

Hon Penny Simmonds

Minister for the Environment
Minister for Vocational Education
Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment



Dr Alan Bollard
Chair
Tertiary Education Commission
PO Box 27-048
Wellington 6141

Dear Alan,

Determination of Design of Funding Mechanism: Delivery at Levels 3 to 7 (non-degree) on the New Zealand Qualification and Credentials Framework and all industry training

I am writing to advise you of a determination of the design of a funding mechanism, under section 419 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act).

This determination is for non-degree tertiary tuition and training at Levels 3 to 7 on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework and all industry training, as well as learner-based funding via the learner component.

The new determination is set out in the appendix to this letter. The determination covers the funding of provision delivered from 1 January 2026. This includes targeted rate increases provided by Budget 2025 and the targeted increases to provider-based delivery rates agreed by Cabinet in March 2025.

Under section 422 of the Act, it is the responsibility of the Tertiary Education Commission to develop the details needed to implement my determinations of the design of funding mechanisms. Your continued focus on tertiary education organisations' Learner Success initiatives and reducing administrative and compliance costs will be important in supporting the success of these funds.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Simmonds'.

Hon Penny Simmonds
Minister for Vocational Education

DETERMINATION OF DESIGN OF FUNDING MECHANISM: DELIVERY AT LEVELS 3 TO 7 (NON-DEGREE) ON THE NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATION AND CREDENTIALS FRAMEWORK AND ALL INDUSTRY TRAINING

PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

Statutory authority

1. This determination of the design of a funding mechanism is made under section 419 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act).

On-Plan funding

2. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) must pay funding allocated under this funding determination in accordance with section 425 of the Act.

Effective period

3. This funding mechanism relates to funding provision from 1 January 2026.
4. The TEC may exercise any of its administrative functions before 1 January 2026 as required to give effect to this funding mechanism.

Available funding

5. The amount of government funding that can be spent under this funding mechanism will be set through the Government's annual budget processes.

PART ONE: DELIVERY COMPONENT FUNDING MECHANISM

Purpose

6. This funding contributes to the provision of teaching and learning services for enrolled learners at tertiary education organisations (TEOs).

TEO eligibility

7. The TEC may only fund a tertiary education organisation (TEO) under this funding mechanism if the TEO is one of the following: ¹
 - a. a tertiary education institution (TEI), namely:
 - i. a university;
 - ii. the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology – Te Pūkenga;
 - iii. a wānanga; or
 - b. a private training establishment registered by NZQA (registered PTE).

Funding formula and rates

8. The TEC allocates funding under this funding mechanism for the relevant programmes, micro-credentials and activities that are specified in a TEO's proposed investment plan.
9. For the purposes of calculating the value of a TEO's approved funding under this funding mechanism, the TEC must use a metric comprising:
 - a. the number of valid domestic enrolments, measured in equivalent full-time student units (EFTS); and
 - b. the programmes or micro-credentials, and their component courses, in which learners are enrolled, and the assigned delivery classifications, funding categories, and funding rates of those programmes or micro-credentials and their component courses.

Equivalent Full-Time Student units (EFTS)

10. One (1.0) EFTS unit is defined as 120 credits of study. For provider-based study this is the expected amount of full-time study over a single academic or calendar year.

¹ If the Education and Training (Vocational Education and Training System) Amendment Bill is enacted before 1 January 2026, paragraph 7 will instead read as follows:

7. The TEC may only fund a TEO under this funding mechanism if the TEO is one of the following:
 - a. a tertiary education institution (TEI), namely:
 - i. a university;
 - ii. a polytechnic;
 - iii. the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology;
 - iv. a wānanga; or
 - b. a private training establishment registered by NZQA (registered PTE); or
 - c. an industry skills board.

11. A TEO will determine the EFTS value of each of its programmes or micro-credentials and the course EFTS factor of its components, in accordance with criteria published by the TEC.
12. 'Work-based EFTS' refers to EFTS reported in the 'work-based' or 'assessment and verification' modes of delivery. The TEC must use the following formula to calculate the number of work-based EFTS for which a TEO is entitled to receive funding:

$$\text{Funded EFTS} = \frac{\text{number of enrolled industry trainees or New Zealand Apprentices} \times \text{credits per industry trainee or New Zealand Apprentice per year}}{120}$$

Delivery classification

13. The TEC must establish a process by which the appropriate delivery classification and funding category is assigned to eligible programmes and/or courses delivered as part of an eligible programme or micro-credential in accordance with Appendix 1.
14. The delivery content of the programme or course (rather than its title) must determine the assignment.
15. Where the TEO assigns the delivery classification and funding category, the TEC must validate this.
16. The TEC must apply the appropriate per-EFTS funding rates for TEOs, as set out in Table 4 (funding rates) of Appendix 1.

Flexible funding

17. The TEC must establish criteria, based on minimum thresholds for organisational and educational performance, for determining under which circumstances a TEO qualifies for flexible funding (a "qualifying TEO").
18. However, a TEO is not a qualifying TEO unless it is funded by the TEC to deliver 20 or more EFTS.
19. The TEC must allocate flexible funding, over and above that approved through investment plans, to qualifying TEOs in the following circumstance: the value of provision actually delivered by the TEO, as measured in dollars, is greater than the value of its approved funding allocation.
20. If a qualifying TEO meets the condition specified in paragraph 19 above, the TEC must pay the TEO up to the following limits, either:
 - a. 2% of the qualifying TEO's approved funding allocation; or
 - b. 10 EFTS, whichever is greater.
21. The TEC may establish criteria to allocate funding above the additional funding limits specified in paragraph 20, provided the TEC has assessed whether the funding available is sufficient for the TEC to provide funding above these limits.

