

2025 Secondary Teachers' Study Award

Applications close Wednesday 8 May 2024

Application
Guide

About the Secondary Teacher's Study Award

Background

The Secondary Teachers' Study Awards were established in negotiation between the Post Primary Teachers' Association Te Wehengarua (PPTA) and the Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o Mātauranga. The awards are based on criteria determined by the Ministry of Education in consultation with the PPTA and the Te Whakarōputanga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa – New Zealand School Boards Association (Te Whakarōputanga).

What is this award?

This study award is one of the professional learning provisions available to teachers in New Zealand state or state-integrated schools, who are employed under the terms and conditions of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA).

What does the study award provide?

The study award provides paid leave at the teachers' normal salary for the duration of the study award. 'Normal salary' includes all permanent salary units and allowances.

Where fixed-term salary units and allowances are held, the teacher should clarify with their principal whether these will continue to be paid. Any salary increases or increments during the period of leave still apply, according to the provisions of the STCA.

The leave counts as service for most purposes. The leave of absence is for full-time or part-time study.

The study award does not include any additional expenses associated with the study, e.g. course fees, or removal and travelling expenses.

The number of weeks is granted at the discretion of the selection panel, based on the study proposed in the application.

How is the study award paid?

You will continue to be paid through your school. Your school receives relief funding, in accordance with the relevant collective agreement, while you are on study leave.

How many are available each year?

Each year there are 75 full-time teacher equivalent (FTTE) study awards available to secondary teachers in state or state-integrated schools. The award provides time for part-time or full-time study in agreed educational priority areas.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for a study award, you must be:

- employed under the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement or applicable Individual Employment Agreement (IEA).
- a permanently appointed full-time or part-time teacher in a New Zealand state or state-integrated school or,
- a full-time long-term relieving or fixed-term teacher in a New Zealand state or state-integrated school.

If appointed to a Community of Schools Teacher (across community) role, you cannot undertake a study award at the same time.

Note that guidance counsellors covered by the STCA may apply. Fixed-term part-time teachers and long-term relieving part-time teachers and day relievers are not eligible to apply.

If you are employed in a full-time fixed-term position, this position must cover the duration of the award.

What professional learning (study) can teachers undertake?

Teachers can apply to:

- complete a qualification
- improve an existing qualification
- study a new qualification in a new or different curriculum area
- undertake research
- undertake study that is relevant and adds value to secondary education
- obtain practical knowledge and skill-related experience in their subject area.

How is my application assessed?

Your application will be checked to ensure it meets all the eligibility criteria outlined on page 1 of the application guide. A selection panel, made up of equal representatives from the Ministry of Education/Te Whakarōputanga and PPTA, will then assess your application.

Firstly priority is given to:

- completing a level 7 specialist subject qualification
- study in a wider or new curriculum area
- teachers who are gaining and/or advancing a teaching or education qualification.
- study to enhance your knowledge and/or pedagogy in areas where there is pressure on teacher supply. For study in 2024 these areas are the sciences, technology, and mathematics (particularly at years 11-13) and te reo Māori.

Applications are then ranked highest to lowest on the following selection factors:

- Study or research that furthers the Ministry of Education's priorities in education including policy that aims to improve the learning outcomes for priority student groups, this includes:
 - Māori and Pasifika students
 - students from low socio-economic backgrounds
 - students with special education needs.
- Study that benefits the teacher personally and professionally.
- The commitment and effort already made in recent study.
- The completeness and clarity of the study plan.

Preference is then given to teachers on equal score who:

- are completing qualifications in 2024
- have not had a significant period of study leave in the last five years
- are registered teachers with at least five years' service in New Zealand state or state-integrated schools.

If required the following additional selection factors will be given consideration.

- issues faced because of professional isolation.
- equal opportunity factors.
- support from the school board/employer (or limited statutory manager or commissioner) and principal.

The selection panel's role is to ensure the selection process is open, fair, consistent and impartial, that it provides equal opportunity and non-discrimination and that study leave weeks are assigned equitably.

Approval of leave

Teachers who are granted a study award will be given leave on pay for the period of study by their principal and school board/employer.

