



Education Report: Funding rates for Kōhanga Reo kaiako training

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education) Hon Jo Luxton, Associate Minister of Education		
Date:	21 September 2023	Priority:	High
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Report

1. This paper seeks your agreement to expand the scope of the tertiary education funding rate for early childhood education (ECE) teacher qualifications to include Kōhanga Reo kaiako training qualifications. This would increase funding of Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust's (the Trust's) Te Tohu Mātauranga Whakapakari Tino Rangatiratanga (Tohu Whakapakari) qualification from 2024. A decision on this matter is required within the next two weeks to allow the change to come into effect from 2024.

Summary

2. The Trust delivers its Tohu Whakapakari qualification for people who want to become a kaiako within a Kōhanga Reo. Tohu Whakapakari not currently eligible for the same tertiary funding rate as ECE teacher training, but instead receives funding at the lower 'humanities' rate (although it would be eligible for the slightly higher 'mātauranga Māori and te reo Māori' rate from 2024). This is because the higher rate is currently limited to qualifications that lead to registration by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (Teaching Council). The Trust has not sought Teaching Council recognition for its qualification, as the criteria for recognition are incompatible with Kōhanga Reo kaupapa.
3. The Trust has recently shifted Tohu Whakapakari to a degree-level qualification and has requested that it be funded at the higher teacher training rate, as it has similar practical components to ECE teacher training. The current rate also limits the Trust's ability to provide sufficient teaching staff numbers and adequate student support, among other limitations.
4. We recommend the funding classification be updated to reflect the original policy intent of limiting the rate to qualifications with a significant practical component, and provide equitable funding for Tohu Whakapakari. This would also be in line with the Crown's te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations.
5. The proposed changes would increase funding for the Trust's delivery of the qualification by just over \$500,000 per annum. The new rates would take effect from 2024. The TEC has advised that it is comfortable that these increased costs can be managed within

Vote Tertiary Education baselines. The TEC's Delivery Classification Guide 2024 and the 2025 funding determination would both be updated, subject to your decision.

Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) recommends you:

- a. **note** that teacher training qualifications receive a higher funding rate than other education courses, largely to reflect costs associated with the practical component of this delivery; **Noted**
- b. **note** that equivalent training under the Trust's Tohu Whakapakari degree-level qualification is ineligible for the higher funding rate as this rate is limited by the TEC to qualifications that lead to registration by the Teaching Council; **Noted**
- c. **note** that the Trust has requested that Tohu Whakapakari be funded at the same rate as teacher training qualifications as it has similar practical components to this training; **Noted**
- d. **agree** that Kōhanga Reo kaiako training be funded at the same rate as ECE teacher training; **Agree/ Disagree**
- e. **note** that the TEC will give effect to this change by updating the wording of its 2024 Delivery Classification Guide and that the Ministry will subsequently update the 2025 funding determinations to reflect this intent. **Noted**

Proactive Release

The Ministry recommends you:

- f. **agree** that the Ministry release this paper after it has been considered by you, subject to any information withheld in line with the Official Information Act 1982. **Agree/ Disagree**


James Campbell
Senior Policy Manager
Tertiary Policy

21/09/2023


Hon Jan Tinetti
Minister of Education

24/09/2023

Background

1. Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust (the Trust) is an umbrella organisation for Kōhanga Reo, which are individual te reo Māori immersion centres managed by whānau. The teaching and care of children in these centres is carried out by qualified kaiako, supported by kaiāwhina. While the main focus of the Kōhanga Reo movement is to preserve and build upon knowledge of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori is just as important.
2. In 2011, a claim was brought to the Waitangi Tribunal (WAI 2336) by Kōhanga Reo supporters, who considered that the Crown had unilaterally treated Kōhanga Reo as early childhood education (ECE) providers while also funding them differently. This, they stated, failed to recognise the kaupapa of Kōhanga Reo, which was never intended to be only about ECE but also encompasses cultural preservation, te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, and whānau development.
3. In response, the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) has worked with the Trust towards strengthening the Kōhanga Reo movement. Significant amounts of funding from Budgets 2018 to 2022 have been put into Kōhanga Reo property needs, information and communications technology modernisation, and general funding rate increases.
4. Most recently, pay rates for kaimahi across the board at Kōhanga Reo have been increased to align with those of kura kaiako. Before this, qualified kaiako pay was relatively low, especially when compared with kura kaiako. In December 2022, joint ministers agreed to a new Kōhanga Reo pay scheme. This pay scheme took effect from March 2023.

