



**Tertiary Education  
Commission**  
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua



# Code of Good Practice for New Zealand Apprenticeships

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# Introduction to New Zealand Apprenticeships

New Zealand Apprenticeships are formal work-based training programmes leading to careers in a range of vocations. New Zealand apprenticeships are open to anyone aged 16 years and over.

There are many benefits to becoming or employing an apprentice. New Zealand Apprenticeships offer people the opportunity to train while working and offer employers the opportunity to employ people whose skills and knowledge develop over time.

This Code replaces the Code of Good Practice for New Zealand Apprenticeships issued in 2015.

## The three parties to a New Zealand Apprenticeship

There are three parties to a New Zealand Apprenticeship - the apprentice, employer and tertiary education provider<sup>1</sup>. Each party has unique responsibilities. The responsibilities of the apprentice are to work and learn. The responsibilities of the employer are to teach and support the apprentice. The responsibilities of the tertiary education provider are to facilitate the training and support both the apprentice and the employer throughout the apprenticeship.

## The framework for New Zealand Apprenticeships

The Education and Training Act 2020 sets out the framework for apprenticeship training and the obligations of those involved.

The key components of a New Zealand Apprenticeship are:

- › being employed in an industry
- › completing a relevant level 4 qualification of at least 120 credits, or two or more qualifications totalling at least 120 credits, provided this includes only level 3 and 4 qualifications and at least 60 out of the total credits are at level 4, and
- › meeting any regulatory requirements of the occupation.

A New Zealand Apprenticeship training agreement is a formal arrangement between the employer and the apprentice and forms part of the apprentice's employment agreement.

In addition to the training agreement, every New Zealand Apprenticeship must have a training plan. A training plan sets out the details of the training to be undertaken. The components of a training plan are:

- › the qualification to be achieved
- › the required standards and/or competencies to achieve the qualification
- › other key skills the apprentice may require
- › the training process, delivery modes and assessment arrangements

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this Code, a tertiary education provider refers to organisations, institutions, bodies and establishments covered by the definition of a tertiary education organisation in section 10 of the Education and Training Act 2020, with the exception of a workforce development council.

- › the key milestones, achievement targets and goals
- › a regular review and reporting framework.

All three parties must agree to the training plan. The training plan is not part of the employment agreement.

All three parties are expected to comply with this Code of Good Practice.

## **The principles for New Zealand Apprenticeships**

The principles for New Zealand Apprenticeships have been developed through input from apprentices, employers and tertiary education providers.

These principles are commitment, collaboration and communication. All parties should be committed to the successful completion of the apprenticeship and pro-actively collaborate and communicate with each other to achieve this.

Underpinning these principles are good practices expected of the apprentice, employer and tertiary education provider in meeting their responsibilities.

## **Good practice for an apprentice is to:**

### **Be informed before becoming an apprentice**

The prospective apprentice finds out as much as possible about the occupation and the training required before pursuing a New Zealand Apprenticeship. Getting some work experience and talking to people already in the industry is a good way of understanding the work environment and future opportunities once qualified. It is important that an apprentice is realistic about what their chosen trade involves and thinks deeply about whether a career in that trade is right for them.

### **Be a good employee**

A good employee acts in good faith and is aware of and meets the responsibilities and requirements of the employment agreement. The apprentice works safely, is professional, looks after workplace property, resources and respects fellow employees and the employer's customers. Apprentices must also understand their rights as an employee.

### **Be an active and committed learner**

The apprentice understands the requirements of the training plan and makes every effort to follow their plan and complete assessments. The apprentice is also committed to the training required off-the-job and to study outside of their working hours.

### **Communicate clearly**

The apprentice communicates clearly and openly with their employer and tertiary education provider. Good communication ensures the employer and tertiary education provider become aware of any problems or concerns the apprentice has with their training.



## **Good practice for an employer is to:**

### **Be informed**

The employer finds out what employing an apprentice involves and what the employer's obligations to training are. Only employers who can commit to supporting an apprentice for the duration of their training should consider employing an apprentice. Talking to other employers who have apprentices and the tertiary education provider will help clarify what is required.

### **Be a good employer**

A good employer acts in good faith and complies with all relevant employment, health and safety, privacy and human rights legislation. A good employer provides an adequate induction into the job, appropriate supervision and a safe working environment for the apprentice. A good employer provides apprentices with all the minimum rights of any employee in New Zealand.

### **Ensure active and effective training and mentoring**

The employer ensures the apprentice is actively and effectively taught while on the job so that the apprentice progressively builds up skills and knowledge and off-the-job training is reinforced. The employer also ensures that over time the apprentice's work covers the breadth and depth of skills and experience needed to complete the apprenticeship and become work competent. The employer can liaise with other employers and the tertiary education provider to achieve this.

The employer (in collaboration with the tertiary education provider) also ensures the apprentice is mentored, particularly in the initial period of the apprenticeship. Mentoring may take different forms but should always include supportive and positive relationships which are focused on the development of the apprentice and the successful completion of the training plan.

