



NETWORK OF ESTABLISHING TEACHERS

# PPTA beginning teachers' handbook

VITAL INFORMATION FOR  
NEW TEACHERS





# Welcome

As you begin your career as a professional teacher in New Zealand, it is important that you know your union can support and protect you.

PPTA Te Wehengarua is here to support you in your introduction to teaching and throughout your teaching career.

It is with great pleasure that we introduce you to the *Beginning Teachers' Handbook*. This handbook provides you with the vital information you require in starting your teaching career and the reasons why you should join your colleagues and become a member of your union and professional association.

The information contained in this publication is a quick reference only. More detailed information about all of the issues contained in this book are available from the PPTA branch at your workplace, the PPTA website [www.ppta.org.nz](http://www.ppta.org.nz) or you can contact the PPTA office in your area (see directory at the back of this publication).

We extend to you our best wishes for your teaching career.



Michael Stevenson  
General secretary



Jack Boyle  
President

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# PPTA, where teachers stand together

The Post Primary Teachers' Association Te Wehengarua is the professional body representing teachers and principals in secondary, area and intermediate schools, technicraft centres, community education and itinerant music positions.

## Supporting teachers

PPTA provides advice, guidance and advocacy about members' conditions of employment.

Members enjoy the following benefits:

- » Collective agreements that guarantee your pay and conditions
- » Professional and legal advice, employment relations education and dispute resolution
- » Professional networks where you can take part in decision-making and influence the debate on crucial education issues
- » Health, banking and insurance discounts.

## How PPTA works

PPTA is the voice of the post-primary teaching profession, with over 17,500 members who participate in the debates that shape our education system.

Each secondary, area school and technology centre has its own PPTA branch in one of 24 regions. Regions are represented on a national executive and at annual conference.

PPTA's executive and its Māori partner, Te Huarahi Māori Motuhake, are elected representatives who work for members nationally.

There are also networks for women, men, Pasifika teachers, new teachers, principals, DPs and APs, LGBTIQ+ teachers and other groups.

PPTA's annual conference has supreme authority within the association and is the forum where members debate and construct major policies.

# Network of establishing teachers

PPTA's network of establishing teachers (NET) provides support for young and new teachers in the first 10 years of their career.

NET is represented by the Establishing Teachers' Committee (ETC), that is highly active in the PPTA, meeting regularly, and advancing the concerns of beginning teachers at a national level.

The committee has contributed to the following successes.

- » PPTA membership cards
- » Regular bulletins for establishing teachers
- » The production of the Beginning Teachers' Handbook
- » Lump sum payments for PPTA members only in collective agreement settlements
- » Larger pay increases for entry-level teacher salaries
- » The establishment of the biennial NET conference
- » Biennial meetings with ITE student representatives
- » The Promise to New Teachers commitment to permanent employment

To join the network, email a brief request to [membership@ppta.org.nz](mailto:membership@ppta.org.nz) or tick the box on the PPTA membership application form.

## Follow us online

Facebook group: PPTANETs

Twitter: PPTA\_NETs

Web: [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz)

## How to join PPTA

Join online at [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz) or get a paper membership form from your branch secretary or local field office.

## Membership types and subscription rates

Full membership is for full- and part-time teachers, relief teachers and members who are on leave without pay for up to two years. Full members can vote and become conference delegates. The subscription rate is one percent of your fortnightly base salary.

Honorary membership is for retired members or members who are on leave without pay for a period of more than two years. Honorary members cannot vote or become conference delegates. The subscription rate is \$50 a year.

Membership for adult and community education (ACE) teachers is \$50 a year. ACE members can vote and become conference delegates.

Membership for student teachers is free. Student teachers cannot vote or become conference delegates. They can join PPTA online via the membership section of [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz)

## PPTA member discounts

Financial PPTA members are entitled to join HealthCare Plus — a health insurer owned by education unions in New Zealand. HealthCare Plus offers a variety of packages at cheaper rates than private insurers. Visit [www.healthcareplus.org.nz](http://www.healthcareplus.org.nz) or call 0800 800 441.

PPTA members are eligible for a special banking package with Kiwibank. Visit [www.ppta.org.nz/membership/benefits](http://www.ppta.org.nz/membership/benefits) to view the complete package and the terms and conditions that apply.

As a PPTA member you'll also enjoy discounts on a huge range of other products and services at outlets such as Placemakers, Hoyts, Repco, Noel Leeming, Beaurepaires and Specsavers to name a few.

# Maximum teaching hours

Non-contact time for all teachers has been improved significantly since 2002. This is especially the case for new teachers in their first two years' work as a secondary teacher. Sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3(a) of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA) states that no teacher shall be timetabled to teach more than 20 hours per week. Clause 3.8 of the STCA gives a further five hours non-contact time for first year teachers (0.2 FTTE) and 2.5 hours (0.1 FTTE) for second year teachers in full-time positions.