You must provide principal and school board/ employer to demonstrate support for your application. If you have not received support for your application, you may still apply. You should provide an explanation as to why written confirmation of support has not been included with your application.

Expectations if awarded a study award

If you are selected for a study award, you must:

- Notify TeachNZ if there are any changes to your contact details, employment status, your study plan, or if you take up a new position
- Undertake the study as stated in your application
- Be at school before and after taking up the study award if you are awarded less than a full year's study award (e.g. 20 or 32 school weeks rather than 40)
- Provide confirmation of enrolment and proof of completion of study when required.

If you are offered a study award and then decline it, you can re-apply with no prejudice in a subsequent year.

Please note that the study award cannot be deferred to the following year.

Timetable

The following is a timetable for the study award application process.

WEDNESDAY 8 MAY 2024

Application closing date

WEDNESDAY 15 MAY 2024

Closing date for submitting additional information

JULY 2024

Selection process

WEDNESDAY 17 JULY 2024

Teachers notified of results

2025 Secondary Teachers' Study Award

Frequently asked questions

Application
FAQ

General

When will I find out the outcome of my application?

You will be notified by Wednesday 17 July 2024.

Are all the study awards allocated each year?

Yes, the selection process for the Secondary Teachers' Study Awards is always competitive as there are a limited number available. Selections are made according to the factors, preferences and priorities detailed in 'How is my application assessed?' on page 2 of the application guide.

What does a Secondary Teachers' Study Award provide?

A Secondary Teachers' Study Award provides you with paid leave for study. TeachNZ (Ministry of Education) covers the relief costs to replace you while you are on study leave, including any holiday pay a relief teacher is entitled to.

Does the Secondary Teachers' Study Award pay for course fees or any additional expenses?

No, there is no contribution to course fees or any additional expenses.

What will happen if I have applied for the wrong award?

Your application will only be assessed for the award you have applied for. It's important for you to check the application information to ensure that you are applying for the correct award.

If my study finishes before the end of the school year, do I need to return to school?

Yes, you are expected to be at school before and after your study leave. A study award will only fund the relief costs up to the total number of school weeks that you have been awarded.

Do I need to return to the same school after completing my study award?

There is an expectation that you will return to either your previous role or a similar one.

Can I apply for more than one award?

Yes, but you can only accept one award. If you are successful in more than one application, you will be asked to choose which award you will accept.

Please note that you must send in a separate application for each award.

Can I submit more than one application for the same award?

No, you can only submit one application for each award you apply for.

Can I postpone my award until the next year?

No, a study award cannot be postponed. If you need to withdraw from the study award, you can apply again in the future with no prejudice.

What if I am offered a position at a different school before I take up the study award?

You will need to tell your new principal and school board/employer you have been offered a study award and discuss your options with them. If your new principal and school board/employer supports your completion of the study award, then you would need to provide TeachNZ with confirmation of support from the principal and school board/employer so your new school can receive relief teacher funding. If you then choose not to take up the study award, for any reason, you must advise TeachNZ as soon as possible.

Please advise by the acceptance deadline if you do not wish to take up the award so that it can be offered to a teacher on the reserve list.

What if I am offered a position at a different school that will commence while I am on study leave?

You will need to consider your commitment to the study award and discuss your options with your principal and school board/employer. If your new principal and school board/employer supports your completion of the study award, you would need to provide TeachNZ with confirmation of support from the principal and school board/employer so your new school can receive relief teacher funding.

Can I withdraw from a study award?

If you choose to withdraw from the study award, you can apply again in the future with no prejudice. You just need to let us know in writing that you would like to withdraw from the award. We can accept this by email to teacher.studyawards@education.govt.nz.

What if I begin my study and I find I can't complete it?

The study award is given to you for the purpose of completing the study outlined in your study plan.

If you are unable to complete the study, you will need to contact TeachNZ to discuss your options.

What if I am made surplus to requirements while on study leave?

The usual provisions for surplus staffing apply at the end of that year, as you are still an employee of the school from which you are on study leave. You have the same rights as other teaching staff and you will be able to complete your study award.

Eligibility

If I am a secondary-trained teacher working in an area or primary school, can I apply for a Secondary Teachers' Study Award?