Te Tohu Mātauranga Whakapakari Tino Rangatiratanga (Tohu Whakapakari)

5. The Trust manages delivery of qualifications specific to Kōhanga Reo. The highest qualification provided by the Trust is Tohu Whakapakari. Tohu Whakapakari has existed as a New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF) Level 7 qualification since 1994 (initially as a diploma only), when it was approved by the NZQA and recognised for funding by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). This was also the year that the Trust was recognised as a Tertiary Education Organisation (TEO).
6. Completion of this qualification is required for employment as a qualified kaiako at Kōhanga Reo and the attendant higher pay rates this brings. Training encompasses te ao Māori ways to care for children, incorporating whānau and community and the central kaupapa of Kōhanga Reo philosophy. It includes on-site learning at Kōhanga Reo.
7. In 2003, the Trust submitted an application for recognition of Tohu Whakapakari as meeting the criteria for registration prescribed by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (the Teaching Council). However, this application did not proceed to a decision. Subsequently, the Trust decided in 2007 not to resubmit, as certain requirements for recognition were incompatible with their kaupapa, including:
 - a. students to practice teaching outside a Kōhanga Reo environment;
 - b. a general rather than Māori conceptual framework; and
 - c. the use of Teaching Council-approved, academically qualified trainers. This would undermine the involvement of kaumātua and other whānau in the training process.

Funding rates for Tohu Whakapakari

8. Teacher training provision receives a higher funding rate than other education training qualifications, such as a Bachelor of Education. The rationale for this has been that it reflects higher costs associated with the practical component of this provision, which is a requirement of Teaching Council recognition. Past increases to the funding rate have, therefore, been limited to qualifications that lead to registration with the Teaching

Council. This has been reflected in the TEC's Delivery Classification Guide [METIS 1166379 refers].

9. The fact that Tohu Whakapakari is not a qualification leading to teacher registration with the Teaching Council has led to it being funded at a lower rate.¹
10. Concerns about the adequacy of qualification funding for Tohu Whakapakari were raised by the Trust in the WAI 2336 claim, where claimants stated that the Crown had discriminated against Māori by failing to “treat kaiako qualifications developed specifically for the kaupapa of Kōhanga Reo equally with early childhood qualifications”, and that this has “had adverse financial consequences for Kōhanga Reo” and devalued Tohu Whakapakari compared to mainstream ECE qualifications.²

Proposed funding classification change

11. As of 2023, Tohu Whakapakari is now offered as an NZQCF Level 7 three-year degree qualification (the earlier Tohu Whakapakari qualification was an NZQCF Level 7 two-year diploma). The Trust has subsequently requested that the TEC reclassify its provision at the higher funding rate.
12. The Trust notes that the qualification has similar practical components to ECE teacher training qualification. However, the current rate limits the Trust's ability to provide a similar training experience, for example the level of teaching staff numbers and adequacy of student support. Furthermore, as a result of the change to a degree-level qualification, teaching staff have more non-teaching responsibilities (e.g., research, personal development), meaning less teaching time is now available per staff member.
13. The Trust has stated that an increase to funding rates will:
 - a. allow delivery to continue, reduce barriers to access, and raise success rates;
 - b. allow practicum placements to occur, staff to do research, staff training to be completed, student management systems for degree study to be maintained and enhanced, and student support services to be that of degree-level study elsewhere for similar programmes;
 - c. enable graduates to have applied skills and knowledge in early learning education in Kōhanga Reo contexts and environments and within the language domain of te reo Māori that will equip them with the abilities to effectively teach, reflect, reclaim, and revitalize Māori early learning practices and disciplines; and
 - d. allow funding of backfill for staff release time associated with the extra requirements on staff.
14. In order to make such a change, the TEC would need to amend its Delivery Classification Guide to allow for the kaiako training for Kōhanga Reo to be classified under “Teaching: Early Childhood Education”, which is the way that the funding category is described in the Funding Determination issued by the Minister of Education. While amendments to the Delivery Classification Guide are generally an operational matter for the TEC, it generally seeks to align its definitions with Ministerial policy intent and look for policy approval from Ministers where changes have financial implications.
15. Ministerial approval for any such change would be required prior to the upcoming general election in order to allow for the change to come into effect for 2024, due to the timeframes for the finalisation of the TEC's Delivery Classification Guide.

¹ In 2023, the ECE teacher training rate was \$10,763 per EFTS and the Trust received \$6770 per EFTS (allocated to ‘humanities’, ‘te reo Māori’ or ‘tikanga Māori’ provision). In 2024, equivalent rates will be \$11,732 per EFTS for the higher rate and \$7656 per EFTS for the ‘mātauranga Māori and te reo Māori’ rate introduced via Budget 2023.

