safe and experience high-quality teaching and learning outcomes

The parties will achieve this by:

- setting clear expectations for teachers and teacher training providers
- applying these expectations in a fair, consistent and defensible way
- feeding insights into system design.

4. Principles for working together

The parties will work together in accordance with the following principles.

Principle	What that means
Public confidence first	Ensuring that coordinated ways of working result in safe, and competent teachers in front of children, delivering quality teaching and learning for students, parents, whānau and communities.
System integrity	Supporting the system to operate as a coherent whole, with aligned standards, policies, and regulatory actions that deliver intended outcomes.
Operational workability	Ensuring standards and policies are workable in practice, supported through structured feedback loops between standard setting and regulatory application.
Risk-based and proportionate approach	Prioritising the most significant risks to learners and the system and ensuring that standards and regulatory tools enable an appropriate and scalable response.
Clarity and transparency	Ensuring that regulated parties know what is expected of them and receive consistent information from both parties

No surprises	Proactive, timely, and transparent communication between parties, including early engagement on emerging issues, policy developments, and intended public communications, so that parties are informed and aligned ahead of decisions or announcements.
Respect for statutory independence	Recognising distinct legal roles, responsibilities and decision-making authority
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	Supporting the Ministry to reflect Te Tiriti in system, policy design and standard setting, and the Teaching Council to reflect Te Tiriti regulatory practice.

5. Roles of the parties

The roles of the parties reflect the distinction between:

- standard setting and authoritative guidance (Ministry), and
- regulatory application and operationalisation (Teaching Council).

The parties acknowledge that the Code of Professional Responsibility is distinct from other standards and criteria in that the Secretary for Education retains non-delegable statutory responsibility for its development, consultation, communication, and ongoing maintenance.

See **Appendix A** for a detailed view.

Functions	Ministry	Teaching Council
Set and maintain standards	Lead	Contribute/Support understanding in practice
Administer standards & monitor compliance	No involvement except in ITE decisions (provide advice to the Council on ITE programme approval, monitoring and review)	Lead (including consultation with the Ministry on ITE matters)
Promulgate & engage the sector on standard	Lead (intent/meaning)	Lead (application in practice)
Review the effectiveness of standards	Lead	Monitor compliance with standards and provide insight on implementation and emerging risks

Working at the interface

To support a well-functioning system, the parties will:

- engage early on proposed changes
- share relevant information, data and evidence consistently with the Privacy Act 2020
- maintain structured feedback loops between standard setting and regulatory application
- identify, assess and escalate system risks, including those relating to safeguarding, system integrity and public confidence
- use agreed escalation pathways where issues cannot be resolved through normal working arrangements

The parties will share relevant information, data and evidence in a timely manner, consistent with their statutory obligations, including privacy, confidentiality and information management arrangements.

The Ministry's role is to define expectations and intent. The Teaching Council's role is to apply those expectations in practice.

The parties will work collaboratively to maintain clarity at this interface and address issues as they arise.

6. Governance and dispute resolution

The parties will maintain appropriate governance and operational arrangements to support implementation of this MoU, including:

- identified senior responsible officers
- regular engagement forums to support coordination, oversight and information sharing
- agreed operational contacts to support day-to-day working relationships

Where issues arise and cannot be resolved through normal working arrangements, the parties will escalate matters through agreed governance channels.

If required, matters may be escalated to the Secretary for Education (or delegate) and the Chief Executive of the Teaching Council for resolution.

Communications

Clear and coordinated communication is critical to system effectiveness.

The parties will coordinate communication where changes affect both standards and regulatory practice, issues are high impact or sensitive, or a consistent system-wide message is required.

The parties will engage early to ensure alignment and avoid confusion for the profession.

7. Review, duration and sign-off

This MoU takes effect from 6 July 2026 and remains in place for 6 months.

The parties acknowledge that this MoU supports a transition state, and that roles, processes and interfaces will continue to evolve as the system beds in.

