

Newly Graduated Teachers: Preparation and Confidence to Teach

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Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa

The Child – the Heart of the Matter

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Newly Graduated Teachers: Preparation and Confidence to Teach

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Overview

ERO undertook this evaluation at a time when there is considerable scrutiny of teacher education and professional development processes in New Zealand. The pace of change in the education landscape is leading to questions about the ability of current arrangements to provide a teaching workforce that can meet the demands of the 21st century and beyond.

ERO's national evaluations in early learning services and schools over this time have highlighted concerns about pedagogy, curriculum, assessment practice, and developing educationally powerful connections with parents and whānau. In the period from 2000 to 2015, we have witnessed a decline in New Zealand's performance as a nation in the critical areas of reading, mathematics and science.

The status accorded to the teaching workforce is a critical element in those education systems identified as high performing, such as Finland, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong. These countries assure the quality of entrants to teacher education, place a strong emphasis on accreditation of initial teacher education (ITE) programmes and place significant emphasis on the transformation into the profession through mentored induction and assessment of readiness to teach.

There is a recognised need to refresh and strengthen the teaching profession. Those who enter teaching today will influence the quality, vibrancy and responsiveness of our education system for the next 40 years, in the face of greater challenges than ever before. The quality of teaching, and therefore, our teaching workforce, is potentially one of the most significant contributors to improving learner outcomes and reducing inequity. [Work](#) is already underway in New Zealand to lift and strengthen ITE. The [Education Council](#) is considering changes to make sure all future teachers enter the workforce well equipped to teach in the classrooms and centres of today and in the learning environments of the future.

In this evaluation, ERO met with newly graduated teachers (NGTs) and leaders in early learning services and schools to find out how confident and prepared NGTs were as a result of their ITE programme.

Despite substantial government investment of more than \$80 million in ITE in 2016, ERO has found a lack of confidence in the selection, professional education and capabilities of many NGTs as they enter the profession. These concerns, while not universal, are widespread, and are compounded by systemic issues such as variation in ITE programmes and components of theory and practice, and lack of clarity about the expectations and relative responsibilities of ITE providers and associate teachers in supporting student teachers.

Many NGTs reported insufficient opportunities to learn the practice of teaching and to understand the depth and breadth of the curriculum, and variable quality of guidance by associate teachers during the ITE period. As a result, these NGTs are emerging from their ITE programmes needing to substantially develop their understanding of pedagogy, curriculum, assessment practice, and working with diverse learners and their parents and whānau.

Added to this variability of preparation is the difficulty experienced by NGTs in gaining initial permanent employment. This reduces NGTs' confidence that they will be able to complete their full certification requirements with the support and guidance they need. The number of NGTs on fixed term contracts in schools further reduces opportunities for these teachers to be well supported as they enter the profession. If we seek to develop consistency across the sector about what modern pedagogy looks like, then NGTs need to feel confident in collaborating with, and making their practice visible to, their more experienced colleagues.

The number and variety of ITE providers and programmes add to this confusion (see *Appendix 1*). There are 20 providers for early childhood education alone, with 17 of these providing a Bachelor's Degree. ITE for primary teaching is offered by 16 providers, with almost all (14) offering a Bachelor's Degree. Nine providers offered a secondary teaching qualification, the most common being a Graduate Diploma (eight) and a Master's Degree (six).

Opinions are mixed about the relative merit of different programmes, with some school/early learning leaders favouring graduates from particular programmes while others state they would not consider graduates from the same programme. Leaders expressed concern about processes for selection for entry into ITE, and many look for the personal qualities of graduates rather than relying on their ITE to prepare them for the workforce. At the system level, teacher shortages continue in areas of greatest need, such as science, digital technology and mathematics, and of teachers with particular knowledge and skills such as te reo Māori.

Interestingly, the one sector that expressed greater satisfaction with the quality of ITE provision and integration of theory and practice were those employing NGTs undertaking field-based early childhood ITE. Nevertheless, ERO has identified in many recent national evaluations wide variation in the quality of education provision in early learning services, particularly in relation to curriculum implementation, assessment and working with diverse learners. This leads to a hypothesis that such field-based courses may be simply supporting the status quo rather than driving improved quality of teaching across the sector.

In this evaluation, ERO worked with NGTs and school leaders to learn about NGTs' confidence and preparation as they entered the workforce. ERO's findings point to a need for better integration of theory and practice both pre-service and for beginning teachers. Both leaders and NGTs told us the balance and alignment between theories learnt and the application of these in practice needed to be strengthened. Balancing theory and practice is about getting it right so NGTs enter their first teaching position with confidence to teach. Our findings reinforce the need for review and strengthening of programmes of teacher education, through the work of the Education Council and government agencies.



Recommendations

ERO makes the following recommendations to ensure a more systematic and structured approach of supporting new teachers through to full certification:

ITE providers

- deliberately integrate theory and practice by:
 - providing clear expectations around the selection and practice of associate teachers
 - providing clear expectations to associate teachers, host schools and student teachers about the learning to occur on practicum
- deliberately create greater opportunities for student teachers to:
 - regularly observe experienced teachers and to apply theory in practice, taking into consideration models operating in other successful jurisdictions
 - engage with learners, parents and whānau from diverse cultural, socio-economic and language backgrounds, and those with special education or additional learning needs.

