

Our Code Our Standards

*Code of Professional Responsibility and
Standards for the Teaching Profession*



EDUCATION COUNCIL
NEW ZEALAND | Matatū Aotearoa

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CODE?

The Code sets out the high standards of integrity and ethical behaviour expected of all members of the teaching profession. It is also public statement by the profession of its shared ethical principles that guide their practice thereby providing learners, their families and whānau, and the public with confidence and trust in teachers and in the profession as a whole.

WHO DOES THE CODE APPLY TO?

The Code applies to all certificated teachers and those who have been granted a Limited Authority to Teach, in every role and teaching context. It is a set of aspirations for professional behaviour and not a list of punitive rules. We believe that it reflects the expectations society puts on our profession. The Code will replace the Code of Ethics from 30 June 2017. As it says in section 387 (6) of the Education Act, it's binding on all teachers.

HOW CAN THE CODE BE USED?

- **For those of us within the profession**, regardless of role, the Code sets out the shared expectations of our profession that we aspire to and have agreed to uphold. It reminds us of our obligations and responsibilities to others and the need to demonstrate high standards of professional behaviour in all we do. It is also a learning tool to assist us to engage in professional learning conversations about our practice.
- **For teachers who are professional leaders and those who are employers of teachers**, the Code assists professional learning conversations with teachers throughout their career about the profession's expectations of ethical and professional behaviour.
- **For those entering the profession**, the Code serves as a tool to assist initial teacher education providers to support student teachers to understand the standards of conduct and integrity expected of everyone in the profession.
- **For those outside the profession**, such as learners, their families and whānau and the public, the Code informs them about the standards of ethical behaviour and practice that the profession expects of all teachers. It can provide them with confidence and trust that all members of the profession have agreed to uphold high standards of ethical behaviour.
- **For the Education Council and its disciplinary bodies**, the Code promotes a shared understanding of the high standards of behaviour expected from the teaching profession. It is part of how the Education Council champions effective leadership and teaching, elevates the status of teaching and strengthens a self-managing profession. In complaint investigations into a teacher's conduct, the Code may be referred to as a benchmark that confirms the expected standards of conduct for members of the profession.

WHY HAS THE CODE BEEN DEVELOPED?

When the Education Council was established through the Education Amendment Act 2015, section 387 stipulated that it must establish and maintain a code of conduct for teachers within two years. The *Code of Professional Responsibility* is the name given to the code of conduct prescribed in the Act.

HOW DOES THE CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY DIFFER FROM THE CODE OF ETHICS?

The *Code of Professional Responsibility* is an updated, renewed statement on the high standards of ethical conduct that are shared and displayed by the profession. It replaces the *Code of Ethics for Certificated Teachers*, which was written in 2003, and is still built around the four commitment statements to the profession, to learners, to families and whānau, and to society.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THESE VALUES IN THE CODE AND STANDARDS?

The values underpin the Code and Standards. These values, whakamana; manaakitanga; pono; and whanaungatanga, and their descriptions sit at the centre of what it is to belong to the profession and reflect the ideals to guide effective teaching practice and ethical behaviour. They aren't intended to be used as another set of criteria for every teacher to be appraised against, but as broad values to aspire to and reflect on.

HOW WAS THE CODE DEVELOPED?

To develop the Code, we looked at the codes of other professional organisations, and reviewed literature. We engaged with teachers through the entire process, with focus groups, online surveys, meetings with key organisations and a working group made up of key sector representatives. In March 2017, we received over 2,100 submissions to our six-week consultation on the draft Code and Standards.

WHICH ORGANISATIONS WERE REPRESENTED ON THE CODE WORKING GROUP?

The Code Working Group provided advice on the development of the Code. The group consisted of representatives from the following organisations:

- Auckland Primary Principals Association
- Early Childhood Council
- Independent Schools of New Zealand
- Ngā Kura a Iwi o Aotearoa
- New Zealand Association of Intermediate and Middle Schools
- New Zealand Catholic Education Office
- New Zealand Council of Education Deans
- New Zealand Educational Institute Te Riu Roa
- New Zealand Kindergartens
- New Zealand Normal and Model Schools
- New Zealand Pasifika Principals Association
- New Zealand Principals Federation
- New Zealand School Trustees Association
- New Zealand Specialist Classroom Teachers
- Post Primary Teachers Association
- Secondary Principals Association of New Zealand
- Teacher Education Forum of Aotearoa New Zealand
- Te Akatea New Zealand Maori Principals Association
- Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand
- Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori

WHY ARE THE CODE AND STANDARDS IN THE SAME DOCUMENT?