² Waitangi Tribunal (2012). Matua Rautia: the report on the Kōhanga Reo claim (WAI 2336). p77, 235.

Analysis

16. Following the recent pay parity changes for Kōhanga Reo kaimahi, we recommend the funding classification be updated to reflect the original policy intent of limiting the rate to qualifications with a significant practical component, and provide equitable funding for Tohu Whakapakari.
17. Broadening eligibility for the higher funding rate would recognise the Crown's obligations under te Tiriti o Waitangi, specifically the protection of the taonga of te reo Māori and mātauranga Māori, the recognition and support of Kōhanga Reo tino rangatiratanga, and providing equitable funding for te ao Māori pathways alongside te ao Pākehā pathways.
18. Recognition of Crown obligations under te Tiriti is also consistent with the Crown's approach to date on the WAI 2336 claim recommendation from the Tribunal that a sustainable funding regime be provided. At the same time, it addresses the Tribunal's view that the lower rate provided to the Trust has played a part in the devaluing of Tohu Whakapakari compared to mainstream ECE qualifications.
19. We also consider that enabling consistency of rate classifications would reflect the following elements:
 - a. that both Tohu Whakapakari and ECE teacher training qualifications are delivered 'on the job' (i.e. with similar practical-component operating costs);
 - b. that the shift to offer Tohu Whakapakari as a degree has come with increased expectations and costs for this delivery;
 - c. that Tohu Whakapakari is a requirement to work as a kaiako within a Kōhanga Reo and provides a pathway into this profession; and
 - d. that, while Kōhanga Reo kaiako are not Teaching-Council registered, this is because the registration criteria do not meet Kōhanga Reo kaupapa, not because of the quality, extent, or necessity of the training.
20. It is also reasonable to conclude that the lower funding rate would limit the Trust's ability to invest in appropriate degree level training.
21. We note that any change to recognise Tohu Whakapakari may also be applied to Massey University's Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching Te Korowai Mokopuna (for Tohu Whakapakari graduates with workforce experience). Massey University has raised similar concerns to the Trust about the funding of this qualification in the past. This qualification would fit into the higher rate if practical component criteria are also met. The additional cost would be very small, as volumes for this qualification are much lower than for Tohu Whakapakari (2.25 EFTS in 2022).
22. Officials have discussed this recommendation with the Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education), and he has indicated that he supports progressing this as a priority prior to the general election.

Financial implications

23. The TEC would give effect to this change by making changes to its Delivery Classification Guide to allow funding at the higher rate from 2024.
24. The proposed updates would increase funding for this delivery. In 2022, a total of approximately 128 EFTSs took part in Tohu Whakapakari. If EFTS numbers stay the same in 2024, the additional cost to the Crown upon a rate increase would amount to approximately \$522,000 (a 53 per cent increase).

Table 1. Relevant 2024 funding rates (in NZD) assuming similar EFTS numbers to those in 2022

Funding rate	Rate per EFTS	Tohu Whakapakari (128.17 EFTSs)
Current rate (Mātauranga Māori)	7,656	981,269.52
Proposed rate (Teaching ECE)	11,732	1,503,690.44
Additional cost of higher rate		522,420.92

EFTS equivalent full-time student, NZD New Zealand dollars.

25. The TEC has advised that it is comfortable that these increased costs can be managed within Vote Tertiary Education baselines. While the change would have a marginal impact on future pressure on these baselines, it is not significant in the context of overall tertiary expenditure. The TEC would continue to use its investment processes to prioritise provision from across tertiary education within available baselines.

Risks

26. We are comfortable that this change does not create any significant precedent risks for expanding the scope of the higher teacher training funding rate, given that it aligns with the original policy intent of limiting the rate to qualifications with a significant practical component. It is also consistent with the Government's broader approach to Kōhanga Reo, in particular the recent work on pay parity.

Next Steps

27. A decision within the next two weeks is necessary to allow the TEC to finalise its Delivery Classification Guide for 2024.
28. Subject to your decision, the TEC will update the wording of the Delivery Classification Guide to align it with policy intent. The TEC will then work with the Trust to communicate this change and ensure funding rates are amended for the 2024 allocations.
29. We would expect to subsequently update the relevant wording in the Ministerial funding determinations for 2025 onwards to clarify that Kōhanga Reo kaiako training is included under the funding classification for the higher rate.