



Pay Equity and the Science Technicians' Claim

The Science Technicians' Pay Equity Claim (SPEC) was settled on 6 March 2023. This document provides an overview of:

- the pay equity claim process for science technicians
- the findings of our pay equity investigation and the key aspects of the agreed settlement
- need-to-know information and actions for schools and kura resulting from the settlement
- the next steps and where you can find support.

Contents

What is pay equity?.....	1
How did we get here?.....	2
The findings.....	3
Agreement on pay equity issues.....	3
Need-to-know information.....	4
Actions for schools and kura.....	6
What happens next.....	8
Where you can find support.....	8

What is pay equity?

- Pay equity means that people are paid equally for doing work of equal value.
- Achieving pay equity means we have to compare the way that we value and pay for work that we perceive to be very different – such as that carried out by science technicians and customs officers.
- Pay equity recognises that while on the surface two jobs may look very different to each other, they actually require the same or substantially similar skills and experience, responsibilities, degrees of effort or working conditions.
- It also recognises that, in some instances, wages for workers in female-dominated occupations have suffered from sex-based discrimination because of perceptions and prejudices about the value of 'women's work', and a tendency to minimise the skills, experience, responsibilities, conditions and effort required by this work.
- Pay equity is an attempt to ensure that the wages paid to workers in female-dominated occupations are free of assumptions and prejudices about the value of that work because it is done mainly by women.
- By comparing the work and pay of female-dominated occupations with male-dominated occupations, pay equity ensures that workers in female-dominated occupations receive pay that properly recognises the value of the work that they do.

How did we get here?

In November 2020, NZEI Te Riu Roa raised a pay equity claim with the Secretary for Education on behalf of science technicians in schools and kura.

On 8 October 2021, NZEI Te Riu Roa and the Ministry signed the terms of reference for the Science Technicians' Pay Equity Claim, which formally started the investigation to find out if the predominantly female school librarian workforce in our schools and kura was undervalued and underpaid.

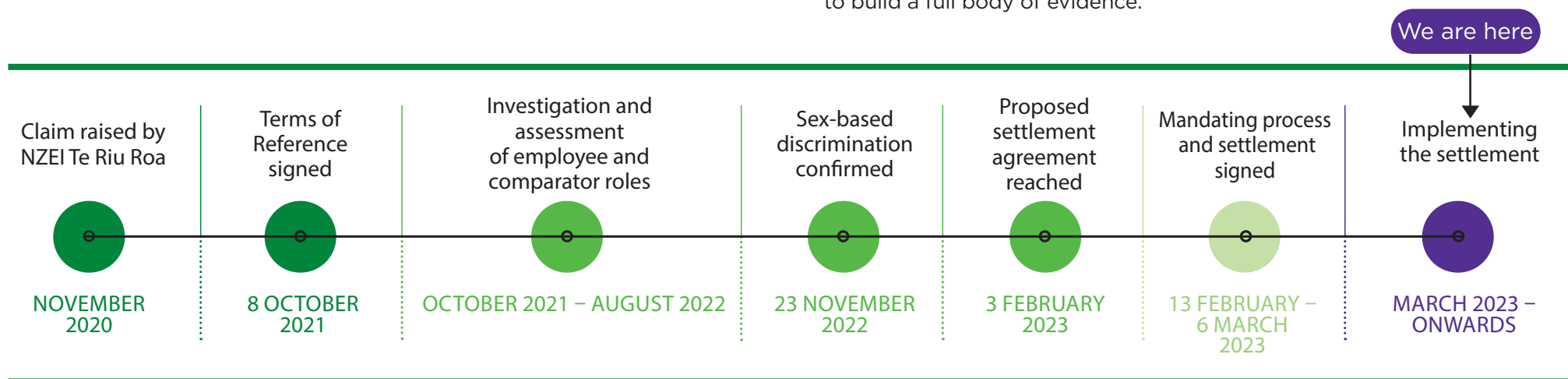
The parties worked collaboratively between October 2021 and August 2022 to investigate the claim.

Twenty-six interviews were carried out with a randomly selected sample of science technicians, and their supervisors, which was representative of school demographics. The interview transcripts were then analysed and the key areas of responsibility and associated tasks and activities identified.

We then sought feedback from schools and kura to check whether there were any significant gaps in the general areas of responsibility. As a result of this feedback, we conducted four further interviews to add to the range of responsibilities documented.

Next, we interviewed a range of comparator roles. Staff in these roles perform work that is different but have skills and experience, responsibilities, working conditions or degrees of effort that are the same or substantially similar to the claimant work, but are male-dominated. The interviews were held to fully understand the work of comparators. The comparator roles that were agreed to and used were teacher aides, school administration support staff, fishery officers, parking compliance officers, cadastral surveyors, corrections officers and customs officers.

