

Endorsement decision making within a Professional Growth Cycle

Endorsement decisions are based on a professional leaders' knowledge of the teachers' practice in relation to using and meeting the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa*

A professional leader can advise the Council in the endorsement decision-making process that:

- the teacher meets the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* as required for their practising certificate type
- the teacher does not meet the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* as required for their practising certificate type.

Professional leaders can also contact the Council at any time to discuss their endorsement decision.

Note that it is important to recognise that teachers on Tōmua/Provisional are working on developing and deepening their practice as a normal part of their teacher journey. Therefore if a Tōmua teacher is progressing as expected, it would not be appropriate to choose not to endorse because they have not yet completed satisfactory induction and mentoring.

When it comes to the attention of a professional leader that a teacher's practice needs to improve and this hasn't or can't be addressed through the normal process of feedback, reflection on practice and engagement in the Professional Growth Cycle, the specific concerns should be raised directly with the teacher.

Most commonly, this will be noticed when there is a clear and shared understanding of the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* and what they look like in the setting, and then seeing that the teacher's practice does not reflect them. This realisation may come to light from everyday occurrences such as:

- informal observations of the teacher's practices or behaviours
- a concern raised by teaching colleagues, students, their whānau or family,
- attitudes, behaviour and learning of children or students.

As part of the process of addressing specific concerns, additional targeted support and development opportunities along with clear expectations and timeframes for what needs to be addressed should be provided. The steps in element f (below) should guide the process to be followed:

Endorsement decision making: element f

The following should guide professional leader endorsement decisions when you are concerned that a teacher's practice does not currently meet the *Standards/Ngā Paerewa*:

- the concerns should be clearly identified with specific examples and discussed with the teacher, with reference to the expectations (often recorded in a quality practice template) of what demonstrating the *Standards/Ngā Paerewa* looks like in your setting,
- support for improvement should be provided and improvement expectations set,
- if the issues are resolved, this needs to be communicated to the teacher; likewise if satisfactory progress has not been made within agreed timeframes,
- if there is not sufficient improvement in the time period discussed, performance management processes outlined in employment agreements must be complied with,
- if no further improvement is made, the professional leader is likely to consider extending formal performance management,
- if employment is terminated or the teacher resigns while this process is underway, the professional leader is required to complete a mandatory report.



What if I can't say that the teacher meets the *Standards/Paerewa*?

While this process is underway, the professional leader may choose not to endorse the teacher's practising certificate application because in their professional judgement they do not currently meet the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa*. The professional leader can also choose to endorse the teacher as meeting the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa* if they are satisfied the teacher is making good progress. At any time, the professional leader can discuss their concerns with the Council and seek further advice and guidance.

If the professional leader chooses not to endorse a teacher's application, the teacher must have been advised that there are specific concerns about their current professional practice before this decision is made, and have had the opportunity to be supported to address these within an agreed timeframe.

Where the professional leader decides not to endorse the teacher, they still need to complete the endorsement as part of the teacher's application. In this situation, the professional leader chooses the option that the teacher does not meet the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa*, which then requires them to provide additional information. The Council will contact the professional leader and the teacher to discuss the concerns further.

So that a professional leader can continue to employ the teacher and work with them, the Council can use their discretion to renew the teacher's practising certificate with the concerns noted as an exception to policy. This ensures that the Council is adhering to principles of fairness and natural justice, and that we do not pre-empt the outcomes of any processes being undertaken to address concerns. The Council may follow up on these concerns with the professional leader during the period of the current certificate.

Accessing further information and advice from the Teaching Council

For professional leaders, there are often questions they would like to ask or advice they wish to seek to support their decision making when they are concerned that a teacher's practice does not currently meet the *Standards | Ngā Paerewa*. For that reason, the Council has created two ways to access this information:

- created a new phone menu option to fast track inquiries from principals and ECE professional leaders so that they can quickly access advice
- written an Endorser Guideline document that provides detailed explanation of the endorsement process for professional leaders, with examples and links to the *Requirements for Teacher Registration, Practising Certificates and Limited Authority to Teach*.