



Teacher Aide Pay Equity Settlement – Work Matrix Guide

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What is the work matrix?

To create a fair pay equity rate, we needed to understand the work teacher aides do.

When the Ministry, NZEI Te Riu Roa and NZSTA investigated the teacher aide pay equity claim, we gathered information about teacher aide work and used this to develop the pay equity work matrix table.

[More information about this process can be found in the Teacher Aide Pay Equity Claim Report](#)

This matrix has four grades (A, B, C, D) showing the most common skills, responsibilities and demands that fall under three broad areas of teacher aide work:



General support



Additional support



Te Ao Māori

Each set of skills builds on those found in previous grades as the levels of skills, demands and responsibilities increase. The grade and step a teacher aide are on determines their pay rate.

You will need to familiarise yourself with the new work matrix, which sets out the most common skills, responsibilities and demands that apply to teacher aides for each of the grades. A teacher aide will be placed in the grade that reflects the highest-level skills, demands or responsibilities performed regularly and are an ongoing part of the role.

You will need to understand the new work matrix for situations such as creating a new teacher aide role, for annual performance reviews, and if a teacher aide requests a review of their grade. You do not need to refer to the work matrix to complete the automatic point to point translation, as Education Payroll will do this.

If movement between grades takes place, the teacher aide should be paid on a higher rate than they were previously paid. Typically, this will be the first step of the employee's new grade.

How to use the work matrix

When considering the grade for a role or when building a job description for a new role, you should consider the work matrix in its entirety to ensure that the descriptors that best fit the role are identified.

A teacher aide should be placed in the grade that reflects the highest-level skills, demands or responsibilities performed both regularly and as an ongoing part of the role.

Six things to remember when assessing a role against the work matrix:

1. Consider all three areas of the work matrix (General_Support / Additional Support / Te Ao Māori)
2. Use the headings to understand the key skills, demands and responsibilities needed in each grade.
3. The work matrix is an assessment of skills, demands and responsibilities.
4. The regular and ongoing skills, demands, and responsibilities of the role that are not a one-off or isolated event.
5. Adjectives and descriptors are important to distinguish the subtle distinctions between grades
6. Teacher aides do not have to do every activity in a grade in order to be placed in that grade.

Consider all three areas of the work matrix

Teacher aide roles may include skills, responsibilities and demands within all three of the areas (General Support, Additional Support, Te Ao Māori), or a blend of two, or it may be covered in just one of the areas, for example Te Ao Māori.

When assessing a role against the work matrix, you should look at the criteria in all three areas even if it seems as though the teacher aide role fits predominantly into one section.



Joey | provides regular coaching and mentoring in a Te Ao Māori Context

Joey actively uses te reo Māori in the classroom. She helps prepare and adapt te reo resources and supports teachers by guiding students and colleagues in tikanga during pōwhiri. These skills place her squarely in grade B. However, she also regularly coaches, mentors and provides guidance and training to other teacher aides. This is found under the area of general support, not Te Ao Māori, but as all three must be considered, the position would be graded in C.

Use the headings to understand the key skills

The work matrix includes headings under each area to help people understand the key skills, responsibilities and demands required in each grade.

Grade A is about following structured programmes, lesson plans and activities and providing basic support to learners.

	GENERAL SUPPORT	ADDITIONAL SUPPORT	TE AO MĀORI
	Follows structured programmes, lesson plans and activities	Supports learner's well-being, health and safety	Developing

In grade B, a teacher aide working in the area of general support will generally follow structured programmes and lesson plans but may make minor adjustments and create activities to suit a learners needs. They may also be directly supporting students with specific health, behavioural and/or other needs, and/or supporting and guiding te reo and tikanga.

	GENERAL SUPPORT	ADDITIONAL SUPPORT	TE AO MĀORI
	Follows structured programmes but can make minor adaption and creates activities	Directly supports students with specific health, behavioural and/or other needs	Supporting, guiding reo and tikanga

In grade C, a teacher aide is more independent. In the area of general support, they are independently delivering ongoing programmes and adapting as required. They may also be using specific expertise to support learners with complex health and behavioural needs, or they may be regularly speaking and role modelling te reo Māori.

	GENERAL SUPPORT	ADDITIONAL SUPPORT	TE AO MĀORI
	Independently delivers ongoing programmes with ability to adapt as required	Supports students with complex health, behavioural and/or other needs	Speaks and role models te reo

To fit into grade D in general classroom support, a teacher aide would be developing ongoing programmes and lesson plans. In additional support, they may be providing highly specialised support for students with complex health, behavioural and/or other needs, and formulating programmes to suit the student's needs. In Te Ao Māori, they may also be a leader and advocate for te reo Māori within the kura and the community.

	GENERAL SUPPORT	ADDITIONAL SUPPORT	TE AO MĀORI
	Creates, plans and delivers ongoing programmes requiring strong technical proficiency and skills	Provides highly specialised support for students with complex health, behavioural and/or other needs	A strong leader and advocate for te reo Māori in the kura and community

The work matrix assesses skills, demands and responsibilities

The work matrix is designed to focus on the activities completed by the teacher aides, not the type of student they are working with. Working with a high-needs student will not automatically place a teacher aide into a higher grade. Likewise, if a teacher aide is working with students within a mainstream classroom, they will not be automatically placed on a lower grade.