Education Council

- review ITE programme requirements; this could include strengthening entry requirements, recruitment priorities to address teacher shortages, programme design, the quality of practicum, knowledge of learner assessment practices, professional development opportunities for associate teachers
- lift the standards for graduating teachers to the level needed for a teacher to be ready to teach with support, by providing clearer expectations to ITE providers about the necessary skills, knowledge and practices teachers need for modern teaching and learning
- with the quality assurance bodies, review graduate assessment processes to provide greater confidence that every student meets the standards for the teaching profession prior to graduation
- review induction and mentoring requirements to ensure there are clear, supported and managed pathways to full certification, by:
 - providing clear expectations to leaders, mentor teachers and provisionally certificated teachers (PCTs) about the learning and support to occur during the PCT phase
 - including an ongoing role for ITE providers in this process
- provide NGTs with access to professional learning and development (PLD) and reflection through practices such as action learning groups, opportunities to observe the practice of other teachers, and guidance and support from mentors and coaches.



Ministry of Education, working with other agencies

- review current policy settings, and develop effective approaches to support the transition into the profession of NGTs, including improved models of mentoring support and models that provide greater employment certainty through to certification.

ERO also recommends the following areas of research and evaluation be considered:

- an evaluation of the effectiveness of initial and ongoing teacher education programmes
- a content analysis of ITE and an exploration of the quality of teacher preparedness in key subject areas including mathematics, science, digital technology and language teaching
- a programme of longitudinal research that follows teachers through selection, their qualification, and into teaching to assess how their practice, capability and confidence as a teacher evolves, and the factors contributing to this.



Context and rationale for this evaluation

New Zealand has an ageing teacher workforce. Data from [Education Counts](#) shows that 8,343 of the 53,861 staff in schools are aged 60 and over (about 16 percent of the workforce). This data is not available for early learning services. There has also been a decline in the [number of students](#) commencing, or graduating from, ITE programmes since 2008. Given the likely shift in the teacher workforce profile over the next few years, it is important that teachers entering the profession are supported to develop the skills, knowledge and practices required for modern teaching and learning. Paradoxically, 42 percent of the NGTs working in schools in this evaluation were on fixed-term contracts.

In addition to the impact of the ageing workforce, [teacher shortages](#) continue in areas of greatest need, such as science, technology and mathematics, and of teachers with particular knowledge and skill such as te reo Māori. There has been significant government investment in teacher education and attempts to raise the status of the teaching profession in response to these challenges.

The Education Council is working with providers and stakeholders to redesign the ITE system to make sure new teachers are confident and well prepared when they enter the profession and have well-managed pathways to full certification. Proposals to lift and strengthen teacher education include raising the quality of practicum arrangements and replacing the Graduate Teaching Standards with the new [Standards for the Teaching Profession](#) (the Standards). The proposed changes aim to provide employers, students and the public with greater confidence that every new graduate meets the Standards (with support) when they start in their first teaching role.

ERO's [School Evaluation Indicators: Effective Practice for Improvement and Learner Success](#) highlight the importance of addressing persistent disparities in our education system. The two domains of practice with the most influence on student outcomes are **educationally powerful connections and relationships** and **responsive curriculum, effective teaching and opportunity to learn**. The indicators note that what teachers do and know is an important influence on students' learning and emphasise the importance of teachers being adaptive experts who can respond flexibly in complex contexts.

Several recent ERO [national evaluation reports](#) about curriculum, assessment and achievement have identified issues and concerns about leader/teacher capability to design and implement a curriculum that is responsive to all learners, particularly those whose underachievement is of concern, or those who need additional support to experience success.



Early learning services and schools are increasingly being asked to resolve complex social problems within our communities. Migration and demographic change is also changing the makeup of New Zealand's learner population, which is increasingly multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and from increasingly diverse cultural backgrounds. The number of ESOL (English for speakers of other languages)-funded students alone increased by 2,254 students in from Term 3, 2016 to Term 2, 2017. NGTs need to be well prepared to teach children from these increasingly diverse contexts. Indeed, for our system to be effective, we need ITE providers to be responsive to the changing nature of education in the 21st century.

This is a timely and relevant evaluation, as there is considerable system-wide interest in the quality of ITE. This evaluation is not directly of ITE provision, nevertheless our findings will contribute to discussion about the role of ITE in developing a highly capable and confident teaching workforce.



What did ERO do?

In this evaluation, ERO wanted to learn about the experiences of Newly Graduated Teachers (NGTs) as they entered the workforce.

In Terms 2 and 3, 2016, ERO conducted semi-structured interviews with leaders in 109 early learning services, and 209 NGTs in these services. These teachers were also invited to complete an online survey. The survey was completed by 70 teachers across 36 services.

ERO also conducted semi-structured interviews with leaders and teachers in schools. ERO talked to leaders at 118 schools, and 379 NGTs at these schools. The survey was completed by 182 NGTs from 75 different schools.

Appendix 2 outlines ERO's evaluation framework and approach to data gathering and synthesis. Further information about the services and schools in this evaluation is in *Appendix 3*.

ERO sought to answer the following evaluation questions:

- How confident and prepared do newly graduated teachers in **early learning services** feel/think they were to use the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* to:
 - design, implement and evaluate a curriculum that is responsive to the language, culture and identity of all of the children they are responsible for in their service, particularly those children at risk of poor educational outcomes
 - assess children's progress and learning and use this information to develop teaching strategies to promote positive learning outcomes
 - work collaboratively with the parents and whānau of children to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships.
- How confident and prepared do newly graduated teachers in **schools** feel/think they were in relation to:
 - having content and pedagogical knowledge appropriate to the learners and learning areas of their programme
 - having an understanding of the complex influences that personal, social and cultural factors may have on teachers and learners
 - using assessment tools to assess students' progress and achievement
 - using assessment data to plan teaching strategies that respond to the identity, language and culture of all learners and accelerate the progress of students at risk of underachievement in their class
 - systematically and critically engaging with evidence to reflect on and refine their practice
 - working collaboratively with the parents and whānau of identified students to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships.

