



PPTA TE WEHENGARUA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022

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# INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION: IS IT FIT FOR PURPOSE?



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## CONTENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS .....	2
1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. THE CURRENT SITUATION IN NZ .....	3
3. CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ITE .....	6
4. NZEI REPORT ON INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION .....	6
5. RESPONSES TO THE NZEI DISCUSSION PAPER .....	7
6. ITE PROVIDERS.....	7
7. FIELD-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION AND IN-SCHOOL TEACHER EDUCATION .....	8
8. CHALLENGES FOR ITE PROVIDERS .....	9
9. PRINCIPLES FOR PARTNERSHIPS.....	9
10. NEXT STEPS – AN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION TASKFORCE.....	9
11. CONCLUDING STATEMENT .....	10

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the report be received.
2. That PPTA Te Wehengarua establishes an Initial Teacher Education taskforce, as outlined in this paper, to better inform the policy position of the Association in this active space.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*There is no conclusive evidence that one approach to ITE is better than another in the preparation of teachers, and there is no one right way to establish and maintain effective ITE. Research findings confirm that teaching—and learning to teach—is a complex interplay of many skills and dispositions that need to operate in a wide variety of contexts.*  
(NZCER, 2019<sup>1</sup>)

- 1.1 PPTA Te Wehengarua has as a constitutional objective to ‘advance the cause of education generally and of all phases of secondary and technical education in particular’<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.2 Historically, Initial Teacher Education (ITE) was offered by colleges of education. All student teachers undertook a range of practica for periods of time varying from 2 to 10 weeks across two or three schools. Most of the subject specialism content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge was offered by lecturers who were themselves registered teachers. At the turn of the century, colleges of education began to follow international trends and amalgamated with universities. By the mid-2000s 90 percent of secondary ITE students were studying at universities. These amalgamations meant that ITE became valued for its academic focus and possibly less so for time spent learning the practice of teaching in schools. Many of the lecturers with teaching backgrounds moved on (or were moved on) and much of the subject specialism provision was contracted to individuals based in schools.

## 2. THE CURRENT SITUATION IN NZ

- 2.1 A snapshot of some of the ITE data from 2019, 2020 and 2021 is provided here<sup>3</sup>. Note these data only report on domestic ITE students.
  - While ITE students have generally been getting younger (under 35 years) in the ECE and primary sectors, it is not the same for the secondary sector. The proportion of first-time students aged under 35 in secondary ITE was 78 percent in 2021, down from 83 percent in 2015.
  - Between 2020 and 2021, the number of domestic students enrolling in an ITE qualification for the first time increased by 26 percent to reach 5,235. This represented an increase of 1,065 students. The highest increase was seen in secondary ITE students (an increase of 265 students). The number of secondary graduates during this same period was up 185 and saw the number of graduates increase to over 1000 for the first time since 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> [Employment Based Initial Teacher Education Literature Reviews | Education Counts](#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ppta.org.nz/about-ppta/ppta-constitution/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/initial-teacher-education-statistics>

- The large increase in domestic first-time secondary ITE students in 2021 followed four years of relative stability in enrolment levels. The increase in 2021 has seen first-time enrolments rise to their highest level since 2012 and these are now 43 percent above the low point in 2016. However, this increase likely reflects the impact of COVID-19 and students seeking to enrol in 'safe haven' programmes during times of economic uncertainty and border closures. Indeed, the enrolment data - as at April 2022 - seem to validate this interpretation of this increase (see table below 'Where teachers in secondary sector trained 2019-2021').
- The two figures below capture some specific data about where teachers trained and how many completed their qualification. The discrepancy in the totals is due to some double ups where some may complete more than one qualification, missing data, and/or rounding.
- When questioned about the lack of specific numbers due to rounding, the Ministry informed us that numbers are rounded to the nearest 5 for privacy reasons. This practice has occurred since 2015 and is applied to any total but seems to be applied inconsistently. Teacher trainee data have been rounded and yet in other circumstances, secondary student data is released accurately by school, with no rounding.

2.2 Note that most graduates (over 700 each year), complete a Graduate Diploma although an increasing number (155 in 2021, the highest to date) are completing Masters' qualifications in teaching.

#### Where teachers in secondary sector trained 2019 -2022

Provider	2019		2020		2021		2022
	April	Full year	April	Full year	April	Full year	April
Ako Matatupu: Teach First NZ				65		65	
University of Auckland	150	150	150	145	260	260	165
University of Waikato	140	165	150	145	155	155	160
Massey University	125	120	105	105	145	145	120
Victoria University of Wellington	105	110	105	105	130	135	85
University of Canterbury	55	55	70	70	165	165	85
University of Otago	40	40	50	50	75	70	70
Auckland University of Technology	80	110	65	130	60	115	40
NZ Graduate School of Education	25	40	20	40	15	25	15
Laidlaw College Incorporated			5	5	5	5	10

Bethlehem Tertiary Institute	15	20	20	30	15	20	15
The Mind Lab	65						
Total	735	880	735	890	1,030	1,155	765

Note: Numbers for the full 2022 year will most likely increase slightly given that some providers also offer mid-year start dates.