Non-contact time for secondary teachers in area schools can be found in subsection 4.2 of the Area School Teachers' Collective Agreement (ASTCA).

This means no full-time first-year teacher should be teaching more than 15 hours per week (an average of three hours per day). Second year full-time teachers should be teaching no more than 17.5 hours per week (an average of 3.5 hours per day).

Part-time first-year teachers who are employed for 12.5 (an average of 2.5 hours per day) or more hours per week are entitled to an additional 2.5 hours paid non-contact time (an average of half an hour per day). This should be either part of their 12.5 hours or an extra paid 2.5 hours non-teaching time.

Different schools have different timetable systems. For instance, some schools have a six-day, 30-hour timetable.

When applying STCA provisions, you need to use the average daily time to work out the maximum teaching time over the cycle.

Thus, in a six-day timetable:

- » a first-year teacher should be teaching no more than 18 hours (6 x 3.0 hours)
- » a second-year teacher would be teaching no more than 21 hours (6 x 3.5)
- » a first-year part-time teacher employed for 15 hours (6 x 2.5) or more should be getting three hours non-contact (6 x 0.5) either as part of their 15 hours or in addition to them

Duty, form time, and meetings are not considered contact time unless actual teaching of students takes place.



Part three of the STCA details other time allowances that may be of interest to beginning teachers. For example, the one hour per week heads of department have for each first- and second-year teacher in their department. Overseas teachers new to New Zealand schools receive an allowance of 0.1 FTE (2.5 hours) per week for the school to use in consultation with them for a maximum of two terms.

Permanent management units (PMUs) attract an allowance of one hour per unit up to a maximum of three hours per week.

## Pay scales

Section 4.1 of the STCA and 3.1 of the ASTCA lists the pay scales for teachers in state and state integrated schools. At first glance this table may appear complicated, as a lot of information is presented in a small space. Most first-year teachers with a subject specialist bachelor degree and graduate diploma in teaching start on step T3 (G3+E).

A secondary teacher's starting salary may be higher if they have work experience related to their position or a higher degree. In fact, some first-year teachers have started at the top of the basic scale due to their type of degree and previous work experience.

It is important to fill out a Ministry of Education salary assessment form as early as possible when you are first appointed, as they tend to take a long time to process. It is at this point you should present all the documentary evidence of your relevant qualifications and work experience. If you feel that you are being paid incorrectly, contact your PPTA field officer who can double-check any salary assessment and advise on a course of action to take if required.

It is also important to be aware that the Ministry of Education sees a salary assessment as a "one-time-only assessment" in some circumstances. Occasionally beginning teachers get caught in this trap by completing a salary assessment before they graduate from their college of education, often because a school wants them to do some relief work late in the year. The ministry assesses teachers in these positions as untrained and will not allow them to add previous work experience to a second salary assessment when they start work as a qualified teacher the following year. New teachers will be on the first step of the salary scale until their qualifications are assessed.

## Sick leave

Section 6.2 of the STCA and section 5.1 of the ASTCA are the entitlements for sick leave for teachers.

Sick leave accumulates to a total entitlement of 306 paid sick leave days after 30 years' service. Your total entitlement is always less any sick days you have already taken.

It is important not to attend school when sick, due to the high amount of contact teachers have with people on a daily basis. It is also harder to recover from an illness in a stressful work environment like teaching. Schools receive a payment from the Ministry of Education every year to pay for relief while teachers are sick.

When you start work at a new school, you should be informed of who to contact if you are sick and unable to attend work and what the school's expectations are if you are away sick for a day or so. A medical certificate is only required after five days. The certificate need not contain a reason for your absence, but should provide some idea of when you are likely return to work.

Sick leave includes leave taken for stress related illness.

The STCA and ASTCA contain a number of other leave provisions. These provisions include:

- » bereavement/tangihanga leave
- » leave for family reasons
- » refreshment leave

## Provisional certification

It is important for new teachers to become registered and provisionally certified with the Education Council.

This can be done by downloading and completing the EC10 form from [www.educationcouncil.org.nz](http://www.educationcouncil.org.nz) when you are about to graduate from your initial teacher education course. There is a simple step by step guide under the title "Applying for the first time" on the site.

Since 2015 teacher registration is permanent (if you are not struck off) but it is the practising certificate, which needs to be renewed three yearly, which allows you to work as a teacher. New teachers will hold a provisional practising certificate.

To progress from provisional to full certification you need to have an induction and mentoring programme from your school. The Education Council's website has useful information about what a good induction and mentoring programme will involve.

At the end of two years, and subject to satisfactory performance as a teacher, the school will recommend to the Education Council that you become fully certified.