A teacher aide may assist with a high health needs student by helping with their feeding or personal hygiene – activities placing them in grade A. Alternatively, the teacher aide may be actively involved

in providing specific expertise to support a student with high health needs. For example, by providing specialised medical support – activities placing them in either grade B or C, which both require direct support for specific health needs. The employer needs to think about which of the grades best describes the work done by the teacher aide.

The regular and ongoing skills, demands, and responsibilities of the role that are not a one-off or isolated event

The employer will need to assess the regular and ongoing skills, demands, and responsibilities of each teacher aide role so that the grade recognises the highest-level skills, demands, and responsibilities that are required for competent performance of the role.

If a teacher aide **regularly and on an ongoing basis** completes a skill, responsibility or demand that is within a higher grade, they should be placed within the higher grade.

When assessing this, you need to consider what skills, responsibilities and demands make up most of the role, and not the things that are one-off or an isolated event.



Kamaia | assisting in cultural events

Kamaia completes several skills, responsibilities and demands that would place her in grade A. However, her school asks her to provide leadership at a one-off cultural event. Providing leadership at a cultural event is a grade C demand, so Kamaia wonders whether she should be placed in grade C. Her school explains that because it is a one-off event it does not place her in grade C.

However, if her school asked her to regularly and on an ongoing basis co-ordinate and represent the school at cultural events throughout the year, she would be placed in grade C despite the remainder of her skills, responsibilities and demands placing her in grade A.

Adjectives and descriptions are important to identify the subtle distinctions and how skills build on the previous grade

When reading the work matrix, pay special attention to how similar activities are described within different grades. The work matrix uses descriptions to elevate the level of skill and responsibility required within each grade.

Employers should look across all the grades and the descriptions to locate the skills, demands and responsibilities that are required for competent performance of the role.

For example:

General support

In grade A, a teacher aide may work with students on a variety of *standardised and specified tasks*, while a grade B teacher aide may *deliver a range of subjects and topics* or *works more in depth in a single or limited range of subjects*. Grade C scales up even further where the teacher aide *has a high*

level of day to day independence which includes planning tasks and activities and clear accountability for delivering specific programmes to agreed standards.

A teacher aide in grade B may make *minor adaptations to lesson plans* and resources and *designs activities to supplement programmes*, while a teacher aide in grade C will *tailor, test, adapt and create individual plans* and resources within a programme.

Additional support

In Grade B, the teacher aide *must be constantly monitoring for escalating behaviours and diffuse these situations*, while grade C teacher aides *must be constantly vigilant for escalating behaviours and defuses difficult situations which may pose risks to themselves or others*.

In grade D, a teacher aide may be required to *de-escalate extreme emotionally charged situations and overcomes significant barriers to learning by employing a wide range of techniques and competencies over time*.

Te Ao Māori

In grade A, a teacher aide *respects, accommodates and has some basic knowledge of Māori language/pronunciation*, while in grade B they *use te reo Māori in daily conversations to provide assistance or respond to needs*.

Moving further up the work matrix, in grade D, the teacher aide role *requires a high level of fluency of te reo Māori*.

Reviewing a job description

Reviewing job descriptions is not a requirement of the settlement, however the new work matrix does more accurately reflect the work of teacher aides and is a useful tool to help build clear job descriptions. If a teacher aide requests that you review their work or if you are creating a new role, you will need to consider the job description against the work matrix.

A job description alone may not provide enough detail to determine a teacher aide's grade, and further questions about the work may be required. Below are some of the questions you may need to ask yourself.



Blue primary school

Teacher aide job description

Job title: Teacher aide
Responsible to: Principal, Deputy and SENCO

Functional Relationships: SENCO, all staff involved in various Learning support areas and other professionals.

Is this a standardised or specified task e.g. Early Works, SRA reading or is the teacher aide working with individual students and small groups delivering on a range of subjects?

This fits in the additional support category. Look through those work matrix grade headings and tasks below to determine which grade fits best.

Overall objectives: To support the learning of those students that may require assistance with their learning, behaviour or physical needs.

Key areas	Performance indicators
Working with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Work with small literacy, numeracy and language groups under the direction of SENCO. ▶ Provide one to one support or work with small groups, developing strategies in partnership with the SENCO or teacher to enable all pupils to access learning opportunities. ▶ In partnership with the SENCO and/or teacher, assist in the use of ICT, learning resources and communication tools in the classroom. ▶ Attend to special needs student's personal care as necessary. ▶ Develop an understanding of the welfare and social needs of the students with Special Education Needs. ▶ Skills and knowledge in working with ESOL students.
Working with SENCO, teachers and other agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Under the direction of the SENCO, teachers and other professionals assist in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of pupils learning, helping to record their progress, as outlined in Individual Educational Plans. ▶ Assist teacher and classes on educational visits when relevant. ▶ Attend and contribute to meetings such as IEP's or team meetings. ▶ Provide relevant support to teacher to support student learning. ▶ Operate equipment including photocopiers, flip camera, DVDs etc. to assist teachers if necessary.

What does this task involve? What tools are they using? What level of expertise does this require? Where does it sit in the work matrix?

What activities does the teacher aide do with the ESOL students?