

Briefing report

Education Review Office (ERO): Overseas Trained Teachers evaluation – initial findings

Date	19 February 2020
Security Level	N/A
ERO Priority	Medium
ERO Reference	M20-2
Date requested	ERO initiated
Date due	ERO initiated
Proactive release	Recommended

Addressee	Action sought	Deadline
Minister of Education	<p>It is recommended that you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) note ERO's findings from surveys on how overseas trained teachers are adjusting to living and working in New Zealand and the implications for their schools. b) note ERO has shared initial findings, including a policy note, with the Ministry of Education and Teaching Council. c) note ERO intends to share these findings with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Education Payroll and Immigration New Zealand. d) note ERO intends to have the final report completed and released by April 2020. e) note this briefing is recommended for release at the time of our publication of this study. 	



Attachments:

***Education Review Office (ERO):
Overseas Trained Teachers
evaluation – initial findings***

Comments:

Minister's Office to complete	
Noted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Referred to:	
Date signed by Minister:	



Our Ref: M20-2

19 February 2020

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

Overseas Trained Teachers evaluation – initial findings

Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with initial findings from ERO's Overseas Trained Teachers (OTT) evaluation, based on surveys of OTTs and their principals. The surveys sought feedback about the recruitment, placement and post-placement phases of these teachers' arrival to work in New Zealand schools. This briefing also outlines how ERO intends to release these findings.

Background

2. In mid-2018 the New Zealand Government announced a package of supply-side initiatives to meet the immediate and rising demand for teachers. This package included the provision of a pool of qualified OTTs.
3. ERO wanted to investigate how well OTTs new to New Zealand had adapted to working and living here. This involved an exploratory case study in August 2019 and was followed by a survey of OTTs in September 2019, and a separate survey of principals of the schools who had employed these OTTs in November 2019.
4. ERO structured the evaluation to gather perceptions from both principals who had hired an OTT and the OTTs themselves. The focus was on those employed in the 12 months prior to September 2019.
5. For the case study, ERO visited a school where half the teaching staff were OTTs. Interviews with the OTTs and senior leaders of this school provided key themes about the OTTs' and leaders' experience with recruitment and placement of the OTTs into the school.

6. A policy brief on teacher migration, which included findings from the visit to this school, was shared with The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) in early November 2019 and the Teaching Council in February 2020 in order to support their policy development systems and practices as they relate to the 2020 recruitment round. This policy brief was not released publicly.

ERO survey

7. In the absence of systematic information about which schools nationally had hired OTTs, ERO emailed principals in September 2019 asking if they had hired any overseas trained teachers who were new to New Zealand in the previous 12 months. If so, principals were then requested to forward the ERO survey to their OTTs. Completion of the survey was voluntary and ERO received responses from 143 OTTs. This approach had the support of both NZEI and PPTA.
8. OTTs identified the country where they had spent their longest time teaching. In total 17 different countries were identified. Forty-five percent of respondents indicated that the longest previous teaching experience had been in South Africa.
9. Almost half of the OTTs (48 percent) had used one of the three recruitment agencies that are supporting the supply-side initiatives.¹ The rest were presumably directly recruited by schools.
10. The separate survey of principals in November 2019 received 53 responses.
11. The findings of these surveys shape a story from principals and OTTs about how OTTs had adjusted to working and living in New Zealand.