The Code sets out the high standards for ethical behaviour that are expected of every teacher. The Standards describe the expectations of effective teaching practice. Together they set out what it is and what it means, to be a teacher in Aotearoa New Zealand. Putting them together promotes a more integrated understanding of how the Code and Standards relate to each other.

WHAT IF I ALSO AM COVERED BY OTHER CODES OF ETHICS OR CODES OF CONDUCT?

Even if teachers have obligations and commitments to other codes of ethics or codes of conduct, the Education Act says they are still bound by the Code of Professional Responsibility. Some other codes that may apply to teachers are those set by employers, or by unions. Where other codes exist, we expect these would complement the Code of Professional Responsibility rather than be in conflict with it.

CAN THE CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY BE APPLIED TO NON-CERTIFICATED TEACHERS WHO ARE EMPLOYED IN A TEACHING ROLE?

Under the Education Act, the Code only applies to teachers who hold a practising certificate and those who have been granted a Limited Authority to Teach. Employers of non-certificated teachers may choose to use the Code as a framework or template when they set out expectations for conduct of non-certificated staff in schools and early childhood centres.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE AND STANDARDS?

Over the last year we have focused our attention on the development of the Code and to ensure a high level of engagement with the profession. Our next focus will be on the implementation of the Code across the education sector. The *Code of Professional Responsibility: Examples in Practice* booklet provides guidance on what the Code commitments and principles might look like in a learning environment. Now that we have a final Code and Standards, we will work to develop a website with resources such as stories of impact, staff meeting and workshop resources, materials to support professional learning conversations, reflective questions, ethical decision-making tools and further readings.

We will also be providing further guidance on specific issues such as professional boundaries. It is our intention to add new materials and resources to the Code and Standards website over time.

HOW CAN THE CODE BE USED TO PREVENT CONCERNS ARISING ABOUT UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR?

We've created the Code to have a wide application in professional practice, not just for dealing with difficult issues. Use the Code to have professional learning conversations, to remind teachers of the shared expectations of their profession, to help teachers be aware of ethical tensions in teaching, and help them resolve issues. This process should begin with student teachers and continue throughout a teacher's career. In this way, the Code is not a punitive tool to 'catch people out', but an aid to reinforce best practice well before any issues might arise.

IF AN UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR IS NOT LISTED IN THE CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY: EXAMPLES IN PRACTICE DOCUMENT DOES THIS MEAN IT IS OK?

No. The examples of unacceptable behaviour are neither definitive nor exhaustive, but are there to help you understand the intent of each Code principle. Other unacceptable behaviour, even if not listed in the *Examples in Practice*, may still be in breach of the Code. And while there are some behaviours that are absolutely unacceptable in every circumstance, in most situations it is important to consider the context surrounding the action or behaviour before coming to a decision about whether it is unacceptable or not.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A TEACHER BREACHES THE NEW CODE?

Teachers that don't uphold the expectations of ethical and professional behaviour set out in the Code could be subject to a disciplinary investigation. In the first instance it is the employer who should deal with the breach. If a school or early childhood centre believes the breach is serious misconduct, they have a legal obligation to report this to the Council immediately. For information about the circumstances where a school or centre must make a mandatory report to the Council see the [Education Council's website](#).

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF A TEACHER?

If someone has concerns about the conduct of a teacher, including complaints about possible breaches of the Code of Professional Responsibility, they should take their concerns to the teacher's employer. If they are not happy with how the school or centre has dealt with the issue, they can raise their concerns with the Education Council. In limited cases, a complaint can be made directly to the Education Council without first taking it to the teacher's employer. For information about reporting a concern about a teacher's conduct see the [Education Council's website](#).

SHOULD EVERY BREACH OF THE CODE BE REPORTED TO THE EDUCATION COUNCIL?

It is expected that teachers, professional leaders and employers will continue to use their judgement about reporting teachers who may have engaged in action which breaches the Code and follow the existing [mandatory reporting requirements](#) where appropriate. Not every breach of the Code amounts to serious misconduct.

DOES THE CODE IMPOSE NEW REPORTING OBLIGATIONS FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT A TEACHER'S CONDUCT?

No. The Code does not create new reporting obligations. The current [mandatory reporting requirements](#) still apply.

NOW THAT THE CODE IS IN PLACE WILL THE CRITERIA FOR REPORTING SERIOUS MISCONDUCT BE REVISED?

