

NZEI Information on Teacher Registration for Group Special Education (GSE) Field Staff Frequently Asked Questions

Does employment with GSE mean that I can still be a registered teacher?

Yes, you can maintain your teacher registration. GSE employees are often experienced teachers who may be entitled to registration in the category of full registration or the category of subject to confirmation. **In either case, you are a registered teacher.**

Why am I to be registered subject to confirmation (STC).

The category is intended for experienced teachers who have previously been registered but who do not currently meet the criteria for full registration, often because of the current criteria for recent teaching experience are not met.

There is misunderstanding that 'Subject to Confirmation' is not a form of registration. It is a category of registration. The teacher is a registered teacher, and will have a practising certificate (the wallet card) which notes the registration number, expiry date, and the category of the teacher registration.

Teachers with registration STC can reapply every three years when their practising certificate expires. The teacher may continue to be granted registration in the category of STC, as they continue to be able to be registered but not able to meet all the criteria for the category of full registration. This is professionally not ideal, but may be the current reality for some teachers.

Can full registration be maintained by employees of the Ministry of Education?

One aspect of the satisfactory recent teaching experience criteria is a period of employment of at least two years in the previous five years undertaken in the general education system, or in an institution approved by the Teachers Council. As the Ministry of Education is deemed to be part of the general education system, the Ministry is therefore an approved setting for the purpose of maintaining full registration.

The Council has acknowledged that some positions in the Ministry, such as those in special education, may involve the kinds of activities required by its criteria for full registration. The Council has agreed to consider applications for full registration from field staff on a case by case basis. Thus, appropriately qualified GSE field staff (those with a teaching qualification recognised by the Council for the purpose of registration) are eligible to apply for registration.

Who should endorse applications by GSE field staff seeking to have their teacher's practising certificate renewed?

The Council has previously advised that, in the same way as occurs in schools and centres where the principal or the most senior registered teacher in a learning centre, endorsement that field staff are satisfactory teachers should be provided by their employer. It should be noted that appraisal for registration links to the Council's Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions and not the Ministry appraisal requirements.

In previous discussions with GSE, the Council noted that, given the Council's expectation that assessments of teacher performance will be built into normal performance management and appraisal systems, the Council considers it would be both appropriate and sufficient to have applications from GSE field staff endorsed by their line manager, who in most cases will be their service manager.

However, for a service manager (or any GSE manager) to provide an endorsement, **they (the manager) must be a fully registered teacher**. If they are not, then their endorsement will need to be accompanied by the signature of a fully registered teacher who is in a position to assess whether the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions have been demonstrated. This person does not have to be a GSE employee – they could, for example, be a teacher with whom the GSE applicant has been working closely in a school or early childhood centre.

My practising certificate has expired? What should I do?

You are able to renew your practising certificate and remain as a registered teacher even if your employment with the Ministry does not require you to be registered, ie you can make a personal choice to maintain your teacher registration. It will cost you \$120 for three years.

You can re-apply for registration, using the Council's Form TC1, and you may be granted registration in the category of full or of STC depending on how you meet the criteria for satisfactory recent teaching experience. There is not the option of "preferring" or "choosing" a category - you apply for registration and are placed in a category according to how you do, or do not, meet the criteria.

Where can I access more information?

The Council's website (www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz)

NZEI's website www.nzei.org.nz has a section on teacher registration, which includes further information about the STC category.

NZEI field staff can also assist individual members.

I am concerned about the categories of registration. How can things be improved?

In 2009, the Teachers Council intends to consult with teachers about teacher registration, which will include discussion about categories of registration.

NZEI will be involving its GSE members in the consultation, and hopes you will participate when information is provided in 2009.