Valid domestic enrolments

22. For the purposes of this funding mechanism, the term “valid domestic enrolment” refers to the enrolment of a learner who is:
- a. a domestic student as defined in section 10(1) of the Act; or
 - b. an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident currently residing in New Zealand; and
 - c. either:
 - i. aged 16 years and over; or
 - ii. aged under 16 years and meets the criteria determined by the TEC; and
 - d. studying in New Zealand, unless the learner meets the criteria in paragraph 26; and
 - e. has paid or committed to pay their fees (if fees apply).
23. The TEC must establish criteria for determining under which circumstances a learner can be considered to be a valid domestic enrolment, where the learner:
- a. is aged under 16 years; or
 - b. has not paid their fees (if fees apply).
24. The TEC must establish the requirements that TEOs must comply with to verify that a learner is a valid domestic enrolment.

Eligibility for learners studying outside of New Zealand

25. A learner studying outside of New Zealand is a valid domestic enrolment only if the learner meets the criteria in paragraph 22(a), (c) and (e) and:
- a. if the learner is studying at an overseas campus or delivery site (irrespective of whether they are enrolled at the TEO’s New Zealand campus or overseas campus), the learner meets the following criteria:
 - i. is undertaking part (but not all) of the programme outside New Zealand; and
 - ii. is enrolled at a New Zealand TEO in a programme leading to the award of a qualification at Level 7 (non-degree) on the NZQCF; and
 - iii. the study outside New Zealand is full-time and face-to-face (i.e. is not an extramural enrolment); and
 - iv. the overseas campus or delivery site is an approved offshore delivery site²; and

² Under the [Offshore Programme Delivery Rules 2022](#), or any other rules published on the same basis.

- v. is in an approved country identified on the Education New Zealand website; or
- b. the learner is studying in a Realm country (namely, Tokelau, the Cook Islands, or Niue) in 2026 and is enrolled in a programme that was funded under this funding mechanism in 2025 or earlier.

Inducements

- 26. Even if a learner meets the criteria specified in paragraph 22, the enrolment is not a valid domestic enrolment for the purposes of this funding mechanism if it has been secured by way of an inducement.
- 27. An inducement may include a financial incentive or ongoing personal possession of physical items where they induce a learner to enrol.
- 28. The TEC must establish criteria for determining what constitutes an inducement.

Eligible programmes and micro-credentials

- 29. The TEC must ensure that funding paid to a TEO under this funding mechanism:
 - a. is for:
 - i. a programme or micro-credential leading to an award on the NZQCF at Levels 3 to 7 (non-degree), or
 - ii. part of a programme or micro-credential, where the programme or micro-credential that it is part of leads to an award on the NZQCF at Levels 3 to 7 (non-degree); and
 - b. meets any other criteria specified by the TEC.
- 30. The TEC may fund a programme or micro-credential, or part of a programme or micro-credential, at Levels 1 and 2 on the NZQCF under this funding mechanism only if it is predominately completed in the work-based or assessment and verification modes of delivery.
- 31. A programme, or part of a programme, must include embedded literacy and numeracy if it leads to a qualification:
 - a. at Level 1 or 2 on the NZQCF; or
 - b. at Level 3 on the NZQCF and is delivered in the work-based mode of learning.
- 32. The TEC must set guidelines, to ensure consistency across the sector, on how a TEO will determine the literacy and numeracy needs of eligible learners and provide support to those learners to meet their literacy and numeracy needs.

Health and safety and regulatory compliance learning

33. The TEC must ensure that funding paid to a TEO under this funding mechanism is not used for a programme or micro-credential where the TEC considers on reasonable grounds that a majority of the programme or micro-credential relates to health and safety or regulatory compliance learning that would displace the responsibility of employers to provide training necessary to mitigate health and safety risks or meet their regulatory compliance obligations.

Cap on high-cost aviation provision

34. The TEC must ensure that funding for provider-based aviation programmes that includes an in-flight training component does not exceed 450 EFTS.³

Health-related professional programmes and micro-credentials

35. The TEC may allow funding paid to a TEO under this funding mechanism to be used for programmes and/or micro-credentials, or their component courses that lead to the award of a post-entry health-related professional qualification or micro-credential that:
- a. is of an academic or research nature; and
 - b. has a clinical component of 30% or less within the total programme or micro-credential.
36. The TEC must ensure that funding paid to a TEO under this funding mechanism is not used for programmes and/or micro-credentials, or their component courses, that lead to the award of a post-entry health-related professional qualification or micro-credential that has:
- a. a clinical component of more than 30% within the total programme or micro-credential; and
 - b. either:
 - i. a requirement for clinical education and training; or
 - ii. an emphasis on specialist clinical professional skills.