Findings

ERO's findings from the interviews and surveys with NGTs and leaders are presented separately for early learning services and schools. These findings reflect leaders' and NGTs' perceptions of the NGTs' confidence and preparedness to teach. It is interesting to note that NGTs were more positive about their confidence and preparedness in their survey responses than they were in the more in-depth interviews ERO conducted with them.

Early learning services

Those NGTs who felt confident and prepared to teach generally had a good understanding of theory associated with curriculum and foundational knowledge of the early childhood curriculum, [*Te Whāriki*](#). They reported that their practicum experience was critical to building their confidence and preparing them as teachers. Leaders noted that students who were working in an early learning service prior to, or at the same time as gaining a qualification tended to be more confident and able to link theory to practice, particularly in relation to curriculum design and implementation.

NGTs who felt less prepared or confident told ERO they knew the theory but not how to implement it in practice. They felt they had limited knowledge about planning and the formative use of assessment information to plan, especially planning a curriculum that is responsive to children's language, culture and identity.

Where students had the opportunity to undertake practicum in a variety of different early learning services (different service types, with different age groups of children, and different philosophical approaches) this helped to strengthen their practice.

Curriculum design, implementation and evaluation

Leaders interviewed had a range of views about the preparedness and confidence of NGTs to use *Te Whāriki* to design and implement a curriculum responsive to children's language, culture and identity. They considered it was not good enough for NGTs to just have foundational knowledge of the curriculum in terms of theoretical understandings. They needed to know how to articulate this knowledge and apply it to practice. Many NGTs were not confident and prepared to plan a curriculum responsive to children's language, culture and identity. This aspect, along with self review, inquiry and reflective practice, managing children's behaviour and promoting social competence, bicultural practice, te reo Māori and tikanga Māori were all cited as areas of weakness.

Although about two-thirds of the NGTs who completed the online survey reported they felt confident or very confident to design, implement and evaluate a curriculum responsive to children's language, culture and identity, interviews revealed that the extent to which their courses prepared NGTs to work with diverse learners was highly variable. Often their courses gave emphasis to bicultural practice with minimal focus on the importance of children's language, culture and identity in planning a responsive curriculum.

Other aspects of practice NGTs felt they could have been better prepared for included working with infants and toddlers, and with children with additional learning needs. Those studying through a field-based provider told ERO that they were expected to learn a lot 'on the job' and gained the most knowledge from working in centre at the same time as completing their qualification.

Assessment

Leaders interviewed identified assessment as an area NGTs were less confident and not as well prepared to incorporate into their teaching, particularly when using assessment information to inform their teaching strategies. They told ERO that NGTs tended to have basic knowledge of 'learning stories' and how to write them but were not so prepared to notice and recognise learning, and were less confident with assessing children's progress. Leaders noted that ITE programmes provided theoretical knowledge, and services were expected to provide the opportunity to apply this in practice.

Leaders needed to support NGTs with assessment, particularly in relation to focusing on making children's learning visible. One leader commented the NGT *"was good at noticing and needed to be reminded that it was about significant learning."*

Although nearly 80 percent of the NGTs who completed the online survey rated themselves as confident or very confident in relation to assessment, interviews with NGTs highlighted a lack of confidence and preparedness in relation to how to assess and document children's learning, and how to use assessment information to identify teaching strategies. What they did learn about assessment was largely focused on a 'learning stories' approach with limited opportunities to learn about different assessment approaches and techniques. Other issues raised by NGTs included a lack of focus in their ITE programme on dispositions, assessment portfolios and bicultural assessment.

Assessment was an area where the theory-practice link was not sufficiently robust to enable NGTs to feel confident and prepared. Expectations were not always understood and shared as to the relationship between what was being learnt through the ITE programme and the role of practicum in supporting this learning. One NGT highlighted this – *"My ITE tutor said 'you learn that (assessment) on placement' and my associate teachers said 'you should be learning that at university'."*

Working collaboratively with parents and whānau

Leaders and NGTs interviewed expressed a variety of views about NGTs' confidence and preparedness to work collaboratively with parents and whānau. Although leaders acknowledged the important role of practicum in building student teachers' confidence to work with parents and whānau, this is an area that students did not always get to experience on practicum. Leaders told ERO that NGTs were sometimes confident to talk with parents about things such as health and safety, but were not as confident to have more in-depth conversations about children's learning. Leaders also noted the challenges for NGTs in working collaboratively with parents and whānau of learners from diverse cultural backgrounds.

NGTs identified similar issues, often with services or associate teachers not allowing them to talk to parents when on practicum. One NGT was told by her associate teacher, *“it is not your place to talk to parents on placement.”* Others felt confident about developing relationships with parents and whānau but found having more courageous conversations about a child’s learning more difficult. NGTs who felt confident to work with parents attributed this to the strong focus on relationships in *Te Whāriki*. Conversely, others noted it was not a strong focus of their study. Shyness and confidence were personal issues that sometimes contributed to NGTs lacking confidence and feeling not so well prepared.