The terms and conditions from collective agreements, data from claimant and comparator organisations, as well as historical information about the development of the role were also analysed to build a full body of evidence.



The findings

The investigation of the claim found that although the work of comparators required the same or substantially similar level of skills, responsibilities, experience, degrees of effort or conditions of work as science technicians were paid less.

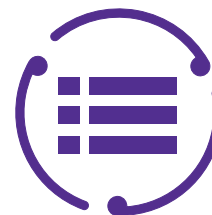
The conclusion of the investigation was therefore that science technicians' pay suffered from sex-based undervaluation and needed to be corrected. For more information, view the [evidence report](#).

Agreement on pay equity issues

On 3 February 2023, the Ministry of Education and NZEI Te Riu Roa reached a proposed settlement agreement that acknowledges the value of the skills, responsibilities, experience, degrees of effort and conditions of work of science technicians and ensures it is being remunerated fairly. That proposed settlement was then endorsed by covered employees on 6 March 2023, to settle the claim.

The settlement applies to science technicians and anyone who does the work described in the work matrix in state, state-integrated schools or kura.

The settlement includes:



Work matrix

A work matrix has been developed, which better acknowledges the value of the skills, experience, responsibilities and demands of science technician roles. The work matrix has three grades (1-3), which will determine the pay rate a science technician employee should be on.



Pay equity rates

The pay equity pay rates range from \$24.99 to \$46.60 per hour and will be effective from 23 November 2022. Science technicians covered by the pay equity claim settlement will automatically receive the new pay equity pay rates by 31 August 2023, including any backdated entitlements. After this, schools and kura will receive the first round of funding through their operational grant on 1 July 2023.



Parental payment

A lump sum payment will be made to science technicians who return to work for six months after taking parental leave. The payment will be equivalent to six weeks' pay at the employee's normal rate immediately prior to the commencement of parental leave.

These new entitlements have been added into the *Support Staff in Schools' Collective Agreement* and the *Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu Specialist and Support Staff Collective Agreement*.

Need-to-know information

- You will receive ongoing funding to cover the costs.
- Translation to the new pay rates will occur for employees on Individual Employment Agreements (IEAs) and Collective Employment Agreements (CEAs).
- How to place new employees on the work matrix.
- The process of applying for regrading of an employee.
- The process of applying for the parental payment.
- Former employees who have left since 23 November 2022 will be eligible for some payment from this date. Keep a record of this.
- Payroll-related information.
- The following guidance is [available here](#) to support you with implementing the settlement:
 - Settlement funding information
 - Pay Rate Translation Guide
 - Work Matrix Guide
 - Payroll Guide
 - Parental Payment Guide
 - Regrading Guide



Ongoing funding

Ongoing funding will be provided to schools and kura to cover the increased cost of the Science Technicians' Pay Equity Claim settlement. This funding will be paid as part of your operational grant instalments, with the first instalment scheduled for 1 July 2023. Schools and kura are required to use the additional settlement funding to apply the pay equity outcomes and new pay rates.



Translation to the new pay rates

Translation from the old pay rates to the new pay rates will be done automatically by Education Payroll by 31 August 2023. This includes employees on IEAs. Some employees may translate automatically by 31 August 2023 and then subsequently to another point in the matrix due to a pay equity regrading movement. See [Applying for regrading](#). Read the Pay Rate Translation Guide to help you understand how science technicians will be translated to the new pay rates.



The work matrix

The work matrix is primarily used to determine which grade new employees should be placed on when starting a new role or position. It may also be used when an employee takes on a new role with different skills, experience, demands and responsibilities, or to confirm that an employee has been placed in the right grade following automatic translation. It will also be used when making grading adjustments or through regrading. Read the Work Matrix Guide to help you with understanding and using the work matrix.



Applying for regrading

Schools and kura have from 1 May 2023 until 15 December 2023 to apply for pay equity regrade funding. 1 December 2023 is the final date an employee can request regrading from their school or kura as a direct result of the settlements.

If an employee requests to be regraded, we recommend you meet with them to talk through their role, job description and responsibilities in the work matrix. If you determine that your employee is completing work that is a higher grade because of the pay equity settlement you can apply for pay equity regrade funding.

The pay equity regrade funding application process is provided only for changes to grades that are a direct result of any inconsistencies in the translation process outlined in the pay equity settlement and **not due** to correcting historic employment issues, changes to responsibilities or incorrect placement under the previous grading system.

Pay equity regrade applications and changes need to be submitted via the Taku portal, and not with the Novo2nt form you would usually use to change the grade of an employee.

Read the Regrading Guide to help you with understanding the regrading process.



Applying for the parental payment

Read the Parental Payment Guide for information on applying for the parental payment.