PART TWO: LEARNER COMPONENT FUNDING

Purpose

37. The purpose of this funding is to support TEOs to put learners at the centre of their organisation and to improve outcomes for learners by:
- a. supporting all learners, particularly those learners who have traditionally been underserved by the education system; and

³ This 450 EFTS cap includes any delivery on the NZQCF at Level 3 and above in aviation, including delivery funded through the *Delivery at Levels 7 (degree) to 10 on the New Zealand Qualification and Credentials Framework* funding mechanism.

- b. recognising that there are higher costs involved in adapting education delivery and support to meet learners' unique needs.
- 38. The learner groups mentioned in this funding determination serve as a proxy for learners who need additional support to be successful in vocational education and training.⁴ The TEC is expected to ensure that TEOs identify the unique needs of all their learners (including through engagement with learners and their communities), make decisions about how to support them, and allocate funding accordingly.
- 39. Priorities for learner component funding include delivery of the priorities of the Tertiary Education Strategy, the identified needs of learners enrolled with a TEO, and the development of a TEO's capability and capacity to support learner success.

Funding formula and rates

- 40. The TEC must calculate learner component funding allocations based on the number of valid domestic enrolments who are part of the learner groups identified below at each eligible TEO. Funding allocated under the learner component is in addition to the funding allocated under the delivery component and is not subject to recovery under paragraphs 74-80.
- 41. This funding does not apply to valid domestic enrolments in the assessment and verification mode of delivery.
- 42. Learner component funding is allocated at a rate of \$1,327.00 per EFTS for learners with low prior attainment and/or disabled learners. Learners who meet both criteria must only be counted once.
- 43. A 'learner with low prior attainment' is someone who at the date of enrolment has not previously achieved a qualification on the NZQCF at Level 3 or above or equivalent.

PART THREE: FUNDING CONDITIONS

- 44. The TEC must impose the following specific conditions on funding provided to each TEO under this funding mechanism.

Performance standards

- 45. The TEC may set minimum and maximum performance and delivery standards for TEOs, including credit achievement standards. If the TEC sets those standards, the TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives this funding must meet those standards.

TEOs

- 46. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must meet, and for the length of the funding

⁴ Vocational education and training, for the purposes of this funding mechanism, refers to delivery eligible to be funded through this funding mechanism.

period must continue to meet, all of the eligibility criteria specified in paragraph 7 of this funding mechanism.

47. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must:
 - a. for data returns for work-based modes of delivery, accurately assign a credit value and nominal duration to a programme in order for the correct work-based EFTS value to be calculated;
 - b. for data returns for other modes of delivery –
 - i. accurately assign each of its courses from an eligible programme, micro-credentials and/or component course a course EFTS factor;
 - ii. accurately assign each of its courses to a delivery classification and funding category in accordance with Appendix 1 and the process established by TEC under paragraph 13; and
 - c. meet minimum and maximum performance standards specified by the TEC.

Programmes

48. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must ensure that each programme or micro-credential and/or its component courses in which an eligible learner is enrolled meets and continues to meet the criteria specified in paragraph 29 of this funding mechanism.
49. Where funding is used for programmes leading to a qualification at Level 1 or 2, or at Level 3 and in the work-based mode of delivery, the TEC must attach to funding a condition that the programme, or its component course, at Level 1 or 2, or at Level 3 and in the work-based mode of delivery, includes embedded literacy and numeracy.
50. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO must not use funding paid under this funding mechanism to fund a programme or micro-credential where the TEC reasonably considers that a majority of the programme or micro-credential would displace the responsibility of employers to provide training necessary to mitigate health and safety risks or meet their regulatory compliance obligations.

New Zealand Apprenticeships

51. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO must report programmes that meet the following criteria as New Zealand Apprenticeships:
 - a. provide an entry point into an occupation to set a person up for a career in an industry;
 - b. meet any regulatory requirements for entry into an occupation;
 - c. require a tripartite agreement between the learner, TEO and employer;

- d. contain a strong theoretical component to support further learning, as well as a practical element;
 - e. are directly related to the intended career; and
 - f. lead to either:
 - i. a qualification at Level 4 on the NZQCF that has a minimum of 120 credits and, if approved by the TEC, additional qualifications at Level 3 or Level 4 on the NZQCF; or
 - ii. multiple qualifications that together have at least 120 credits, provided those qualifications are at Level 3 and Level 4 on the NZQCF, and at least 60 credits are at Level 4 on the NZQCF; and
 - g. meet any additional criteria set by the TEC to ensure that the programme is focused on Level 4 outcomes on the NZQCF.
52. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO must report learners as a New Zealand Apprentice through the Industry Training Register if they are a valid domestic enrolment, and are:
- a. enrolled in a New Zealand Apprenticeship programme;
 - b. employed in the occupation for which the apprentice is training; and
 - c. supported by a training plan agreed by the apprentice, the employer, and the TEO arranging the training, throughout the programme.
53. The TEC must approve, and maintain, a register of all New Zealand Apprenticeships, and may withdraw funding approval, with effect for new enrolments after a reasonable notice period.

Subcontracting

54. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must:
- a. not subcontract any of the funded activities without the prior written approval of the TEC, and where the TEO is quality assured by NZQA, without prior written approval of NZQA;
 - b. comply with any conditions imposed by the TEC with written approval to subcontract;
 - c. ensure that a subcontracted party does not further subcontract any functions; and
 - d. remain accountable for the use of the funding.

Learners and enrolments

55. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must verify a learner's identity, and confirm that

each learner is a valid domestic enrolment, in accordance with the requirements developed by the TEC.

56. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must not:
 - a. restrict enrolment in programmes and micro-credentials funded under this funding mechanism on the basis of private advantage (for example, enrolment being restricted to the TEO's employees only); or
 - b. secure or seek to secure a valid domestic enrolment through offering of an inducement, as specified in paragraphs 26 to 28.
57. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that if a learner is in the work-based or assessment and verification modes of delivery, the TEO must ensure that it keeps a record of evidence that the learner has a formal training agreement with their employer that is intended to lead to the completion of one or more of the programmes and/or micro-credentials.
58. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must provide eligible learners, prior to or during the enrolment process, with a privacy statement that meets criteria set by the TEC about the collection and use of their personal information, and that advises learners that their personal information may be disclosed to the TEC, NZQA, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development and Inland Revenue, as appropriate.

Reporting withdrawals to Ministry of Social Development

59. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this mechanism must report the withdrawal of learners in the provider-based and provider-based: extramural modes of delivery to the Ministry of Social Development within five working days of each withdrawal. This is to enable student loans and student allowances to be cancelled as soon as possible.

Refunding fees for Withdrawals

60. General refund provisions under section 357 of the Act relating to domestic students enrolled in registered PTEs apply.
61. For TEIs, the TEC must attach to funding a condition that, if fees are to be refunded to a learner on the basis that the learner withdrew on or before the withdrawal date, the TEI must, as soon as reasonably practicable, pay the refund:
 - a. to the Ministry of Social Development, if the student paid the fees using the Student Loan Scheme; or
 - b. directly to the learner or employer, depending on who paid the fees.

High-cost provision

62. If the TEC allocates funding to a TEO for high-cost provision, the TEC must attach the following condition or conditions to funding:

Aviation

63. A TEO funded through the provider-based mode of delivery must not use funding provided under this funding mechanism to fund high-cost provision, as specified in paragraph 34, above the volume of EFTS for that provision at the TEO that the TEC has agreed to fund.
64. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that each TEO that is allocated EFTS for aviation provision that includes an in-flight training component (pilot training) must supply the Ministry of Social Development with the correct learner enrolment information, through the Verification of Study system, that ensures that:
- a. annual student loan fee borrowing for any pilot training learner does not exceed \$35,000 per EFTS; or
 - b. where a pilot training learner is studying part-time, annual student loan fee borrowing does not exceed the proportion of \$35,000 that is represented by the proportion of the EFTS course load being undertaken by the learner (for example, if a learner is studying 0.4 EFTS units in the year, the student loan borrowing limit will be \$14,000).

Fees and associated course costs

65. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism:
- a. must pay for the essential equipment, infrastructure and hardware required to deliver a particular programme, micro-credential and/or component course⁵; and
 - b. in relation to the provision of essential equipment, including computers, diving hardware, and chainsaws, must not:
 - i. include the costs of these items in any fees, compulsory course costs, or student services fees, charged to learners; or
 - ii. require the costs to be met through the “course-related costs” component of the Student Loan Scheme, as a condition of enrolment for learners; and

⁵ The phrase “equipment, infrastructure and hardware” refers to those items that can be used by successive intakes of learners. It does not include personal items which are provided for individual learner use and which the TEO does not retain for the next intake of learners nor does it refer to the infrastructure used by learners in work-based or assessment and verification modes.

- c. must not meet the costs of overseas travel for learners through the use of funding obtained under this funding mechanism or via the Student Loan Scheme, unless the overseas travel is academically essential.
- 66. For the purposes of paragraph 65(c) above, the TEC must develop guidelines determining when overseas travel is academically essential.
- 67. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must comply with the Fee Regulation Settings specified in Part Four of this funding mechanism.

Fees Free tertiary education and training

- 68. The TEC will work with the sector and other government agencies to support the implementation of the Fees Free schemes.
- 69. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that each TEO must work with the TEC to give effect to the Fees Free schemes. In particular, the TEO must provide information as required by the TEC, to enable the TEC to understand the entitlement use of eligible learners, and fees charged for eligible programmes and micro-credentials.

Learner component funding

- 70. The TEC must attach to learner component funding a condition that a TEO must:
 - a. identify the unique needs of all learners (including through engagement with learners and their communities);
 - b. make decisions about how to support learners; and
 - c. allocate funding accordingly.

No other funding

- 71. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must:
 - a. not (without the TEC's prior written approval) seek or obtain funding from any Crown source other than the TEC to fund a programme or micro-credential that is funded under this funding mechanism; and
 - b. notify the TEC immediately if it becomes aware of any circumstances that might result in a breach of sub-paragraph (a) of this condition.

Responsible use of funding

- 72. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO that receives funding under this funding mechanism must use the funding:
 - a. lawfully, responsibly, and for the purposes for which it is provided; and
 - b. in a manner consistent with the appropriate use of public funds.

TEC administrative responsibility in the case of under-funding

73. If a TEO receives funding under this funding mechanism that is less than it should have been, or than what it was entitled to receive, the TEC must treat the amount of the under-funding as a credit and pay the amount of the under-funding as soon as reasonably practicable.