The *Criteria for Reporting Serious Misconduct* is also known as *Rule 9 of the Education Council Rules 2016*. It sets out the circumstances where an employer must immediately report to the Education Council if the employer has reason to believe a teacher has engaged in any of the listed kinds of serious misconduct. Now that the Code is in place, the Council will review rule 9, and amend it if this is deemed necessary. In the meantime it will remain in place unchanged.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF SERIOUS MISCONDUCT?

Serious misconduct is defined at section 378(1) of the Education Act 1989. The definition is made up of two parts and both parts must be satisfied for a teacher's actions to be considered serious misconduct.

First, serious misconduct is conduct by a teacher that:

- adversely affects, or is likely to adversely affect the wellbeing or learning of one or more students; or
- reflects adversely on the teacher's fitness to be a teacher;
- or may bring the teaching profession into disrepute;

And secondly, the conduct must be of a character or severity that meets the Education Council's criteria for reporting serious misconduct (which is laid out in rule 9).

HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?

Get in touch with us if you have any questions at enquiries@educationcouncil.org.nz or call (04) 471 0852.

Standards for the Teaching Profession

Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession



EDUCATION COUNCIL

NEW ZEALAND | Matatū Aotearoa

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STANDARDS?

The Standards describe the expectations of effective teaching practice in New Zealand. They serve as a benchmark to guide everyday practice, a tool to guide appraisal and a framework for lifelong professional learning and development. By defining quality in the contemporary teaching context, we expect the Standards to influence the quality of teaching. Over time, all teachers will be required to demonstrate that they meet the Standards in order to be issued with and to renew a full or subject to confirmation practising certificate. The Standards replace the *Practising Teacher Criteria* from 30 June 2017.

WHO DO THE STANDARDS APPLY TO?

The Standards apply to every teacher who holds a practising certificate, regardless of role or setting.

WHY HAVE THE STANDARDS BEEN DEVELOPED?

When the Education Council was established in the Education Act, section 382(h) required us to establish and maintain standards for ongoing practice and criteria for the issue of practising certificates of different kinds. It was also timely for us to review the *Practising Teacher Criteria*, which were introduced in 2010.

HOW DO STANDARDS DIFFER FROM THE PRACTISING TEACHER CRITERIA?

The Standards rationalise the *Practising Teacher Criteria* from twelve criteria to six standards. They provide holistic descriptions of what quality teaching looks like in Aotearoa New Zealand. They have been developed to better reflect the contemporary teaching context in New Zealand – drawing on the elements of knowledge, practice, best practice and research.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THESE VALUES IN THE CODE AND STANDARDS?

The values underpin the Code and Standards. These values, whakamana; manaakitanga; pono; and whanaungatanga, and their descriptions sit at the centre of what it is to belong to the profession and reflect the ideals to guide effective teaching practice and ethical behaviour. They aren't intended to be used as another set of criteria for every teacher to be appraised against, but as broad values to aspire to and reflect on.

HOW WERE THE STANDARDS DEVELOPED?

The Standards are a revision of the Practising Teacher Criteria. To develop them, we sought guidance from a working group made up of teachers, leaders and teaching experts and key sector representatives. We worked with a team of writers to develop the Standards in both English and Māori to better reflect contemporary teaching. The writers consulted with early childhood specialists and a Māori Medium advisory group to make sure the new Standards work in a range of learning contexts. In March, we received over 2,100 submissions to our six-week consultation on the draft Code and Standards. We also did a trial to verify the standards, with teachers in early childhood, primary, secondary and kura, and with both students and teachers in initial teacher education settings. The final version of the Standards, released in late June, was informed by both the feedback from the consultation and the findings from the trials.

WHAT ARE THE KEY CHANGES IN THE NEW STANDARDS FROM THE DRAFT STANDARDS?

Feedback from the consultation and the trials suggested that we needed to provide greater clarity for each of the standards, including the headings and further descriptions. These descriptions are now called 'elaborations' rather than 'indicators/examples'.

WHICH ORGANISATIONS WERE REPRESENTED ON THE STANDARDS WORKING GROUP?

The Standards Working Group provided advice on the development of the Standards. The group consisted of representatives from the following organisations:

- Auckland Primary Principals Association
- Early Childhood Council
- Education Review Office
- Independent Schools of New Zealand
- Ngā Kura a Iwi o Aotearoa
- New Zealand Association of Intermediate and Middle Schools
- New Zealand Catholic Education Office
- New Zealand Council of Education Deans
- New Zealand Educational Institute Te Riu Roa
- New Zealand Educational Institute Rural Education Reference Group
- New Zealand Kindergartens
- New Zealand Normal and Model Schools
- New Zealand Pasifika Principals Association
- New Zealand Principals Federation
- New Zealand School Trustees Association
- New Zealand Specialist Classroom Teachers
- Post Primary Teachers Association
- Rural Education Outreach Programme Aotearoa New Zealand
- Secondary Principals Association of New Zealand
- Teacher Education Forum of Aotearoa New Zealand
- Te Akatea New Zealand Maori Principals Association
- Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand
- Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori
- The University of Auckland

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WHAT WILL THE NEW STANDARDS MEAN FOR APPRAISAL?