The study award you are eligible to apply for depends on which collective agreement you are employed under. You are most likely employed under either the Area School or Primary Teachers' Collective Agreements.

You can apply for a Secondary Teachers' Study Award only if you are covered by the terms and conditions of the Secondary Teacher's Collective Agreement and meet all the eligibility criteria.

If you are covered by the terms and conditions of either the Primary or Area School Teachers' Collective Agreements, you may be eligible to apply for an Area School or Primary Teachers' Study Award. Please visit www.TeachNZ.govt.nz/studyawards to find out more.

I am a Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTL) who works in primary and area schools, but my lead school is a secondary school. Can I apply for this award?

The study award you are eligible to apply for depends on which collective agreement you are employed under.

You can apply for a Secondary Teachers' Study Award if you are covered by the terms and conditions of the Secondary Teacher's Collective Agreement.

Although you are working in primary schools, as your lead school is a secondary school you may be employed under the terms and conditions of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement.

If you are covered by the terms and conditions of the Primary or Area School Teachers' Collective Agreements, you may be eligible to apply for a Primary or Area School Principals' and Teachers' Study Award. Please visit www.TeachNZ.govt.nz/studyawards to find out more.

I am a guidance counsellor with a LAT and am employed full-time. Can I apply for a study award?

Yes, the guidelines specifically allow for untrained guidance counsellors to apply for a study award to complete a teacher education course. You would meet the priority area of gaining and/or advancing a teaching or education qualification.

What if my teaching position is made surplus to requirements after I submit my application?

TeachNZ provides relief funding to a school while a teacher is away on study leave. If your position is disestablished, you will not be able to take up this study award; under the surplus staffing provisions, however, there is a retraining option which offers full-time study leave for 40 weeks.

Talk to your colleagues, your school board/employer and/or your union about the options available to you through the surplus staffing provisions. Your proposal for the study award may fit the criteria for the retraining option available through surplus staffing.

I am a part-time teacher; can I apply for a Secondary Teachers' Study Award?

Yes, if you are permanently employed. If you are offered a study award, the amount of study leave you receive will be pro rated on the basis of your current full-time teaching equivalent (FTTE). You will need to let us know your current FTTE.

Please note that part-time, long-term relieving or part-time fixed-term teachers are not eligible to apply.

I am on a fixed-term contract; can I apply for a Secondary Teachers' Study Award?

Yes, if you are appointed full time, but you will also need to be employed by a school during study leave as TeachNZ provides relief funding to your school while you are on study leave.

Can I apply if I am a long-term reliever?

Yes, if you are employed full-time, but you will also need to be employed by a school during the study leave as TeachNZ provides relief funding to your school while you are on study leave.

My certification is currently Tiwhikete Whakaakoranga Pūmau | Full Practising Certificate (Category Two). Can I apply?

Yes, you can apply.

Please notify TeachNZ if your certification status changes during the application or selection process.

I am provisionally certificated – can I apply?

Yes, but please note that one of the selection factors gives preference to certificated teachers with at least five years' service in New Zealand state or state-integrated schools.

Please notify TeachNZ if your certification status changes during the application or selection process.

I have Limited Authority to Teach (LAT) – can I apply?

Yes, teachers who have LATs and are appointed full time in teaching roles, such as guidance counsellors and itinerant music teachers, can apply as untrained teachers to complete a teacher education course. They meet one of the priority areas (see above for guidance counsellors), but one of the other selection factors gives preference to registered teachers with at least five years' service in New Zealand state or state-integrated schools. The selection panel has to consider the complete range of priorities, preferences and selection factors in making their decisions.

Can I apply if I have previously had a study award or sabbatical?

Yes, but please note that one of the selection factors gives preference to teachers who have not had a significant period of study leave in the last five years.

Can I apply if I'm not a member of a teachers' union?

Yes, the study awards are open to all teachers in New Zealand state and state-integrated schools who meet the eligibility criteria.

Can I apply if I am a Deputy Principal?

Yes, as long as you meet the eligibility criteria.

I am appointed to the Community of Schools Teacher (across community) role, am I able to take study leave?