Recovery of funding

74. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that if a TEO receives delivery component funding under this funding mechanism that is greater than it should have been, or that it was not entitled to receive as determined by the TEC, the TEO must treat the amount of the over-funding as a debt due to the Crown that:
- a. is repayable on demand; and
 - b. may be set-off against all or any funding, or any sum of money payable by the TEC to the TEO.
75. The TEC must provide the TEO with reasonable notice before exercising its right to demand repayment or set-off the debt against all or any funding.
76. For the purposes of this condition, a TEO will have received funding that was "greater than it should have been" if the total dollar value of the provision funded under this funding mechanism that is delivered by a TEO within a funding year is less than 99% of the total dollar value for the provision paid to the TEO under this funding mechanism.
77. In that situation, the percentage of funding that is repayable is equal to the difference between the bottom of the tolerance band (99%) and the percentage value of the provision that was delivered.

Over-delivery

78. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO cannot deliver provision above 105% of their approved allocation without prior written approval from the TEC.

Recovery of funding in case of deviation from approval

79. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that if a TEO deviates materially and substantially from their commitments of delivering specific subject areas, programme or micro-credential levels and/or the modes of delivery for which funding is approved, the TEC may treat the funding for that programme or activity as recoverable as a debt due to the Crown that:
- a. is repayable on demand; and
 - b. may be set-off against all or any funding, or any sum of money payable by the TEC to the TEO.
80. The TEC must provide the TEO with reasonable notice before exercising its right to demand repayment or set-off the debt against all or any funding.

Repayment of funding following revocation of funding approval

81. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that if, in accordance with clause 16 of Schedule 18 of the Act, the TEC suspends or revokes some or all of a TEO's funding paid under this funding mechanism before that funding has been used or contractually committed towards the purposes for which that funding was provided, then the TEO must treat the unexpended or uncommitted portion of the funding as a debt due to the Crown that:
- a. is repayable on demand; and
 - b. may be set-off against all or any funding, or any sum of money payable by the TEC to the TEO.

Disclosure of data from Statistics New Zealand's Integrated Data Infrastructure

82. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEO consents, for the purposes of section 39(2)(a) of the Data and Statistics Act 2022, to Statistics New Zealand disclosing information to the Ministry of Education and the TEC from its Integrated Data Infrastructure that identifies, or may identify, the TEO.
83. The TEC must inform TEOs that the Data and Statistics Act 2022 does not constrain the ongoing use or sharing of the TEO-level data once it is disclosed.

Benchmarking

84. The TEC must attach to funding a condition that a TEI must participate as appropriate in benchmarking, including:
- a. providing the TEC, or any vendor contracted by the TEC for benchmarking purposes, with financial and performance information as requested, in a timely manner; and
 - b. engaging with follow-up questions and related quality assurance processes, in a timely manner; and
 - c. contributing to the cost of any vendor contracted by the TEC, at a rate determined by the TEC.

PART FOUR: FEE REGULATION SETTINGS

85. The conditions in Part Four of the funding mechanism apply to fees charged by TEOs for the relevant programmes, micro-credentials, activities and/or courses funded under this funding mechanism, and to student services fees charged to domestic learners that are funded under this funding mechanism, where specified. However, fees charged for industry training (i.e. programmes or micro-credentials funded by TEC under this funding mechanism in the work-based modes of delivery) are exempt from the conditions in paragraphs 89 to 111.
86. The fees charged by a TEO are subject to these conditions if the TEO is the sole source of the item to which the fee relates.

Definitions

87. In Part Four of this funding mechanism, unless the context otherwise requires:

- a. **Course** means part of a programme that leads to the award of a qualification listed on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF), including a certificate, diploma, degree, or postgraduate qualification. This includes a course that is part of a programme where the student is not enrolled in the programme (for example, where a student is only enrolled in one or more courses but is not intending to complete the entire programme);
- b. **Corresponding course** means a course that:
 - i. was subject to Te Pūkenga's programme unification process; and
 - ii. is offered by a polytechnic established on or after 1 January 2026 or a business division of Te Pūkenga; and
 - iii. is the same as or very similar to (as determined by TEC) a course delivered by its corresponding polytechnic before 1 April 2020.
- c. **Corresponding polytechnic** means a polytechnic that became a subsidiary of Te Pūkenga on 1 April 2020 and that corresponds by name, location, or other unique identifying feature, to a polytechnic established on or after 1 January 2026 (including any business divisions of Te Pūkenga incorporated into the polytechnic) or to a business division of Te Pūkenga.
- d. **Fees** means:
 - i. tuition fees;
 - ii. compulsory course costs that are charged to all students enrolled in a course, which include (but are not limited to) the following: any compulsory costs associated with enrolment, examinations (including reporting of credits to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority), field trips, and any compulsory purchase of equipment or books through the TEO;
 - iii. excludes any administrative fees or charges (other than tuition fees or compulsory course costs) for additional services that are payable as a result of the specific circumstances of a student, which include (but are not limited to) the following: reassessment or remarking of examination results, examination relocation fees, fees associated with recognition of prior learning, or fees associated with an application for selected entry programmes;
 - iv. excludes student services fees.
- e. **Industry training** means programmes or micro-credentials funded by TEC under DQ3-7 in the work-based modes of delivery;

- f. Micro-credential means study or training that leads to an award but does not, of itself, lead to an award of a qualification listed on the NZQCF;
- g. Programme means a programme of study or training leading to the award of a qualification listed on the NZQCF;
- h. Student services fees means fees for the provision of student services that are provided by the organisation or by another person or body on behalf of the organisation;
- i. TEO means tertiary education organisation as defined in section 10(1) of the Act;
- j. Te Pūkenga means Te Pūkenga—New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology, as continued by section 314 of the Act.