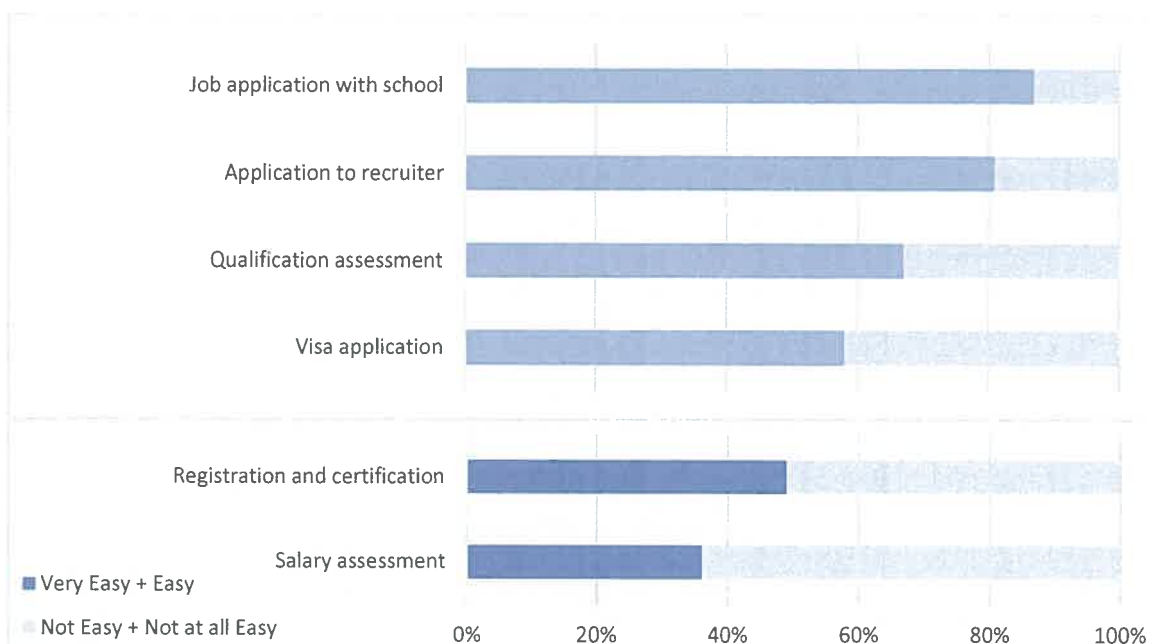
ERO's key findings

Recruitment process

12. During the recruitment process, OTTs were more likely to find interactions easy with their school or recruitment agency than with the four government agencies involved. These agencies are the Teaching Council, New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Immigration New Zealand and Education Payroll Limited.
13. Over half of OTTs found the recruitment process was difficult with the Teaching Council for registration and Education Payroll for salary assessment.

¹ Recruitment agencies, and the percentage of OTTs who had used them: Education Personnel (31%), Randstad Education (13%), and Oasis Recruitment (4%).

Figure 1: OTT interactions with government agencies, which were rated from 'Very easy' - 'Not at all easy'



14. OTTs who had commented on their experience with the recruitment process:
 - were challenged with the amount of documentation required, and the amount of processing time involved,
 - appreciated when government agencies were responsive to their applications and minimised the burden of required documentation. For example NZQA's list of pre-approved overseas teaching qualifications.
15. Almost all principals (98 percent) chose to hire an OTT due to shortage of applicants in New Zealand. Almost half of principals (46 percent) had chosen to hire an OTT for a particular skillset. This was the case for every secondary and special school principal.
16. Almost all principals (98 percent) were actively involved in the recruitment process, and most (82 percent) had assisted their OTTs with requirements for the government agencies.

Support for OTTs

17. Awareness of the Ministry funded support was limited. Almost one-third of OTTs did not attend any of the workshops, and less than half of the principals had offered the workshops to their OTTs.
18. Most OTTs (at least 80 percent) who attended at least one of the three Ministry funded workshops felt they were appropriate for their needs.²

² The Ministry has funded the University of Otago for a range of PD opportunities for OTTs. The workshops, and their content, offered for 2019/2020 were: Workshop 1 (offered in term 1): Te Reo, Tikanga, Māori and

19. Compared to the workshops, the modules and webinars had fewer OTTs³:
 - access these resources:
 - 46 percent did not access the modules
 - 59 percent had not accessed the webinars
 - find they fitted their needs:
 - 71 percent felt the modules fitted their needs
 - 60 percent felt the webinars fitted their needs
20. OTTs commented that the most common support their school had provided them with was a mentor.
21. Sixty-three percent of OTTs indicated they would appreciate more support from both their school and from external sources.
22. Principals had commented that a challenge of hiring an OTT was the limited resources they had to support them.