The Standards are expected to be used to form the basis of appraisal systems. You can find more information on appraisal systems [here](#).

WHEN CAN I START USING THE NEW STANDARDS AND WHAT ARE THE TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS FROM THE PRACTISING TEACHER CRITERIA?

We are encouraging teachers, schools, kura and centres to start using the Standards as soon as possible. From 1 January 2018, we expect the new Standards will be used in the appraisal systems as their new cycle begins.

We want to keep the transition arrangements simple. This will mean, that in some cases, professional leaders and principals will be endorsing teachers for certification using the new Standards even though their appraisal was based on the *Practising Teacher Criteria*. For example, if the professional leader or principal believes the teacher has met the *Practising Teacher Criteria* in the first year of the Standards being implemented, then the teacher should be deemed to have also met the new Standards.

IS THERE A MATRIX THAT SHOWS HOW THE PRACTISING TEACHER CRITERIA MAPS TO THE NEW STANDARDS?

Yes. The matrix can be found [here](#).

HOW CAN I GET STARTED WORKING WITH THE NEW STANDARDS FOR APPRAISAL?

To help you and your colleagues get familiar with the standards and help you see the breadth of your practice in appraisal, we've developed the *Quality Practice: Standards for the Teaching Profession/Ngā Paerewa mō te Umanga Ngaioatanga*. You can use this template to record quality practice in your setting as a group. Doing this work together allows you to focus appraisal on inquiries or goals. Find the template and instructions for using them [here](#).

WHAT ARE THE ELABORATIONS AND DO I NEED TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF EACH ELABORATION IN MY APPRAISAL?

The elaborations provide depth and context to the standards themselves and support teachers to affirm and develop quality practices in their settings.

Quality practices will generate naturally occurring evidence that can be used for discussion and analysis. For the purposes of appraisal, it is not expected that teachers would need to identify evidence of each elaboration, but the evidence of their quality practice would need to be sufficient to reflect the standard.

HOW ARE THE STANDARDS USED FOR THE ISSUING OF PRACTISING CERTIFICATES?

Teachers who are applying for or renewing a practising certificate need to demonstrate that they meet the Standards with an appraisal process.

WILL GRADUATING TEACHERS BE EXPECTED TO MEET THESE STANDARDS TOO IN ORDER TO GET CERTIFICATED?

For new graduates, *The Graduating Teacher Standards* will continue to apply until such time as the Education Council makes changes to its Initial Teacher Education requirements.

HOW DOES TĀTAIAKO FIT WITH THE NEW STANDARDS?

Tātaiako is a lens through which to view and inform your practice across all of the Standards. The Standards, like the Tātaiako cultural competencies, are holistic and the elaborations provide more information about practices that reflect them. As teachers consider what the Standards look like in their setting, Tātaiako continues to provide examples of cultural competencies that can demonstrate the Standards.

HOW DO OTHER EDUCATION POLICIES AND PRIORITIES FIT WITH THE STANDARDS?

The elaborations indicate where different education policies and priorities may fit. You may also wish to consider them across the practices that are relevant to your setting.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE AND STANDARDS?

Over the last year we have focused our attention on the development of the Code and Standards and to ensure a high level of engagement with the profession. Our next focus will be on the implementation of the Code and Standards across the education sector. Now that we have a final Code and Standards, we will work to develop a website with resources such as stories of impact, staff meeting and workshop resources, materials to support professional learning conversations, reflective questions, ethical decision-making tools and further readings. It is our intention to add new materials and resources to the Code and Standards website over time.

We will also be offering a series of Appraisal Workshops and Resources in 2017/18 to help teachers and leaders become familiar with the new Standards and unpack them for appraisal.

HOW DO THE STANDARDS FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION FIT WITH TEACHING STANDARDS IN THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS?

During the design of the *Standards for the Teaching Profession* there has been discussion about the confusion created by the existence of multiple teaching standards, including those in collective agreements.

The Council and the unions have discussed this issue, and agree that this proliferation is not ideal. NZEI, PPTA and the Council are committed to further work in this area.

HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?

Get in touch with us if you have any questions at enquiries@educationcouncil.org.nz or call (04) 471 0852