No, a teacher in receipt of the allowance for Community of Schools Teacher (across community) role shall not be eligible to take up a study leave award but may apply for a study leave award in the last year of their appointment to the role provided that it is not taken up until after the conclusion of the fixed-term appointment.

If I am appointed to the Community of Schools Teacher (within school) role, am I able to take study leave?

Yes, apply as usual.

How is my application assessed?

How is study leave awarded?

A selection panel meets and selects on the basis of the selection factors, preferences and priority areas outlined in 'How is my application assessed?' on page 2 of the application guide.

What is considered recent study?

Recent study is defined as study that has been undertaken in the last three years.

What is considered 'professional isolation'?

It is important that you outline any professional isolation, as applications are judged based on the information you provide.

Examples of professional isolation include:

- if you are the sole teacher of a subject area (e.g. the only te reo Māori or chemistry teacher)
- if you are the sole mentor of beginning teachers in your school
- if you are a teacher in a small, isolated school
- if you cannot access professional development opportunities because of distance and/or costs
- the socio-economic status of the school or community or specific requirements of the school.

What are the Ministry of Education's priorities for education?

You can find these in the Ministry of Education's current Statement of Intent. You can find a copy on <https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/publications/statement-of-intent/>.

What are equal opportunity factors?

The selection panel will consider equal opportunity factors, which are any barriers that could prevent a teacher from taking up opportunities.

Examples of equal opportunity factors can include:

- family circumstances that prevent you from taking up professional development opportunities
- it is hard to find relief teachers in your subject area so you have been unable to take up professional development opportunities.

Completing the application form

What does full-time teacher equivalent (FTTE) mean?

Full-time teacher equivalent means one full-time teaching position, which has a measure of 25 hours per week (five hours per day).

Can I include my professional development in my qualifications on the application form

You may describe any aspect of your learning and study in support of your overall personal career plan and your application; however, study leave is given according to particular priorities, which are outlined on page 2 of the application guide.

Can I include time spent in initial teacher education in my employment history?

No, time spent in initial teacher education is not counted as service as a teacher in New Zealand.

I have received a study support grant previously. Does this count as supported study leave?

No, a study support grant is not considered supported leave.

Proposed study

Is there an approved list of qualifications?

You can apply to study any qualification you choose. You will need to justify your choice of study in your study plan.

What is research study?

For the purposes of a study award, research study may be part of, or in conjunction with, a formal study programme provided by a tertiary institution.

Which tertiary institutions are approved for study?

You can apply to study at any tertiary institution, whether on campus or via distance learning.

Can I study overseas?

Yes, you can apply to study at any tertiary institution you choose.

How do I find out the level of the qualification I am studying?

You can find the level of the qualification on the New Zealand Qualifications Authority website www.nzqa.govt.nz, or you can ask your tertiary institution.

What if the qualification I am planning on studying is not on the NZQA framework?

Please make sure you provide as much information as possible.

Do I need to be enrolled when applying?

No, but please contact your proposed tertiary institution to find out key enrolment dates.

If you are awarded a study award you will be asked to provide confirmation of enrolment in February or March of the year you go on leave.

Can I apply to study part time throughout the year?

Yes you can, as study leave can be used flexibly throughout the year. It is important your principal and school board/employer understand that you plan to study part time and how this will affect your teaching time.

An example of this could be if you are planning to study 60 credits, you would be awarded 16 school weeks to complete your study. You can take the 16 school weeks flexibly throughout the school year with agreement from your school.

How is the leave awarded?

How do I work out the number of weeks I will need a study award for?

The amount of leave awarded is based on the length of the course you study, up to a maximum of 40 school weeks (term breaks are not counted). The period of study leave is granted at the discretion of the selection panel.

For example:

- If you plan to study 120 credits, you will be awarded 32 school weeks to complete your study.
- If you plan to study 60 credits, you will be awarded 16 school weeks to complete your study.

What are school weeks?

School weeks are the weeks during term time. TeachNZ funds relief costs for the school weeks plus any holiday pay the relief teacher is entitled to.

Can I apply to complete my postgraduate qualification, and start work towards my 'Masters'?

Yes, you can apply to complete more than one qualification in the year. Please make sure you provide all the requested information for both/all qualifications in your study plan.