## **Payment of fees**

Since 2015 teachers covered by the STCA do not have to pay for their own registration and certification. However, if you are applying before you have a job you will have to pay, and then seek reimbursement once you are employed. There is a form on the Education Council website to complete to get reimbursement.

## **Towards full certification**

Providing that part-time teachers are employed for 12.5 hours or more a week they too may qualify for full certification after two years.

Both full-time and part-time teachers need to be employed for at least 10 consecutive school weeks or one school term for this service to count towards full certification.

Boards of trustees have a responsibility to ensure that schools maintain a scheme of induction and mentoring for beginning teachers over a two-year period in order to assist them to achieve a satisfactory level of competence and to gain full certification.

Beginning teachers must maintain a portfolio, either paper or digital, of their induction and mentoring programme such as lesson observations, professional development and reflections.

This record must be taken by the teacher to the next school, if necessary, to complete full certification.

## Education outside of the classroom

Sound judgement is required by provisionally certified teachers (PCTs) when dealing with students in and outside of the classroom. Ideally, no PCT should be without a fully registered teacher on events such as field trips and school camps.

This of course is difficult for PE and Outdoor Education teachers who are expected to take students outside the classroom in the course of normal lessons. PCTs should always exercise caution when it comes to education outside the classroom. Read and discuss any school policies with your head of department or supervising teacher.

Most schools require teachers to complete some form of hazard identification and analysis when planning lessons outside the classroom. A member of the senior management team then checks the form and makes any necessary changes before approving it. Any accidents or near misses while outside the classroom with students should be reported to your head of department or a member of senior management.

While participation in extra curricular activities is not compulsory, many teachers do choose to become involved. PPTA advises that all members, including beginning teachers, do not overload themselves with extra curricular activities as teaching is very demanding.

## Appointments and tenure

Part 3 of the STCA and Part 2 of ASTCA reflect the State Sector Act 1988 s. 77A and determine how appointments to teaching positions should be advertised and made.

All permanent positions, and non-permanent positions of longer than one term, must be advertised in the Education Gazette. In appointing the best person for the position, the employer will have regard to the experience, qualifications and abilities relevant to the position and such other relevant matters as it determines.

On appointment, a teacher must receive a letter of appointment outlining the details of the position. Such details include the position start date, the hours of work (if part-time) and the curriculum areas to be taught. If the position is fixed-term or long-term relieving in nature, then section 66 of the Employment Relations Act 2000 applies. This means there must be "a genuine reason based on

reasonable grounds” for using a fixed-term employment agreement. The reasons must be communicated in writing to the successful applicant. Genuine reasons in teaching include relieving for another teacher while they are away on maternity, refreshment or study leave.

Following New Zealand Teachers Council research into PCTs, and concerns from PPTA’s Network of Establishing Teachers (NET), the PPTA launched a “memory stick campaign” to educate members and teacher trainees about the pitfalls of fixed-term employment. The information on the memory sticks is available on the PPTA website.

The Promise to New Teachers was developed as a way for schools to show their commitment to new teachers. More details can be found on the Network of Establishing Teachers community page of [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz) If you suspect you have been offered a fixed-term or long-term relieving position that may have breached the points noted above, you should contact your local PPTA field officer (details at the back of this booklet).

## Managing student behaviour

All schools and their communities have different policies and expectations around student behaviour. New teachers should familiarise themselves with their school’s policies about student discipline.

If you are having trouble with a particular student, it is prudent to make notes of significant incidents and alert your head of department and/or dean about what is happening. It would also be a good idea to ask a more experienced colleague how the policies work in practice. Any new teacher attempting to change school policies or culture relating to student discipline will face an uphill battle.

In all relationships with students, teachers must be aware of the authority they have, which derives both from their professional position and the difference in age. Because of the power imbalance which exists between teacher and student, teachers must accept that it is their responsibility to control the nature of the relationships. Guidelines for professional conduct are set out in the Code of Ethics section of the PPTA constitution.

The Code of Profession Responsibility, published in July 2017 by the Education Council, sets out the high level of ethical behavior expected of teachers. The PPTA infosheet *Safe interaction with students* outlines teachers’ responsibilities in forming healthy working relationships with students.

## Claiming expenses

Teachers can claim for a range of expenses. Some common claims to look out for include mileage for using your own car when authorised by the school and the field allowance of \$25 per day for field trips or camps.

Ask your colleagues how to claim for expenses at your school. Part 7 and Appendix D of the STCA, and Part 6 and Appendix 1 of the ASTCA, deal with the expenses, allowances and reimbursements a teacher is entitled to.

## Removal expenses

For teachers moving to a new region to take up their first permanent appointment, expenses are covered in 8.1.1(d) of the STCA and 7.1 of the ASTCA.