NGTs who completed the online survey were most confident about working collaboratively with parents and whānau. Eighty-seven percent rated themselves confident or very confident in this area. A few NGTs noted this was an area they needed support with, especially in relation to developing relationships and with communication.

Personal qualities

Leaders recognised the importance of the personal qualities of NGTs that contributed to their confidence and preparedness to teach. These qualities included being motivated, enthusiastic, warm, caring, passionate and mindful. Being able to form relationships and build on these relationships to work collaboratively in partnership with parents and whānau was often seen by leaders to be more about the personal qualities of the person rather than something that can be learnt in an ITE programme. Leaders recognised the new knowledge NGTs brought to their service and their strengths in communication and working collaboratively.

Schools

Overall, NGTs in schools felt confident in their preparation to be teachers, however they tended to be more confident about their content and pedagogical knowledge than their ability to use assessment data to show progress, plan strategies and refine their practice.

NGTs’ personalities, life experiences and learning on practicum supported them to feel confident. They found it useful when practicum was across a broad variety of contexts and aligned with the theory they learnt.

Leaders and NGTs identified variability in the content and quality of their preparation across lecturers, courses and ITE providers, and across NGTs’ experiences on practicum.

A stronger alignment between NGTs’ learning on practicum and in lectures would better support their confidence in their preparation. NGTs reported that when theory and practicum aligned, practicum was a useful way to develop their understandings. They felt less confident when what they experienced on practicum did not align with the theory they were taught. Links between theory and practice were not always explicit, which limited NGTs’ confidence.

Content and pedagogical knowledge

NGTs generally felt well prepared with the content and pedagogical knowledge they needed to begin work as a teacher. Over 80 percent of NGTs who responded to the survey reported feeling confident they had the content and pedagogical knowledge they needed.

NGTs were supported to be confident in their content and pedagogical knowledge by learning about theories and philosophies that inform teaching, as well as practical strategies they could use in their class. They generally felt they were prepared to plan lessons and units. Practicums were helpful for many NGTs' understanding of the theory they learnt, and how it related to their practice.

When NGTs did not feel as confident or prepared, it was often because the theory they learnt did not link to what they experienced on practicum, or it was too theoretical and they did not see how it applied in practice. Some courses had too little focus on areas outside of reading, writing and mathematics or the pedagogy they were taught was outdated. Others wanted to know more about working in a Modern Learning Environment (MLE).

Leaders also noted NGTs' sound baseline knowledge that they could build on over time, but identified some areas where they felt NGTs could be better prepared. These included up-to-date pedagogical knowledge, a broader understanding of curriculum and pedagogy, and working in an MLE. Leaders recognised it can be challenging to take theoretical knowledge and apply it practically, and that NGTs learnt a lot when they first started teaching.

NGTs who felt less confident and prepared also identified areas that ITEs could improve, such as better preparation for teaching students with additional learning needs, students who were at risk of underachievement, or extending students who were achieving well, and the day-to-day practices they needed as new teachers. They needed more opportunities to develop confidence in areas such as setting up a classroom, writing a report or planning a trip. Leaders agreed this was an area they needed to build NGTs' capability in.

Both leaders and NGTs highlighted classroom and behaviour management as an area that needed more support.

Understanding personal, social and cultural factors

Nearly all the NGTs who responded to the survey felt confident in their ability to develop positive relationships with learners and members of their learning community. In interviews, NGTs told ERO they learnt about a variety of factors that influenced students' learning, particularly the importance of culture. They felt their own culture and life experiences supported them to better understand the influences these things could have on students.

NGTs who felt less prepared to understand and respond to the personal, social and cultural factors that influence learning said their learning about the various influences could have been more in depth or more authentic. They told ERO they would have benefited from having more diverse experiences on practicum. For example, some had all their practicums at high decile schools.

Leaders told ERO that while some NGTs were culturally competent and had a good understanding of the factors that influence learning, others were naïve to the complexity of these influences. They said reality was a shock for some NGTs, and they could be better prepared for diverse contexts. NGTs' confidence in this area was thought to be dependent on their personality, life skills and previous experiences. Leaders noted variability in NGTs' preparedness depending on their course and practicum experiences.

Assessment

Assessment, its analysis and use to inform planning and practice was a common area that needed strengthening. Leaders told ERO that NGTs often had little understanding of assessment tools, moderation, data analysis or data use. They said NGTs' knowledge and understanding was dependent on what they learnt on practicum, and many were learning about assessment 'on the job'.

NGTs felt more confident when they had opportunities to learn about assessment on practicum. These opportunities helped NGTs develop some understanding of assessment tools, and NGTs felt more confident when they had opportunities to practice using assessment during their ITE.

NGTs were not always prepared well enough to be confident in the use of National Standards or National Certificate of Educational Achievement, or to use achievement data to plan strategies to accelerate the progress of students at risk of underachievement. NGTs did not understand what acceleration was, and did not use data to inform their planning and teaching. Leaders said some NGTs were prepared in theory, but not ready to do this in practice. Moderating judgements, and reporting on achievement to parents, was also an area that some leaders felt needed strengthening. Assessment and data analysis were among the main areas leaders were building NGT capability in.

Nearly one-third of teachers that completed the survey were only somewhat confident or not confident at all to use data to inform their planning. In general, secondary school teachers rated themselves as more confident to do this than primary school teachers.

Engaging with evidence to reflect on and refine practice

Leaders noted variability in NGTs' understanding of teaching as inquiry. Although leaders saw NGTs attempting reflective practice, they noted variability in the extent that NGTs used evidence to refine their practice. While some NGTs were improvement focused, making changes to their practice based on evidence and reflection, other NGTs reflected, but were not focused on improvement or outcomes.