The Annual Maximum Fee Movement

- 88. The Annual Maximum Fee Movement (AMFM) sets the maximum percentage that TEOs may increase their fees by each year for domestic for all courses that are funded under this funding mechanism.
- 89. The AMFM for 2026 is set at 6.0 percent. This permits up to a 6.0 percent increase on the fees (GST exclusive) charged in 2025 to domestic students for all courses that are funded under this funding mechanism.
- 90. The AMFM applies to any new courses established by a TEO in substitution for an existing course dealing with the same or similar subject matter, at a same or similar level on the NZQCF, for which funding provided under this funding mechanism can be used, except where provisions in paragraph 91 apply.
- 91. If a TEO reduces fees for a course across one or more calendar years, the TEO can then return to the previous fee (from before the reduction was applied), in addition to applying the AMFM rates for the period in which the fees were reduced. This paragraph does not apply where fee reductions were in place prior to 2024.
- 92. A polytechnic established on or after 1 January 2026 or a business division of Te Pūkenga that offers a corresponding course may charge the fee that applied to the course before 1 April 2020 plus an increase at the AMFM rate for each subsequent year.

Exceptions to the Annual Maximum Fee Movement

- 93. Subject to paragraph 97, a TEO may apply to the TEC for an exception from the AMFM on the basis of exceptional circumstances. Any exception granted will not exceed an additional 6.0 percent increase over and above the permitted 6.0 percent increase.
- 94. In considering exceptional circumstances, the TEC must only have regard to the following criteria:

- a. the TEO can demonstrate that it is financially unsustainable for it to deliver the course, in terms of the cost of delivering the course and taking into account the total income that the course would generate (including government funding and fees), and that there are no satisfactory alternatives to limit costs; and
 - b. the existing fees for the course are no more than the 75th percentile of the range of fees charged for similar courses; and
 - c. any two of the following three criteria:
 - i. where the course is part of a programme at levels 3-7 (non-degree) on the NZQCF that has been delivered previously, the programme has a cohort-based completion rate that meets or exceeds the median performance benchmark for that NZQCF level in the previous year;
 - ii. the TEO can demonstrate that the course is in some way unique or special; for example, that there are no available local alternatives;
 - iii. not allowing an exception will prevent the TEO from making a significant contribution to the achievement of one or more of the Government's priorities, as set out in the current Tertiary Education Strategy.
95. For the purpose of paragraph 94(b), the TEC must specify how similar courses will be determined.
96. If a TEO is applying for an exception from the AMFM for multiple courses, each course must individually meet the exception criteria specified in paragraph 94.
97. There is a limit to the number of courses for which a TEO can request an exception for each year, depending on the number of EFTS enrolled at the TEO, as follows:
- a. for a TEO with 1,000 EFTS or less, the limit is 4 courses;
 - b. for a TEO with between 1,000 and 4,999 EFTS, the limit is 8 courses;
 - c. for a TEO with between 5,000 and 9,999 EFTS, the limit is 12 courses;
 - d. for a TEO with 10,000 EFTS or more, the limit is 16 courses, and increases by 4 courses per increment of 10,000 EFTS.

Low or Zero Fee Courses

98. If the fee for a course funded under this funding mechanism is less than \$511.11 (GST inclusive) (or \$444.44 (GST exclusive)) per EFTS in 2025, then for 2026, the TEO may increase the fee to up to \$511.11 (GST inclusive) (or \$444.44 (GST exclusive)) per EFTS, or may increase the fee by 6.0 percent, whichever is the greater.
99. Paragraph 91 applies, and paragraph 98 does not apply, to fees that:

- a. have been reduced temporarily; and
- b. prior to the temporary reduction were higher than \$511.11 (GST inclusive) (or \$444.44 (GST exclusive)) per EFTS.

Fee-setting Limits for New Courses

- 100. The fee for a new course established by a TEO and funded under this funding mechanism must be no more than the 75th percentile from the range of fees charged for similar courses. The TEC must specify how similar courses will be determined.
- 101. The above fee-setting limit does not apply where the course is established in substitution for an existing course dealing with the same or similar subject matter, at a same or similar level on the NZQCF. Substitute courses are subject to the AMFM.

Exceptions to Fee-setting Limits for New Courses

- 102. A TEO may apply for an exception from the fee-setting limits for new courses on the basis of exceptional circumstances.
- 103. In considering whether or not there are exceptional circumstances, the TEC must only have regard to the following criteria:
 - a. the course would not be financially viable without a higher fee;
 - b. where the course is part of a programme at levels 3-7 (non-degree) on the NZQCF that has been delivered previously, the programme has a cohort-based completion rate that meets or exceeds the median performance benchmark for that NZQCF level in the previous year;
 - c. the TEO can demonstrate that the course is in some way unique or special; for example, there are no or very few similar courses to compare fees with; and
 - d. the course is aligned to the Government's priorities as set out in the Tertiary Education Strategy.
- 104. The TEC must only grant an exception if it is satisfied that the TEO meets all of the above criteria.
- 105. The TEC has discretion to determine the level at which a TEO can set fees for any new courses that have been granted an exception.