#### Number of secondary ITE graduates in the secondary sector 2019 -2021

	2019	2020	2021
<b>Completing ITE qualification</b>	900	890	1,025

Note: Across curriculum subject areas that secondary ITE graduates have studied to teach at school, eight of the nine broad subject areas had an increase in graduates between 2020 and 2021.

#### Subjects of graduating students in the secondary sector 2019 -2021

Broad subject	2019	2020	2021
Science	175	170	180
Mathematics and statistics	100	90	105
Technology	70	70	130
English	165	150	180
Social sciences	295	270	355
Health and physical education	150	130	175
Languages	30	30	40
Te reo Māori	25	20	35
The Arts	140	150	135
No subjects reported	20	5	15
<b>Total graduates</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>1,005</b>

Notes: Students can be assigned up to three teaching subjects and are counted in each subject, so the sum of the various fields may not add to the total. The teaching subjects reported here do not necessarily represent the subjects graduates may teach at school.

- 2.3 Note also, that in Māori Medium programmes, 98 percent of first-time students were enrolled in primary programmes. The remaining students were enrolled in programmes at the ECE level.

### 3. CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ITE

- 3.1 The New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER), The New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) and the Teaching Council have all released reports and/or discussion documents in the last three years that focus on current developments, trends and challenges in Initial Teacher Education.
- 3.2 They each, in their own way, challenge the status quo and contribute to the wider discussions about the future of Initial Teacher Education. In this paper, the NZEI report is of particular relevance and is discussed next.

### 4. NZEI REPORT ON INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

- 4.1 The New Zealand Education Institute, Te Riu Roa released a discussion paper<sup>4</sup> in November 2021 as part of its campaign preparation. The paper calls for a system-level change to address the increasingly ‘fragmented and competitive’ Initial Teacher Education (ITE) model that exists currently. This call is strongly underpinned by the need for a genuine Te Tiriti relationships-based approach that would include the development of ‘a Māori accreditation process where Māori medium, kōhanga, puna reo and kura – kaiako have separate accreditation options designed by properly resourced hapū and iwi’ (p.7).
- 4.2 Several models are offered for discussion in the paper which was initially targeted at NZEI members as part of their 2022 campaign work. As the paper became more widely circulated some of the thinking has evolved and four big ideas have emerged:
  - ITE that is Te Tiriti led, including that by 2040 teachers coming through ITE would be bilingual and capable of teaching in either language.
  - Schools and ECE as partners, ITE as a characteristic of a school/centre - this would be a school/centre-wide approach and those who opt-in would receiving a resource package. This would mean a narrowing of the schools/centres involved but there would be pathways for principals, support staff and mentor teachers.
  - Align systems and supports, focussing on shifting pedagogical practice at a systems level and addressing current silos of practice.
  - Rethink start of career, with the provisionally certificated years having reduced teaching time while completing postgraduate study in an area of interest (such as learning support) without the pressures of whole class teaching

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<sup>4</sup> NZEI Te Riu Roa, Initial Teacher Education 2040 <https://bit.ly/30sPAIf>

## 5. RESPONSES TO THE NZEI DISCUSSION PAPER

- 5.1 The discussion paper has served a useful purpose in 2022 as a catalyst for the conversations that need to be had in this space and while the models provided are not yet fine-tuned, they do offer some initial thinking around addressing some critical needs. The profession-led model leans well towards PPTA Te Wehengarua's support of ITE, PLD, curriculum advice and leadership being under one umbrella. This reminds us of all Colleges of Education and the supporting advisory service that worked well in the past.
- 5.2 The discussion paper deserves further conversations although PPTA Te Wehengarua would want to see better acknowledgement and understanding of:
- the importance of ongoing subject specialism
  - the secondary context if the in-school post graduate study model for PCTs were to be further advanced
  - second language acquisition and the challenge of the journey to becoming bilingual.

## 6. ITE PROVIDERS

- 6.1 The Teach NZ website makes for interesting reading when it comes to providers and courses offered for people wanting to study towards a secondary teaching qualification. All the programmes listed lead to teacher registration and all the providers are fully accredited to offer these qualifications.
- 6.2 There are 11 providers to choose from, offering 36 different courses of which 23 are labelled 'general' and 13 for Māori medium. Nine of the providers offer Māori medium courses and all 11 offer at least one general course.
- 6.3 In terms of the levels of qualifications offered:
- one provider offers two Bachelor-level courses (Technology and Conjoint)
  - twenty-one different Graduate Diplomas (eight in Māori medium) are offered across nine providers
  - four post-graduate diplomas (one in Māori medium) are offered across four providers
  - nine Masters programmes (four in Māori medium) are offered across five providers
- 6.4 It would be interesting to know how those looking to enrol choose their provider of initial teacher education. With so many variations out there it's no wonder schools get confused and stick to just one or two providers.