Reflections on practicum often supported NGTs to feel confident and well prepared, as did the feedback they received. However, NGTs had mixed views as to how well supported and encouraged they were to use data to inform their reflections. In addition, a few felt they could reflect on what worked or not, but were not well prepared to improve their practice based on their reflections.

Working collaboratively with parents and whānau

NGTs' interpersonal skills and life experiences were a good foundation for them to engage with parents and whānau.

NGTs felt more confident in their relationships with students, than in their ability to work collaboratively with parents and whānau. Leaders noted this was largely dependent on NGTs' interpersonal skills, and that age and experience supported them to be more confident to engage with parents about their child's learning.

Just under three-quarters of NGTs that responded to the survey indicated they were confident to work with parents and whānau. NGTs employed in primary schools rated themselves more confident to work collaboratively with parents and whānau than NGTs teaching in secondary schools.

Leaders told ERO that NGTs often developed good relationships with parents and whānau and understood the need to work with parents around students' learning. Some lacked the strategies to develop learning-centred partnerships. Leaders noted the challenge of taking theoretical knowledge and applying it practically. They commented that student teachers had limited opportunities to practise things like working collaboratively with parents before starting in their teaching role.

Personal qualities

Leaders recognised and valued the personal qualities of NGTs as being important to their confidence to teach. Leaders valued NGTs' enthusiasm and passion for the role, and their willingness to learn. Leaders said NGTs were hard working and quick to pick up the knowledge and skills they needed for their role. They saw that NGTs had a holistic view of student success, and developed good relationships with their students.

A few leaders commented that ITE providers should be more selective of the students they accept, or that they allow to graduate. Leaders said they employed NGTs that fit the culture of the school, and then built on their strengths and areas for development. For some leaders, having NGTs was seen as more work for the school, because of the need to upskill them, while others said they felt it was their professional responsibility to employ NGTs, to support the profession.



Discussion

This evaluation provided an opportunity to give voice to leaders and NGTs about how prepared and confident new teachers are when entering the workforce. ERO's findings highlight the importance of making sure theoretical learning aligns with the practical experience that occurs on practicum and on entry to teaching, and that NGTs are well prepared in key aspects of teaching practice.

Regular student teacher placement or practicum over the course of a teacher education programme is critical to gaining the practical skills required in becoming an effective teacher. Our findings indicated that practicum experiences had been mixed for many of the NGTs we talked with, with many reporting a lack of alignment between programme content and what the pre-service teacher was exposed to or experienced during their school and early learning placement.

As we have indicated in our recommendations there is a need for closer partnership between initial teacher education providers and the schools and early learning services involved with student practicum/placement. The selection of placements and supervising or associate teachers should be done with the explicit intent of facilitating skill development for the student teacher. This partnership needs to be deliberate and focussed on the integration of conceptual theoretical elements of the programme with real life opportunities for the student teacher to observe, apply and reflect on the application of what they are covering through their pre-service programme. Early learning services and schools that take on this role should be those which have a strong professional learning culture.

NGTs told ERO it was useful to have practicum opportunities across a variety of contexts during their ITE, in order to better understand the diversity of learners. However we found that practicum experiences did not always enable student teachers to put theory into practice and build their confidence in a variety of different contexts. NGTs also identified gaps in their learning in relation to key aspects of teaching practice. ERO is particularly concerned that assessment literacy, and the use of assessment information to plan, improve and evaluate practice needed strengthening for NGTs in both early learning services and schools.

Associate or supervising teachers have a major part to play in the placement experience and learning of student and newly graduated teachers. In this, associate or supervising teachers should be aware of the importance and commitment of taking on such a role. They should equally have sufficient training and support from the pre-service programme provider to ensure that they can successfully guide, mentor, coach and assess the student teacher while they are present in their school, centre and classroom. They need to be able to model quality practice and translate for the student the rationale and intent of their own teaching strategies and approaches.

It is important that associate teachers create opportunities that allow the student teacher to experiment, adapt and improve on their practice, allowing the student teacher to build their confidence through gradually increasing their level of autonomy and independence. Critical to this is being clear from the outset of the intentions and expectations that the student teacher is pursuing in a lesson or learner engagement, having strong observational skills, providing timely and regular feedback to the student teacher and modelling specific practice which the student teacher is attempting to develop. Assisting the student teacher and NGT to make sense of what

they are seeing, and how they are impacting learner outcomes are core to the role of the associate or supervising teacher.

Associate teachers have a responsibility to introduce the student teacher to the school community and to their teacher colleagues, ensuring that they are included as an important member of the school, syndicate or service's professional learning community. They also have a role in facilitating opportunities for student teacher to seek advice, to observe and reflect on teaching practices from across the school or service. Such reflective practice includes the skills to share and analyse their own and others' practice, inquiry, team teaching approaches, and a collective responsibility in increasingly diverse contexts.

The current variability of NGT's confidence and preparedness as they begin their teaching career means the extent and nature of support they need to reach full certification must also be differentiated, to compensate for such variation. NGTs require ongoing focused guidance and mentoring from leaders and teachers, critically in relation to assessment for learning, responding to diverse learners, and working collaboratively with parents and whānau.