Fee-capping Limits for Micro-credentials

- 106. The fee for a micro-credential must be no more than \$64 (GST inclusive) per credit. This fee cap does not apply to component courses that are also part of a programme leading to the award of a qualification and are funded through this funding mechanism, or to any fees charged for industry training.

107. Where a micro-credential is wholly or partly comprised of courses that also lead to an award of a qualification and are funded through this funding mechanism, the fees for those courses must be equal to, or less than, the maximum fee permitted for the course under the AMFM and fee setting limits for new courses. The fees for any courses that are not part of a programme and are funded through this funding mechanism must be no more than \$64 (GST inclusive) per credit.

Exceptions to Fee-capping Limits for Micro-credentials

108. A TEO may apply to the TEC for an exception to the fee-capping limits for micro-credentials (or components of a micro-credential that are not made up of existing courses subject to the AMFM) on the basis of exceptional circumstances. Where a course in a micro-credential is also a course in a programme, it is subject to the AMFM and the relevant exception criteria outlined in paragraphs 93-105.
109. In considering whether or not there are exceptional circumstances, the TEC must only have regard to the following criteria:
- a. the TEO can demonstrate that the fee cap makes it financially unsustainable to offer the micro-credential, in terms of the costs of delivering the micro-credential and taking into account the total income that the micro-credential would generate (including Government funding and fees), and that there are no satisfactory alternatives to limit costs; and
 - b. the TEO can provide evidence that there is strong support from industry and/or employers to deliver the micro-credential and that the micro-credential clearly meets industry and/or employer needs.
110. The TEC must only grant an exception if it is satisfied that the micro-credential meets both of the above criteria.
111. The TEC has discretion to determine the level at which a TEO can set fees for any micro-credential granted an exception.

Student Services Fees

112. All TEOs that charge student services fees to domestic students who are funded through this funding mechanism must comply with the requirements set out in paragraphs 137 to 144.
113. The objective of the requirements on TEOs that charge fees for the provision of student services is to ensure:
- a. accountability to students in the use of fees for student services;
 - b. involvement of students in decisions in the charging and use of fees for student services; and

- c. fair arrangements for students in different tertiary education settings (for example, work-based students or students in fees-free foundation education programmes).

Requirements when setting student services fees

- 114. **Opt-in arrangements for apprentices and trainees:** TEOs must not charge a compulsory fee for student services to apprentices and trainees (as defined in section 10(1) of the Act), or their employers. TEOs must give apprentices, trainees and their employers the option of paying for and accessing student services. Where apprentices and trainees opt in to receive student services and pay fees, TEOs are still required to comply with the requirements outlined in paragraphs 115 to 121.
- 115. **Decision-making:** TEOs must establish and demonstrate adequate arrangements for decisions to be made jointly or in consultation with the students enrolled at the TEO, or their representatives, on the following matters:
 - a. the maximum amount that students will be charged for student services;
 - b. the types of services to be delivered (within the permitted categories set out in paragraph 121 below);
 - c. the procurement of those services; and
 - d. the method for authorising expenditure on those services.
- 116. **Consultation requirements:** If a TEO chooses to make decisions about student services fees in consultation with students enrolled at the TEO or their representatives, instead of undertaking a joint decision-making process, the TEO is required to ensure that:
 - a. the outcome of the consultation is not predetermined;
 - b. proposals are clearly communicated and publicised;
 - c. there is sufficient time for students to consider proposals and provide feedback; and
 - d. due consideration is given to student feedback.
- 117. **Accounting for the use of student services fees:** TEOs must either hold all student services fees in a separate bank account or ensure that all income and expenditure associated with the provision of such services is separately accounted for in the TEO's accounting system.
- 118. **Reporting on student services fees:** Institutions must provide information on all student services fees through their annual report, and registered private training establishments (PTEs) must provide information on all student services fees through a written report to students. Institutions and registered

PTEs must include the following information in their annual report or written report to students:

- a. a description of the services funded out of the student services fee;
- b. a statement of the fee income and expenditure for each type of student service;
- c. the student services fee amount charged per EFTS or academic year (or however it is calculated); and
- d. a statement describing how the provider is complying with the accounting requirements specified above in paragraph 117.

119. **Private training establishment's written reports to students:** Registered PTEs charging student services fees must provide to the TEC a copy of the report referred to in paragraph 118 no later than 14 days after it is provided to the students. A copy of the report must be sent either by email to: ssf@tec.govt.nz or by post to: Requirements for Student Services Fees Submissions, Monitoring and Crown Ownership, The Tertiary Education Commission, PO Box 27048, Wellington 6141.

120. **Publishing information online:** TEOs charging student services fees must, as soon as reasonably practicable each year, publish the following information on their website:

- a. a description of the services funded out of the student services fee;
- b. a statement of the fee income and expenditure for each type of student service;
- c. the student services fee amount charged per EFTS or academic year (or however it is calculated);
- d. a description of the current year's student services fee decision-making process, including what decisions were consulted on, how consultation with learners occurred, a summary of student feedback, what the decisions were, and the extent to which student feedback was incorporated into those decisions; and
- e. a description of how students can be involved in student services fee decisions for the following year – i.e. how TEOs propose to consult with their students and what issues might be considered.