The parties will review this MoU within six months of commencement, and at any other time as agreed, particularly where there are significant changes to legislation, roles, or emerging system risks.

This MoU may be updated or replaced at any time by agreement of the parties.

This MoU may be terminated at any time by either party upon giving the other 6 weeks notice of the termination.

Signatories

	Ministry of Education	Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand
Role	Hautū, Te Pou Ohumahi Mātauranga	Interim Chief Executive
Signature		
Name	Anna Welanyk	Tom Gott
Date	09/07/26	14/07/26

Appendix A Role of the parties from transfer of functions (detailed view)

Functions	Ministry	Teaching Council
Set and maintain standards		
Set and maintain teacher registration criteria, teacher education qualification standards, teaching standards, practising criteria of all types, and the code of conduct.		
	- Develop and update standards, ensuring alignment with legislation and system policy, informed by reviews and benchmarking. - Consult / engage on changes in line with legislative requirements.	- Contribute operational and regulatory advice to support development and refinement of standards - Support consultation and engagement activities through established relationships with the profession - Support understanding of standards in practice through engagement with the profession - Provide feedback on clarity, workability and implications for regulatory practice
Administer standards & monitor compliance		
Administer and monitor teacher education programmes, teacher registration and practicing certification, and conduct and competence.		
	- Provide advice on ITE programme approval, monitoring and review - Provide advice on system expectations and alignment with wider education priorities (on all teaching standards)	- Approve teacher education programmes (incl consult the Secretary for Education (or delegate) as outlined in legislation and in accordance with an agreed process - Undertake ongoing monitoring of providers of teaching qualifications / exercise interventions (incl consult the Secretary for Education (or delegate) as outlined in legislation and in accordance with an agreed process) - Make decisions/ judgements for teacher registration and certification through applying relevant standards and criteria - Manage end-to-end processes for teacher registration and practising certification - Monitor compliance with standards in regulatory practice - Proactively support regulatory compliance - Manage cases relating to conduct and competence.
Promulgate & engage the sector on standards (in particular teaching workforce and ITE providers)		
Help the sector understand teacher registration criteria, teacher education qualification standards, teaching standards, practising criteria of all types, and the code of conduct.		
	- Lead system-level communication on policy intent, expectations, and what standards mean, ensuring clarity and consistency across all channels and published materials. - Lead system-level engagement and consultation with the sector to support understanding and effective implementation of changes to standards and changes. - Develop and maintain guidance materials and capability-building opportunities to strengthen sector understanding and application of standards (*). - Plan and manage change implementation, aligning engagement, communication, and support activities to enable successful uptake.	- Lead communication on how standards are applied in practice - Communicate regulatory processes, expectations and thresholds

Functions	Ministry	Teaching Council
Review the effectiveness of standards		
Monitor the administration of teacher registration criteria, teacher education qualification standards, teaching standards, practising criteria of all types, and the code of conduct.		
	• Define success measures for the effectiveness of standards and undertake ongoing measurement. • Gather feedback and evaluate data on the effectiveness of standards. • Assess their impact on teaching quality, learner outcomes, safeguarding, and system performance • Ensure alignment with wider government priorities and education strategy • Ensure standards and requirements operate as a coherent and effective regulatory system • Develop proposals to change standards to act on identified challenges / improvement areas.	• Monitor compliance with standards in regulatory practice • Provide insight on implementation challenges, emerging risks and unintended consequences • Contribute operational and regulatory perspectives to system-level analysis • Provide feedback on how standards operate in practice, including issues of clarity, workability and impact • Support engagement with the sector through interactions with the profession and regulated parties • Reinforce expectations through engagement with the profession

(*) Note that for the code of conduct specifically, the Ministry leads the development of tailored and detailed guidance for all audiences and ensure ongoing national workforce understanding



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education

He mea tārai e mātou te mātauranga
kia rangatira ai, kia mana taurite ai ōna huanga.

We shape an education system that delivers
equitable and excellent outcomes.



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o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government