The difficulty experienced by NGTs in gaining initial permanent employment and the use of fixed-term contracts for NGTs further reduces opportunities for these teachers to be well supported as they enter the profession. ERO found that the mentoring and guidance needed to enable completion of full certification requirements is often not available when NGTs are not appointed to permanent positions, or when the conditions in a school or service preclude active consideration of their learning needs. NGTs need not only the skills, but confidence, through both their ITE programme and PCT phase, to fully participate in a community of professional learning. This is not the role of ITE providers alone; increased responsibility and support for NGTs is needed in early learning services and schools.

Associate or supervising teachers and leaders should look to the experience as an opportunity to learn and grow in their own practice and leadership. To engage with teacher educators, students and NGTs about new pedagogical thinking, to develop or build on mentoring and coaching skills and to continue to reflect on their own practice and its impact on learning.



Conclusion

This evaluation raises significant questions about the extent to which student teachers and newly graduated teachers are supported to develop the necessary skills and strategies to become competent and capable teachers. ERO has found that currently many NGTs feel they have, and are perceived as having, limitations in their confidence and preparation as they begin teaching. Given the government's considerable investment in ITE this is not a satisfactory situation.

Although leaders recognised that most NGTs were enthusiastic, hardworking and passionate about their role, the concerns raised about lack of confidence and preparedness to teach signal a need for improved system alignment. In order to better prepare NGTs it is essential ITE providers, associate teachers, school and service leaders, students and newly graduated teachers have clarity about their roles and expectations in the preparation of teachers entering the profession.

Several recent ERO national evaluation reports have identified issues and concerns about teachers' capability to design and implement a curriculum responsive to all learners, particularly those whose underachievement is of concern or those who need additional support to experience success. ERO's evidence highlights the need for teachers to be better prepared and given ongoing support in these critical areas.

Given considerable system-wide interest in strengthening the teaching profession, ERO's findings contribute to further discussion about the roles and responsibilities during ITE and professional support towards certification, in developing a highly capable and confident teaching workforce.



Appendix 1: Approved ITE providers 2016

ITE Provider	Sector	Current qualifications
Te Pū Wānanga o Anamata	Primary	Bachelor
Te Wānanga o Aotearoa	Primary	Bachelor
The University of Auckland	ECE	Bachelor Graduate Diploma
	Primary	Bachelor Graduate Diploma Master's
	Secondary	Bachelor of Physical Education Graduate Diploma Postgraduate Diploma (Field based) Master's
Auckland University of Technology	ECE	National Diploma Bachelor
	Primary	Bachelor Master's
	Secondary	Graduate Diploma
Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi	Early Years	Bachelor
	Primary	Bachelor
Bethlehem Institute of Education	ECE	Diploma Bachelor Graduate Diploma
	Primary	Bachelor
	Secondary	Graduate Diploma

ITE Provider	Sector	Current qualifications
University of Canterbury	ECE	Bachelor Master's
	Primary	Bachelor Master's
	Secondary	Bachelor of Education (Physical Education) Graduate Diploma Master's
Eastern Institute of Technology	ECE	Bachelor
	Primary	Bachelor
Laidlaw College	Primary	Bachelor
Manukau Institute of Technology	ECE	Bachelor
Massey University	ECE	Graduate Diploma
	Primary	Graduate Diploma Master's
	Secondary	Graduate Diploma Master's
New Zealand Graduate School of Education	Primary	Graduate Diploma
	Secondary	Graduate Diploma
New Zealand College of Early Childhood Education	ECE	Bachelor
New Zealand Tertiary College	ECE	Bachelor Graduate Diploma

ITE Provider	Sector	Current qualifications
Open Polytechnic	ECE	Bachelor
The University of Otago	ECE	Bachelor Graduate Diploma
	Primary	Bachelor Master's
	Secondary	Master's
Te Wānanga o Raukawa	ECE	Bachelor
	Primary	Bachelor
Te Wānanga Takiura o ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa	Primary	Bachelor
Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand	ECE	Bachelor
Unitec Institute of Technology	ECE	Bachelor
Victoria University of Wellington	ECE	Bachelor Graduate Diploma
	Primary	Bachelor Graduate Diploma Master's
	Secondary	Graduate Diploma Master's
Toi-Ohomai Institute of Technology	ECE	Bachelor Master's

ITE Provider	Sector	Current qualifications
University of Waikato	ECE	Bachelor Graduate Diploma
	Primary	Bachelor Graduate Diploma Master's
	Secondary	Graduate Diploma Master's
Waikato Institute of Technology	ECE	Bachelor
Whitireia Community Polytechnic	ECE	Bachelor



Appendix 2: Evaluation framework and questions

Overall evaluation questions

- How confident and prepared do newly graduated teachers in **early learning services** feel/think they were to use the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* to:
 - design, implement and evaluate a curriculum that is responsive to the language, culture and identity of all of the children they are responsible for in their service, particularly those children at risk of poor educational outcomes
 - assess children's progress and learning and use this information to develop teaching strategies to promote positive learning outcomes
 - work collaboratively with the parents and whānau of children to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships.
- How confident and prepared do newly graduated teachers in **schools** feel/think they were in relation to:
 - having content and pedagogical knowledge appropriate to the learners and learning areas of their programme
 - having an understanding of the complex influences that personal, social and cultural factors may have on teachers and learners
 - using assessment tools to assess students' progress and achievement
 - using assessment data to plan teaching strategies that respond to the identity, language and culture of all learners and accelerate the progress of students at risk of underachievement in their class
 - systematically and critically engaging with evidence to reflect on and refine their practice
 - working collaboratively with the parents and whānau of identified students to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships.