121. **Categories of student services:** TEOs may charge student services fees to support the delivery of the following categories of services:

- a. *Advocacy and legal advice* – Advocating on behalf of individual students and groups of students, and providing independent support to resolve problems. This includes advocacy and legal advice relating to accommodation.

- b. *Careers information, advice and guidance* – Supporting students' transition into post-study employment.
- c. *Childcare services* – Providing childcare services while caregivers are studying.
- d. *Clubs and societies* – Supporting student clubs and societies, including through the provision of administrative support and facilities for clubs and societies.
- e. *Counselling services* – Providing non-academic counselling and pastoral care, such as chaplains.
- f. *Employment information* – Providing information about employment opportunities for students while they are studying.
- g. *Financial support and advice* – Providing hardship assistance and advice to students on financial issues.
- h. *Health services* – Providing health care and related welfare services.
- i. *Media* – Supporting the production and dissemination of information by students to students, including through newspapers, radio, television and internet-based media.
- j. *Sports, recreation and cultural activities* – Providing sports, recreation and cultural activities for students.

APPENDIX 1: CALCULATION OF FUNDING

Table 1: Delivery Classification

#01	Agriculture; Horticulture
#02	Architecture; Quantity Surveying
#03	Arts; Advanced Studies for Teachers; Health Therapies; Humanities; Languages; Social Sciences
#03.1	Osteopathy; Acupuncture
#04	Business; Accountancy; Office Systems/Secretarial; Management
#05.2	General Education
#06	Computer Science
#11	Engineering; Technology
#11.1	Priority Engineering
#11.2	Pilot Training
#12	Fine Arts; Design
#13	Health Sciences (excluding classifications #07, #15, and #17)
#14	Law
#16	Music and Performing Arts
#17	Health Related Professions
#18	Science
#22	Trades
#38	Foreign-Going Nautical
#42	Mātauranga Māori and Te Reo Māori
#43	Mathematics

Delivery to which this funding mechanism relates that has a delivery classification code that is not included in the table above must be mapped by the TEC to the most appropriate delivery classification code within the above table based on the contents of the programme, micro-credential and/or component courses.

Table 2: Funding categories: alphabetic code

Subject category	Delivery classification guide numbers and subject areas
F1 Humanities, Business and Social Service Vocations	#03: Arts; Advanced Studies for Teachers; Health Therapies; Humanities; Languages; Social Sciences. #04: Business; Accountancy; Office Systems/Secretarial; Management. #5.2: General Education (unclassified) #14: Law #43: Mathematics
F2 Trades, Creative Arts, Information Technology and Health-related Professions	#02: Architecture; Quantity Surveying #06: Computer Science #12: Fine Arts; Design #16: Music and Performing Arts #17: Health Related Professions #22: Trades
F3 Agriculture, Engineering, Health Sciences and Science	#01: Agriculture and Horticulture #3.1: Osteopathy, Acupuncture #11: Engineering, Technology #13: Health Sciences #18: Science
F4 Pilot Training and Priority Engineering	#11.1: Priority Engineering (leading to qualifications at Level 5 or above) #11.2: Pilot Training
F5 Foreign-going Nautical and Specialist Agriculture	#01: Agriculture and Horticulture (leading to qualifications at Level 5 or above) #38: Foreign-Going Nautical
F6 Mātauranga Māori and Te Reo Māori	#42: Mātauranga Māori and Te Reo Māori

Table 3: Funding categories: modes of delivery

Mode	Description
Provider-based*	Learners study mainly in a campus setting with some supported self-directed learning. Providers are responsible for learners' pastoral care and learning support.
Provider-based: extramural	Learners study mainly away from a campus setting but not in the workplace. Learners undertake supported self-directed learning and the provider is responsible for the learners' pastoral care and learning support.
Work-based	Learners study mainly in the workplace with some supported self-directed learning. Learners are supported in their training by both the provider and employer. Providers are responsible for learners' pastoral care and learning support in conjunction with the employer.
Assessment and verification:	Learners receive training in the workplace. The employer has created or purchased a programme of study leading to a qualification and delivers this. Providers work with employers to map the programme to the appropriate New Zealand qualification. The provider retains the responsibility for the learners' pastoral care and learning support and supports the employer in providing these. Providers are responsible for the quality of assessment.
* All delivery to learners residing in a Correctional facility receives the funding rate for the 'provider-based' mode of delivery	

Table 4: The funding rates

Funding categories	Mode of delivery / \$ per EFTS				
	Provider-based	Provider-based: extramural	Work-based		Assessment and verification
Humanities, Business and Social Service Vocations (F1)	\$6,584	\$6,584	\$5,131		\$1,658
Trades, Creative Arts, Information Technology and Health-related Professions (F2)	\$10,992	\$10,992	\$7,277		\$1,658
Agriculture, Engineering, Health Sciences and Science (F3)	\$12,375	\$12,375	\$7,945		\$1,658
Pilot Training and Priority Engineering (F4)	\$15,140	\$15,140	\$9,285		\$1,658
Foreign-going Nautical and specialist Agriculture (F5)	\$19,753	\$19,753	\$11,610		N/A
Mātauranga Māori and Te Reo Māori (F6)	\$8,094	\$8,094	\$8,094		\$1,843
* All delivery to learners residing in a Correctional facility receives the funding rate for the 'provider-based' mode of delivery					