Former employees

People who were employed on or after 23 November 2022 are covered by the claim settlement. Former employees will be able to access information on the [Pay Equity for Former Employees](#) webpage at a later date.

If you are a school or kura with a former employee, there is no action for you. However, if you would like to check that the designation code of your former employee was correct at the time of their employment, you can do this in EdPay. See the Payroll Guide for instructions on how to do this.



Payroll information

Schools and kura need to be aware of payroll-related information and undertake several actions in payroll following the settlement (see page 7). For more detailed payroll information, view the Payroll Guide. It shows what key information may be required, where you can find it and the actions schools and kura may need to take regarding payroll.

Actions for schools and kura

There are actions schools and kura need to take, as well as some things to be aware of, to ensure science technicians receive the benefits and new pay rates resulting from the settlement.

At a glance

- Check that covered employees have an up-to-date employment agreement and job description. ☐
- Use the new offer of employment template letter for new employees. ☐
- Updating payroll information – check that all covered employees' payroll information is up to date and they are on the correct designation code(s) in EdPay. ☐
- Recruiting new employees – contact Ohumahi Support to discuss how to process employees who will be hired between the settlement date and the date employees are paid the new rates. ☐



Ensuring employees have an up-to-date employment agreement and job description

While employees' employment agreements are automatically varied by the settlement, it is important that you have an up-to-date signed employment agreement with your employee.

Action

Check that you have an up-to-date signed employment agreement, where necessary, including the recently promulgated IEAs for non-union members (as available on the [education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz)), and job descriptions on file for your employees.



For further support with these actions:

- contact the Ministry at ohumahi.support@education.govt.nz or on **0800 114 117**
- visit the Taku portal on [education.govt.nz/taku](https://www.education.govt.nz/taku) Education Sector Logon (ESL) required
- contact NZEI Te Riu Roa at payequity@nzei.org.nz or on **0800 693 443**
- contact NZSTA at eradvice@nzsta.org.nz or on **0800 782 435** (option #2)



New offer of employment template letter

New employees will need to have a new offer of employment template letter, which references the terms of the settlement.

Action

The new offer of employment template letter for employees on IEAs is available on [NZSTA's Resource Centre](https://www.nzsta.org.nz/resource-centre). Please ensure these templates are used.



Updating payroll information

Below are some of the payroll actions for schools and kura. More detailed payroll-related information is available in the Payroll Guide.

Employment status in EdPay

Make sure all covered employees' employment status is correct in payroll. This includes ensuring they are on the correct grade and step.

Designation codes

For employees to receive payment following the settlement, they must be on the correct payroll designation code(s) in EdPay. This is done by viewing your 'My Employee's Tab' via EdPay. If an employee is not on the correct code, they will not be paid the new rates.

Action

Principals and authorised payroll users should make sure that employees whose work is covered by a current pay equity claim are on the correct designation code on EdPay. Employees with multiple roles may need more than one designation code.

If employees are not on the correct designation code, this will need to be changed immediately. The effective date of a designation code change may impact pay rates and pay equity funding for the employee. Contact Ohumahi Support to discuss the effective date, particularly if you are considering an effective date prior to 23 November 2022.

Designation codes can be changed on EdPay, or with a NOVO2nt form.

Below is the designation code for this claim.

Designation code	Description
S89	Assoc - Science Technician



Recruiting new employees between now and payment

Before recruiting new employees who will start between the settlement date (6 March 2023) and the date employees are paid the new rates, contact Ohumahi Support to discuss how to process these employees in EdPay. This is particularly important to ensure the right pay information is communicated to the employee(s), and that they are set up in the system correctly. After implementation of the new rates, new employees will be placed on the work matrix and set up in EdPay in the usual way.

Action

Contact Ohumahi Support to discuss how to process employees who will be hired between the settlement date and the date employees are paid the new rates.

What happens next

Together with NZEI Te Riu Roa and NZSTA, we have developed detailed guidance for science technicians, schools and kura.

This includes guidance on settlement funding, pay rate translation, the work matrix, payroll information, the parental grant and regrading. The guidance has more details and case studies for your reference. It is now available to read on education.govt.nz and nzei.org.nz.

For key dates and activities in implementing the claim settlement, view the [Librarian and Library Assistants', and Science Technicians' Pay Equity Claims Roadmap](#).

Where you can find support

- contact the Ministry at ohumahi.support@education.govt.nz or on **0800 114 117**
- visit the Taku portal on education.govt.nz/taku
Education Sector Logon (ESL) required
- contact NZEI Te Riu Roa at payequity@nzei.org.nz or on **0800 693 443**
- contact NZSTA at eradvice@nzsta.org.nz or on **0800 782 435** (option #2)