Approach to data gathering and synthesis

ERO gathered data from interviews with leaders and NGTs in early learning services and schools and from two online surveys of NGTs. The interviews were undertaken in early learning services and schools having an education review between 23 May and 23 September 2016. ERO reviewers provided NGTs with links to the online survey during the onsite phase of the review. The surveys could only be accessed by NGTs in the services or schools being reviewed.

NGTs' responses to the surveys were synthesised alongside interview data from leaders and NGTs to develop higher-level findings.



Questions for semi-structured interviews with leaders and NGTs in services and schools

Questions for semi-structured interviews with leaders in early learning services

1. What is your experience of employing newly graduated teachers (provisionally certificated teachers; PCTs) in the last three years?
2. How confident and prepared do you think they were to:
 - a. design, implement and evaluate a curriculum that is responsive to the language, culture and identity of all of the children they are responsible for in their service
 - b. assess children's progress and learning and use this information to develop teaching strategies to promote positive learning outcomes
 - c. work collaboratively with the parents and whānau of children to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships?
3. What do you see as their strengths? What areas have been a focus for building capability as PCTs? What gaps have you noticed? What support are you providing?
4. What is the employment status of your current PCTs/fully certificated teachers (FCTs) in their first year of being fully certificated? For instance, permanent teaching positions, long or short term relieving?
5. From your experience of employing new graduates do you have a preference for particular ITE provider(s)? Which providers? Why?
6. Are there any ITE providers you wouldn't employ graduates from? Which providers? Why?
7. Do you have any other comments regarding the preparation and confidence of newly graduated teachers?

Questions for semi-structured interviews with PCTs/FCTs in early learning services

1. Teachers to introduce themselves to reviewers sharing information about when they graduated and what year of PCT/FCT they are.
2. How confident and prepared were you when you graduated to:
 - design, implement and evaluate a curriculum that is responsive to the language, culture and identity of all of the children they are responsible for in your service
 - assess children's progress and learning and use this information to develop teaching strategies to promote positive learning outcomes
 - work collaboratively with the parents and whānau of children to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships?
3. What did your ITE provider do well to prepare you in relation to these aspects of practice?
4. What could your ITE provider have done to better prepare you in relation to these aspects of practice?
5. What support are you receiving to address aspects of practice you need to improve?
6. How do you know about your strengths and areas for improvement? Self assessment? Peer assessment?
7. To what extent have you been able to use what you learnt through your initial teacher education programme in this service? What has enabled you to use what you learnt? What have been the barriers or challenges?

8. What are your views about assessment and assessing children's learning? To what extent have you been able to use what you learnt about assessment in this service? Is what you learnt reflected in your current assessment practice in this service? If yes, in what ways? If not, what is different? Why?
9. What is your employment tenure?

Questions for semi-structured interviews with leaders in schools

1. What is your experience of employing newly graduated teachers (provisionally registered teachers) in the last three years?
2. How confident and prepared do you think they were in relation to:
 - a. having content and pedagogical knowledge appropriate to the learners and learning areas of their programme
 - b. having an understanding of the complex influences that personal, social and cultural factors may have on teachers and learners
 - c. using assessment tools to assess students' progress and achievement
 - d. using assessment data to plan teaching strategies that are responsive to the identity, language and culture of all learners and accelerate the progress of students at risk of underachievement in their class
 - e. systematically and critically engaging with evidence to reflect on and refine their practice
 - f. working collaboratively with the parents and whānau of identified students to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships?
3. What do you see as their strengths? What areas have been a focus for building capability as PCTs? What gaps have you noticed? What support are you providing?
4. What is the employment status of your current PCTs/FCTs in their first year of being fully certificated? For instance, permanent teaching positions, long or short term relieving?
5. From your experience of employing new graduates do you have a preference for particular ITE provider(s)? Which providers? Why?
6. Are there any ITE providers you wouldn't employ graduates from? Which providers? Why?
7. Do you have any other comments regarding the preparation and confidence of newly graduated teachers?

Questions for semi-structured interviews with PCTs/FCTs in schools

1. Teachers to introduce themselves to reviewers sharing information about when they graduated and what year of PCT/FCT they are.
2. How well prepared do you think you were in relation to:
 - a. having content and pedagogical knowledge appropriate to the learners and learning areas of their programme
 - b. having an understanding of the complex influences that personal, social and cultural factors may have on teachers and learners

- c. using assessment tools to assess students' progress and achievement
 - d. using assessment data to plan teaching strategies that respond to the identity, language and culture of all learners and accelerate the progress of students at risk of underachievement in your class
 - e. systematically and critically engaging with evidence to reflect on and refine their practice
 - f. working collaboratively with the parents and whānau of identified students to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships?
3. What did your ITE provider do well to prepare you in relation to these aspects of practice?
4. What could your ITE provider have done to better prepare you in relation to these aspects of practice?
5. What support are you receiving to address aspects of practice you need to improve?
6. How do you know about your strengths and areas for improvement? Self assessment? Peer assessment?
7. To what extent have you been able to use what you learnt through your initial teacher education programme in this school? What has enabled you to use what you learnt? What have been the barriers or challenges?
8. What are your views about the analysis and use of data in teaching and learning? To what extent have you been able to use what you learnt about analysing and using data in this school? Is what you learnt reflected in your current practice in this school? If yes, in what ways? If not what is different? Why?
9. What is your employment tenure?
10. Any other comments



Online survey questions

Questions for PCTs/FCTs in early learning services

1. Confidence and preparedness to teach

Use the seven Graduating Teacher Standards (with indicators alongside each standard) and a Likert scale to rate their confidence and preparedness against the standards (4 point scale)

Provide a box for overall comment.