Adjustment to practice in schools, and living in New Zealand

23. Most OTTs felt they had adjusted to aspects of teaching in New Zealand.⁴
24. Most principals felt their OTTs had adjusted well to aspects of being a teacher in New Zealand⁵.
25. A sub-group of the sample was over-represented in not adjusting to working with *The New Zealand Curriculum* (the NZC), pedagogy and maintaining a work-life balance. This sub-group had come from a background where the teachers had been used to a prescriptive curriculum and didactic pedagogy.
26. Over half of OTTs (56 percent) felt they did not have a good understanding of the implications of the Treaty of Waitangi for their practice or the implications of tikanga when interacting with Māori learners.
27. Half of principals agreed their OTTs did not understand the implications of the Treaty of Waitangi for their practice. Over half of principals (53 percent) felt their OTTs did not understand the implications of tikanga when interacting with Māori learners.
28. OTTs commented on the benefits of living in New Zealand which included its people and lifestyle, natural environment, and safety.

Culturally Responsive Teaching; Workshop 2 (offered in term 2): Developing an understanding of the NZC; Workshop 3 (offered in term 3): Delving deeper: Design for Learning and the NZC.

³ Also funded through the University of Otago, OTTs can also access online modules and webinars. The online module content included: An Introduction to Te Reo Māori, An Introduction to Tikanga Māori, An Introduction to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Aotearoa New Zealand, Gaining a Full Practising Certificate, and Developing an Understanding of the NZC.

⁴ This included the content of the NZC, pedagogy, developing relationships with learners and their parents, the culture of their students, and maintaining a work-life balance.

⁵ This included the NZC content, pedagogy, planning and assessment, behaviour management, the culture of their students, relationships with co-workers, students and parents, managing wellbeing, and work-life balance.

29. Principals commented that the benefits of hiring an OTT included their willingness to learn, their existing knowledge base, and an opportunity for the school to learn from their experience. However, one-fifth of principals identified the only benefit was having a teacher in a classroom.
30. The most common challenge OTT's identified was the cost of living.
31. Principals commented that the challenges of hiring an OTT included the resourcing requirements to support them, and the assistance they needed to shift their teaching practice to suit the New Zealand context.

Summary

32. The recruitment process was easiest for OTTs when interacting with their school or recruitment agency. Fewer OTTs found interactions with the four government agencies easy, with documentation requirements and the time taken for applications being common challenges for them.
33. Principals were most likely to hire an OTT due to a shortage of New Zealand based applicants. All secondary and special schools hired an OTT for a specific skillset. Principals were highly involved in the recruitment process, and many also supported their OTTs with the process for government agencies.
34. The Ministry funded workshops fitted the needs of most OTTs who had attended. However, one-third of OTTs did not attend the workshops, and less than half of principals had offered the workshops to their OTTs.
35. Over half of OTTs indicated they would appreciate more support from their school and from external sources. Principals had commented on the challenge of providing adequate resourcing to support their OTTs.
36. Most OTTs had adjusted well to living and working in New Zealand. A sub-group of OTTs were more likely to have not adjusted to the NZC content, pedagogy and a work-life balance. Over half of OTTs felt they had not adjusted to understanding the implications of the Treaty of Waitangi and tikanga for Māori students.
37. Principals felt their OTTs had adjusted well to aspects of teaching practice. About half of principals felt their OTTs had not well understood the Treaty of Waitangi, and the implications of tikanga for Māori students.
38. Principals commented that the benefit of hiring an OTT was their enthusiasm and the skills they brought to their school. However, one-fifth of principals expressed the view that only benefit was having a teacher for a classroom.
39. Principals had commented that the challenge of hiring an OTT was the resourcing requirements to support them and helping them shift their practice to a New Zealand context.

Next steps

40. ERO is communicating initial findings of this evaluation to government agencies. ERO has met and discussed these findings with the Ministry of Education and Teaching Council. The draft findings will be sent to New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Education Payroll and Immigration New Zealand for feedback.

41. ERO intend to release a report, which includes these evaluation findings, by April 2020. The report will include recommendations for government agencies to consider.

Recommendations

42. It is recommended that you:

- a) **note** ERO's findings from surveys on how overseas trained teachers are adjusting to living and working in New Zealand and the implications for their schools. **noted**
- b) **note** ERO has shared initial findings, including a policy note, with the Ministry of Education and Teaching Council. **noted**
- c) **note** ERO intends to share these findings with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Education Payroll and Immigration New Zealand. **noted**
- d) **note** ERO intends to have the final report completed and released by April 2020. **noted**
- e) **note** this briefing is recommended for release at the time of our publication of this study. **noted**



Nicholas Pole
Chief Executive

NOTED/APPROVED



Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

2 / 3 / 20