## 7. FIELD-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION AND IN-SCHOOL TEACHER EDUCATION

- 7.1 Of particular interest to PPTA Te Wehengarua since the early 2010s has been the evolution of New Zealand's only approved site-based initial teacher education programme Teach First.<sup>5</sup> Students in this programme are committed to a four-year process where the first two years (while studying) include 0.6 and 0.7 teaching loads, the final two years with teaching loads of 0.8 and 0.9 are the two years of provisional certification.
- 7.2 Data presented earlier show that while increasing slowly, the number of students enrolled in the Teach First programme are not huge.
- 7.3 Aside from Teach First, PPTA Te Wehengarua know of two other in-school teacher education programmes being offered via groups of Auckland schools. While the University of Auckland's involvement was in the public arena in late 2021<sup>6</sup>, with the teachers-in-training being based four days a week in a select group of schools, the other provision was not so well publicised.
- 7.4 The University of Waikato had also been talking to a group of schools in Auckland about hard-to-staff subjects such as science and Te Reo Māori. All students have to go through the same enrolment criteria but they're initially identified by the schools involved. If they want to get involved they have to go through one of the schools. Around 20 students began in 2021 and there is the intent for this programme to grow the number and diversity of schools involved.
- 7.5 In some of the field-based teacher education provisions the cost appears to be met by the school, including provision of a stipend and payment of tertiary fees. This means that some schools are essentially buying their way out of a teacher supply crisis.
- 7.6 PPTA Te Wehengarua has a number of concerns about any in-school or field-based provision:
- the additional pressures and expectations placed on mentor teachers.
  - the varying conditions of employment for the student teachers who are not necessarily employed as LATs for the 0.2 although some are.
  - the inequitable practice of payment of stipends by some schools to some teacher education students.
  - the lack of diversity of schools visited on practica, as these are arranged within the group of schools involved.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.teachnz.govt.nz/studying-to-be-a-teacher/studying-while-employed-as-a-trainee-teacher/>

<sup>6</sup> [Back to school opportunity for aspiring teachers - The University of Auckland](#)

## 8. CHALLENGES FOR ITE PROVIDERS

- 8.1 With the range of providers across the country, many of whom operate beyond their own geographical region, it is not surprisingly then that ITE providers continue to report that it is becoming increasingly harder to place students. There is fierce competition between schools for student placements and payments made to associate teachers are not the same. ITE providers also have concerns about schools' lack of understanding of the particular requirements of their programme(s) and it is an ongoing challenge for providers and schools to be clear about expectations on the school and the students alike.

## 9. PRINCIPLES FOR PARTNERSHIPS

- 9.1 PPTA Te Wehengarua values its ongoing relationships with initial teacher education providers, and in our explorations of alternative models, it is critical that we do not jeopardise the strong relationships we have with current ITE providers and that our partnerships continue to be genuine. We are committed to the 2017 document *Principles for partnerships between secondary schools and initial teacher education providers*. This document, outlining four aspirational principles between initial teacher education providers and schools, was presented at annual conference 2016 and was well received by the membership. The principles provide an important backdrop to PPTA Te Wehengarua's next steps.

- 9.2 The principles are:

1. The development of student and beginning teachers is a shared responsibility of the teaching profession.
2. Educative mentoring of teachers throughout their career paths must be recognised and valued as a specialist role in secondary schools.
3. Initial teacher education must be a genuine and effective partnership between ITE providers and schools and subject to ongoing collaborative programme design and review.
4. Quality resourcing to ensure high quality initial teacher education and induction into full membership of the profession is essential.

## 10. NEXT STEPS – AN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION TASKFORCE

- 10.1 In order to progress the work of the Association in these active conversations it will be critical to seek the input of a range of members. To do this it is proposed that an Initial Teacher Education Taskforce be established.
- 10.2 The taskforce would be charged with exploring a range of issues as outlined in this paper such as (but not limited to):

- the development of a principled approach to its mahi that includes the importance of equitable access to quality teacher education programmes;
- that PPTA Te Wehengarua continue to investigate the current situation
- the notion of a foundational or common approach to initial teacher education programmes
- the need to address the increasingly fragmented nature of ITE by the proliferation of programmes and types of programmes
- that PPTA Te Wehengarua continue to actively reach out to offer support for all beginning teachers

10.3 The composition of the taskforce will be representative of the membership and will be appointed by the President and the General Secretary.

## 11. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

11.1 This initial teacher education debate is part of a wider conversation that encompasses the complexity of teacher supply and the support for teachers, be they recent graduates of teacher education or seasoned professionals. It is important that PPTA Te Wehengarua continues to be part of this debate.