Beginning teachers are entitled to basic removal costs but need to check with the Ministry of Education or a field officer regarding their precise entitlements. The teacher must use the company contracted by the ministry. New teachers are advised to apply for removal costs as early as possible to avoid processing delays, especially over the Christmas and New Year period.

Teachers already holding a permanent or long-term relieving position of 12 months or more have their entitlements to removal expenses outlined in Part 8 and Appendix C of the STCA and Part 7 and Appendix 2 of the ASTCA, where various costs involved in moving an established home are listed and covered.

## Parental leave

Before making decisions about parental leave you may like to consult your local field officer and read PPTA's "Parental leave: Guidelines to your employment rights" information available at [www.ppta.org.nz](http://www.ppta.org.nz).

Teachers who are the primary carer may apply for up to 18 weeks' paid parental leave administered by the Inland Revenue Department. Your school should have application forms.

Permanently appointed teachers will be granted two days' paid leave to attend their partner at the birth of their child.

Section 6.3 of the STCA and section 5.2 of the ASTCA cover parental provisions including leave and the maternity grant.

## Frequently used acronyms

<b>ACE</b>	Adult and community education
<b>AEU</b>	Australian Education Union
<b>AO</b>	Advisory officer (PPTA)
<b>AP</b>	Assistant principal
<b>ASTCA</b>	Area Schools Teachers' Collective Agreement
<b>CTU</b>	Council of Trade Unions
<b>BOT</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>BTTA</b>	Beginning teacher time allowance
<b>CAC</b>	Complaints assessment committee (Teachers Council)
<b>CAPNA</b>	Curriculum and pastoral needs analysis (used for falling rolls process in schools)
<b>CA</b>	Collective agreement
<b>DGS</b>	Deputy general secretary (PPTA)
<b>DP</b>	Deputy principal
<b>EAP</b>	Employee Assistance Programme
<b>EC</b>	Education Council
<b>EEO</b>	Equal employment opportunity
<b>ERA</b>	Employment Relations Act
<b>EREL</b>	Employment related education leave
<b>ERO</b>	Education Review Office
<b>ESOL</b>	English for speakers of other languages
<b>FO</b>	Field officer (PPTA)
<b>FTTE</b>	Full-time teaching equivalent
<b>FT</b>	Fixed term

<b>FTU</b>	Fixed term unit
<b>GMFS</b>	Guaranteed minimum formula staffing
<b>HPTSA</b>	High priority teacher supply allowance
<b>ISEA</b>	Independent Schools Education Association
<b>MMA</b>	Middle management allowance
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MT</b>	Mahi tika (PPTA employment relations education courses)
<b>NET</b>	Network of Establishing Teachers (PPTA)
<b>NZEI</b>	New Zealand Educational Institute
<b>NZQA</b>	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
<b>NZSPC</b>	New Zealand Secondary Principals' Council
<b>PD</b>	Professional development
<b>PG</b>	Personal grievance
<b>PPTA</b>	Post Primary Teachers' Association
<b>PCT</b>	Provisionally certified teacher
<b>PUM</b>	Paid union meeting
<b>RTLB</b>	Resource teacher learning and behaviour
<b>SCT</b>	Specialist classroom teacher
<b>STA</b>	School Trustees Association
<b>STCA</b>	Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement
<b>TKI</b>	Te Kete Ipurangi (On-line resource system for teachers)



# Year-start checklist

Salary assessment completed

Letter of appointment received

Correct non-contact time

PPTA branch chair identified and membership form completed

Registration roles clarified

Key school policies accessed and read (student management, leave, PD etc).

Computer/lap top log-in information

Classroom keys

Other PRTs identified

School and PRT meeting scheduled accessed

## Help!

- » Your school branch chair is the first PPTA point of contact in school. Each school has its own PPTA branch
- » PPTA field officers can assist with employment issues, such as pay and working conditions
- » Specialist classroom teachers can provide confidential advice on your teaching practice
- » Your local PPTA region takes issues to the annual conference on your behalf
- » Your PPTA executive member represents the region at national meetings in Wellington six times a year
- » The PPTA Network of Establishing Teachers (NET) makes sure the voice of beginning teachers is heard at a policy level

# Contact PPTA

Our website [ppta.org.nz](http://ppta.org.nz) has information about PPTA activities, events, advice, publications and our positions on educational and industrial issues.

If you have a question, talk to your branch chair, a regional officer, executive member or contact your nearest PPTA field office.

## Auckland

Level 1, 4 Western Springs Road, Morningside,  
PO Box 52 006, Auckland 1352  
09 815 8610  
[auckland@ppta.org.nz](mailto:auckland@ppta.org.nz)

## Hamilton

Level 1, ANZ Building, 650 Te Rapa Road, Te Rapa,  
PO Box 20 294, Hamilton 3241  
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## Palmerston North

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## Christchurch

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## Dunedin

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