2. How confident and prepared do you think you were you to (use 4 point scale and comment):

- design, implement and evaluate a curriculum that is responsive to the language, culture and identity of all of the children you are responsible for in your service
- assess children's progress and learning and use this information to develop teaching strategies to promote positive learning outcomes
- work collaboratively with the parents and whānau of children to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships?

3. What did your ITE provider do well to prepare you in relation to these aspects of practice?

4. What could your ITE provider have done to better prepare you in relation to these aspects of practice?

5. What aspects of practice have you had support with since you graduated?

6. What aspects of practice do you need further support with?

7. To what extent have you been able to use what you learnt through your initial teacher education programme in this service? (4 point Likert scale)

8. Are you in a permanent teaching position?

If yes, how long have you been in this position?

If no, what is your tenure?

9. Did you participate in a semi-structured interview with ERO reviewers? Y/N

10. Any other comments

Questions for PCTs/FCTs in schools

Preparedness to teach in relation to the [Graduating Teacher Standards \(GTS\)](#)

1. Use the seven GTS (with indicators alongside each standard) and a Likert scale to rate their preparedness against the standards (4 point scale)

Provide a box for overall comment.

2. How well prepared do you think you were in relation to (use 4 point scale and comment):

- a. having content and pedagogical knowledge appropriate to the learners and learning areas of their programme
- b. having an understanding of the complex influences that personal, social and cultural factors may have on teachers and learners
- c. using assessment tools to assess students' progress and achievement

- d. using assessment data to plan teaching strategies that respond to the identity, language and culture of all learners and accelerate the progress of students at risk of underachievement in your class
 - e. systematically and critically engaging with evidence to reflect on and refine their practice
 - f. working collaboratively with the parents and whānau of identified students to develop and maintain learner-centred relationships.
3. What did your ITE provider do well to prepare you in relation to these aspects of practice?
4. What could your ITE provider have done to better prepare you in relation to these aspects of practice?
5. What aspects of practice have you had support with since you graduated?
6. What aspects of practice do you need further support with?
7. To what extent have you been able to use what you learnt through your initial teacher education programme in this school? (4 point Likert scale)
8. Are you in a permanent teaching position?
If yes, how long have you been in this position?
If no, what is your tenure?
9. Did you participate in a semi-structured interview with ERO reviewers? Y/N
10. Any other comments.



Appendix 3: Services and schools in this evaluation

Early learning services

The sample included more education and care services and fewer kindergartens than is representative of national picture. The services' locations were representative of the national location distribution of services.

Table 1: Service type

Early learning service type	Number of ELS in sample	Percentage of ELS in sample	National percentage of ELS
Kindergarten	3	3%	21%
Education and care	106	97%	79%
Total	109	100%	100%

Table 2: Location

Early learning service location	Number of ELS in sample	Percentage of ELS in sample	National percentage of ELS
Main Urban Area	85	78%	77%
Secondary Urban Area	5	5%	6%
Minor Urban Area	10	9%	12%
Rural Area	9	8%	5%
Total	109	100%	100%

NGTs who completed the survey

The survey was completed by 70 NGTs. Of these, two were employed in fixed term positions, and 68 were employed in permanent positions.

Certification status:

- 52 PCTs
- 18 FCTs

Qualification:

- 12 with a Diploma
- 47 with a Bachelor's Degree
- 10 with a Post Graduate Diploma

Age:

- 33 aged 21-29
- 18 aged 30-39
- 15 aged 40-49
- 4 aged 50-59



Schools

The sample included more main urban area schools and fewer rural area schools than is representative of the national picture. The sample also included more very large and large schools, and fewer very small and small schools than is representative of the national picture.

The sample was representative of New Zealand schools in terms of school type and decile.

Table 3: School type

School type	Number of schools in sample	Percentage of schools in sample	National percentage of schools
Contributing	38	32%	33%
Full Primary	41	35%	44%
Intermediate	13	11%	5%
Composite (Year 1-15)	2	2%	4%
Secondary (Year 7-15)	8	7%	4%
Secondary (Year 9-15)	16	13%	10%
Total	118	100%	100%

Table 4: Decile

Decile Group	Number of schools in sample	Percentage of schools in sample	National percentage of schools
Low Decile	28	24%	29%
Medium Decile	50	42%	40%
High Decile	40	34%	31%
Total	118	100%	100%



Table 5: Location

School location	Number of schools in sample	Percentage of schools in sample	National percentage of schools
Main Urban Area	92	78%	53%
Secondary Urban Area	7	6%	6%
Minor Urban Area	9	8%	13%
Rural Area	10	8%	28%
Total	118	100%	100%

Table 6: School size

School roll size	Number of schools in sample	Percentage of schools in sample	National percentage of schools
Very Small	0	0	9
Small	11	9	24
Medium	49	42	36
Large	40	34	21
Very Large	18	15	10
Total	118	100%	100%

NGTs who completed the survey

The survey was completed by 182 NGTs. Of these, 77 were employed in fixed term positions, and 105 were employed permanently.

Certification status:

- 136 PCTs
- 46 FCTs

Qualification:

- 101 with a Graduate or Post Graduate Diploma
- 68 with a Bachelor's Degree
- 7 with a Master's Degree

Age:

- 106 aged 21-29
- 48 aged 30-39
- 22 aged 40-49
- 6 aged 50-59