### **Support access to off-the-job training**

The employer supports the apprentice to attend off-the-job training. The type and timing of off-job training is detailed in the training plan and the employer takes this into account when scheduling work and making other commitments. The employer works with the apprentice and tertiary education provider to resolve any issues that might arise with off-job training requirements.

### **Support the tertiary education provider's access to the apprentice**

The employer ensures the tertiary education provider has reasonable access to the apprentice. The tertiary education provider will sometimes require face-to-face meetings with the apprentice and will communicate with them in other ways throughout the apprenticeship. The employer works with the tertiary education provider to overcome any difficulties with access.

### **Communicate clearly**

The employer communicates clearly to the apprentice and encourages the apprentice to communicate by creating a supportive environment. The employer is clear about the

requirements of the employment agreement, responsibilities for tools, training fees and other associated training costs such as travel. On-going communication with the apprentice throughout the apprenticeship improves relationships and supports the training.

Clear and open communication with the tertiary education provider about an apprentice's progress or withdrawal from a training programme is equally important. Good communication builds better connections and understanding across all parties. It also means issues may be averted and problems resolved earlier.

## **Good practice for a tertiary education provider is to:**

### **Provide potential apprentices and employers with good information**

The tertiary education provider makes information on apprenticeships readily available to employers and prospective apprentices. The information includes advice that apprentices under the age of 18 years should seek independent advice before entering the apprenticeship.

The information refers to the obligations and expectations of all parties to an apprenticeship, including those under the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021. The tertiary education provider helps prospective apprentices and their employers decide if an apprenticeship is right for them. The tertiary education provider ensures all parties are aware of this Code of Good Practice.

### **Develop a training plan in collaboration with the apprentice and employer**

The tertiary education provider works with the apprentice and the employer to develop a training plan for the apprenticeship. The training plan ensures the apprentice can complete the required qualification for the occupation. The training plan is also based on a comprehensive training needs analysis of the apprentice, recognition of prior learning, and may include the development of other key skills.

### **Support the implementation of the training plan**

The tertiary education provider supports the implementation of the training plan through the provision of resources, arrangements for on-the-job assessments and facilitating and/or delivering the off-the-job training. The tertiary education provider monitors and reports on the apprentice's progress against the training plan on a regular basis to both the apprentice and employer. Where possible the tertiary education provider assists the apprentice and the employer to overcome any barriers to training and assessment.

### **Support the apprentice**

The tertiary education organisation ensures the apprentice receives appropriate education and pastoral support. As pastoral support needs change during the apprenticeship, the tertiary education organisation ensures the support is responsive to the apprentice's needs. The tertiary education organisation also needs to ensure that pastoral care is provided in accordance with the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021, which sets out the expectations that tertiary education providers must meet for learners' safety and wellbeing.

The overall purpose of an apprenticeship is for an apprentice to be prepared and supported in their learning, by both the tertiary education provider and their employer, to gain the skills and knowledge required to meet industry needs and to allow them to thrive.

### **Support the employer**

The role of the tertiary education provider is to support the employer to empower their apprentices to grow and refine their skills and knowledge so they can meet industry requirements and support firms to thrive. Support to the employer may take the form of guidance, information, resources and other services as appropriate. Support from the tertiary education provider is tailored according to the capabilities of the employer to support and mentor their apprentice.

### **Communicate clearly**

The tertiary education provider ensures it communicates well with both the employer and the apprentice so all parties are up-to-date with the progress of the training plan and any changes to the training plan. Communication is relatively frequent, informative and constructive.

### **Provide further support to the apprentice**

If the apprentice cannot continue their training with their employer, the tertiary education provider makes reasonable endeavours to find another employer for the apprentice.

## **Further information**

### **Resolving training problems**

All parties have an obligation to work together to resolve problems related to the training plan. If a problem cannot be resolved and there is no prior agreement about a resolution process, an apprentice can direct their dispute to Tertiary Education Dispute Resolution. Tertiary Education Dispute Resolution is an independent service established to resolve contractual and financial disputes between domestic tertiary learners and education providers. They can also hear claims for redress relating to breaches of the Pastoral Care Code of Practice. The Tertiary Dispute Resolution website is <https://tedr.org.nz/>, which contains their contact details.

### **Resolving employment problems**

Tertiary education providers should not become involved in discussions about employment agreements or advocate for either the employer or apprentice in a disciplinary situation or an employment dispute.

Tertiary education providers should provide employers and apprentices with useful and timely information on how to get authoritative advice on employment relations issues from an appropriate source. They should not provide this type of advice themselves.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), and trade unions are good points of contact for employment relations issues. WorkSafe New Zealand, the government's workplace health and safety regulator, is a good point of contact for health and safety issues.

The MBIE and WorkSafe New Zealand websites are [www.employment.govt.nz](http://www.employment.govt.nz) and [www.worksafe.govt.nz](http://www.worksafe.govt.nz) and have those agencies' contact details and many good resources.