The study that I plan to complete takes two full years. If I am awarded a study award will it cover both years of study?

No, the study awards are only available for up to one school year.

Can I change my course of study after submitting an application?

Yes, but not substantially. Please notify TeachNZ of proposed changes in writing, and provide details of this and an explanation of the reason for this change as this will need to be approved.

Can I apply to study for one semester only?

Yes you can, but it is important that your principal and school board/employer know that you are planning on study for one semester as they will only receive relief funding for the time you are away.

Study plan requirements

How should I present my application?

Please see the application form and complete your study plan in the requested format. This makes it easier for the selection panel to assess study plans consistently.

Why is it important that I explain what study I plan to do?

As you can apply to study any qualification at any tertiary institution, you need to clearly justify your choice of study and explain how this decision will benefit your teaching practice and students. This includes detailing your chosen qualification and papers in your own words and explaining why you have chosen that paper or qualification.

Why do I need to complete all the information on my study plan?

The selection panel will be using only what you provide as the basis for their decisions and you need to present your application as best you can.

Your study plan is a key part of your application and you need to demonstrate to the selection panel that you have taken the time to prepare it carefully and have followed the format structure. Failure to do so may result in your application scoring lower.

Can I submit more than one study plan?

No, you can only submit one study plan.

Principal and school board support

What can I provide as evidence that my principal supports my application?

We can accept one of the following as support:

- A signed letter of support from your school principal.
- An email sent directly from your school principal to TeachNZ.

Principal support, in one of the formats outlined above, must be submitted by two weeks after the closing date.

Please note that support from the principal is a selection factor.

Who can support my application if my principal is away?

The acting principal is the only person who can support your application on behalf of your principal. Please make sure it is clear that the signature is from the person acting in the role of the principal.

Who can support my application if I am acting principal?

The principal should support your application. If your principal is unable to provide support in one of the approved formats please provide an explanation in the box provided.

What can I provide as evidence that my school board supports my application?

We can accept one of the following as support:

- A copy of relevant school board motion confirming support for your application. Please do not provide the full Board minutes, just the signed Board motion.
- A signed letter of support from the boards presiding member
- An email sent directly from the boards presiding member to TeachNZ.

School board support, in one of the formats outlined above, must be submitted by two weeks after the closing date.

Please note that support from the school board/ employer is a selection factor.

What if I can't provide confirmation of principal and school board/employer support when I submit my application?

If you have not yet received support from the principal and/or school board/employer, you may still apply, but please send confirmation of support in by 2 weeks after the closing date. Please provide an explanation in the application form as to why the support of the principal and/or school board/employer is not included with your application.

Please note that support from the principal and school board/employer is a selection factor.

Who has the authority to support my application on behalf of the school board presiding member?

The deputy presiding member or another trustee who has delegated authority in the absence of the presiding member or their deputy.

Who can support my application if the school board has been disestablished?

Please ask the commissioner acting in place of the school board to confirm support for your application. Please ensure it's clear the signature is that of the commissioner.

Who can support my application if my school has a limited statutory manager employed?

If the limited statutory manager is acting in place of the school board for employment matters, ask the limited statutory manager to confirm support for your application, otherwise the boards presiding member should. Please ensure it's clear that the signature is that of the limited statutory manager.

I am a Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTL) and work in a number of schools. Which principal and school board/employer should I ask to support my application?

RTLs are employed by the cluster lead school's principal and school board/employer. The schools where RTLs are located, but not employed, are called host (or satellite) schools.

Please ask the principal and school board/employer from your lead school to support your application.

Sending my application

Can I email you my application?

No, we can only accept applications submitted online. You can apply online at: www.teachnz.govt.nz/studyawards

What happens if my application is late?

Late applications will not be considered.

Can I send in additional information after submitting my application?

You may submit additional information for your application up to two weeks after the closing date, otherwise this cannot be considered with your application.

How will I know that you have received my application?

You will receive an email to confirm that your application has arrived. Please contact us if you have not heard from us by the closing date.

What happens if my application is incomplete?

It's important to ensure you've submitted all the required information. If your application is incomplete, or it is not in the correct format, the selection panel may not be able to assess it fully.