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Lay Member — Competence Authority, Matatū Aotearoa | The Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand

Bring an independent, public-interest voice to regulatory decisions about whether a teacher's practice meets the required level of competence — and about the outcomes that follow — in Aotearoa New Zealand.

About the role

The Competence Authority considers and decides matters referred to it about the competence of registered teachers and holders of a Limited Authority to Teach. Where the Authority is satisfied that the required level of competence has not been attained, it makes protective, educational, and remedial orders under section 508 of the Education and Training Act 2020 — including conditions on practice, referral to an impairment process, annotation of the register, and, in the most serious cases, cancellation of registration.

Parliament reserved the Lay Member role under section 505(3) for a person who is not a teacher, an employer, or a member of an employing body. The seat exists so that an independent public-interest voice sits on Competence Authority panels — bringing the perspective of children, young people, parents, whānau, colleagues, and the wider public into deliberation.

What you would bring

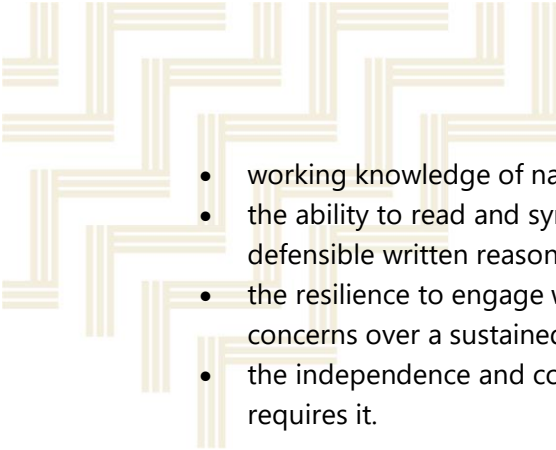
You will be expected to carry three lenses into every panel:

- The learner outcomes and safeguarding lens — looking at the evidence and the proposed outcomes from the perspective of the learners affected by the teacher's practice.
- The public assurance lens — testing whether the panel's reasoning and outcomes are timely, consistent, proportionate, credible, and able to withstand scrutiny.
- The participant experience lens — keeping the experience of the teacher, complainants, referrers, colleagues, learners, and whānau visible in deliberation and in written reasons.

About you

We are looking for people with:

- a demonstrated commitment to the interests of children and young people, learner wellbeing, and public protection;
- experience of decision-making in settings where evidence, fairness, and integrity matter — for example complaints, investigations, governance, statutory bodies, professional standards, social-sector, health, or community leadership;

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- working knowledge of natural justice and of Te Tiriti o Waitangi;
 - the ability to read and synthesise significant volumes of evidence and to contribute to clear, defensible written reasons;
 - the resilience to engage with material that raises safeguarding, vulnerability, or capability concerns over a sustained period; and
 - the independence and courage to respectfully challenge panel consensus where the evidence requires it.

You are not eligible if you are a teacher, an employer of teachers, or a member of an employing body of teachers.

The detail

- Appointments are made for a term of up to three years.
- Panels typically sit one or two days a month. A typical case requires preparation, panel time, and contribution to the written decision.
- We are particularly seeking candidates based in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch, with the ability to travel to other locations as required. Some travel to Wellington will be required. Fees are paid in accordance with the Cabinet Fees Framework.
- Structured induction is provided, with explicit modules on the statutory framework, the competence process, natural justice, evidence, decision-writing, conflicts, confidentiality, learner outcomes and safeguarding in a competence context, and Te Tiriti capability in a Competence Authority setting.
- All recommended candidates are subject to referee checks, open-source screening, and a Ministry of Justice criminal history check.

How to apply

Please email governance@teachingcouncil.nz to request the full application pack and application forms. Applications must include a covering letter, a curriculum vitae, a completed application form and capability statement, a signed section 505 eligibility declaration, and a signed conflict-of-interest declaration. Applications close on Friday 4 September 2026.

Matatū Aotearoa welcomes applications from people with a range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, including those with knowledge of education, learner wellbeing, safeguarding, community leadership, or public-interest decision-making. The Council is committed to appointment processes that are fair, transparent, and support public confidence in the Competence Authority.