

AUT



A FUTURE IN
SECONDARY TEACHING



WHAT IS SECONDARY TEACHING LIKE?

“Education is the most powerful weapon with which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

You never forget a good teacher. Effective teachers become vital influencers on their students’ lives by immersing themselves in the culture of the school and the surrounding community. Secondary teaching offers the opportunity to instruct and inspire young people, both in New Zealand and around the world; the prospect of passing on knowledge and passion in fields of interest is a strong motivating factor for many teachers.

The range of people that teachers come into contact with is vast. They need to be able to adapt their teaching methods and interaction to suit a wide range of learners in the class.

Teachers also respond to societal issues that can impact students, such as poverty and inequality. They must incorporate families, whānau and the broader community into their practice.

Teaching is about helping others to reach and exceed their aspirations, but it also offers you the opportunity to learn through the experiences of others. This shared relationship is at the heart of education, and means that the development of a teacher is always dynamic and evolving. Furthermore, teachers constantly upskill in new teaching methods and technologies, and participate in other broad professional development.

All New Zealand secondary teachers need to have one or two subject areas they can teach to senior level, which means that prospective teachers need to have done appropriate teaching subject(s) in their undergraduate (bachelor’s) degrees.

Do you have a passion in a particular subject area that you’d like to pass on to others? Are you a skilled communicator with an ability to relate to a wide range of learners? Do you want to shape the minds of tomorrow? Do you enjoy the company of teenagers? If so, a career in secondary teaching waits for you.

OUTLOOK AND TRENDS

Shortage of secondary school teachers – There is currently a shortage of secondary school teachers, and the demand is expected to remain high due to several factors. Firstly, the number of secondary school students is increasing because children born in high birth rate years are reaching secondary school age. Additionally, many current teachers are either changing careers or retiring. If you are looking to secure a job as a secondary school teacher, your best chances are in schools located in rural areas or in Auckland.

TeachNZ Scholarships – The TeachNZ scholarships are available to applicants of all teaching subjects. However, priority is given to those planning to teach a subject that has a shortage of qualified teachers in high schools – currently Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths. These can change year to year. Priority is also given to Māori or Pasifika or students planning to teach in bilingual or immersion settings, and applicants from other diverse ethnic backgrounds. It's still possible to receive a scholarship outside of the priority areas, but it depends on the number of applications received.

Digital technologies – The technology learning area has been revised to strengthen the positioning of digital technologies. The goal of this change is to ensure that all learners have the opportunity to become digitally capable individuals. The change provides a greater focus on students building their skills so they can be innovative creators of digital solutions, moving beyond solely being users and consumers of digital technologies.

New Zealand Histories – From 2023, Aotearoa New Zealand's histories became part of all kura and schools' local curriculum. Aotearoa New Zealand's histories curriculum content supports a focus on critical citizenship – understanding the past to make sense of the present and to inform future decisions and actions.

WORK SETTINGS

In New Zealand there are three types of schools:

- State schools – government-funded
- Integrated schools – former private schools now funded by the state
- Independent (also called private) schools – fully funded by student fees

State and integrated schools are funded according to their decile rating, which is determined by the socio-economic background of students enrolled in the school. A low decile school has a higher proportion of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The main destination for graduates of secondary programmes is the classroom, but by no means are they solely employable in schools. The skills gained are very transferable, such as public speaking, research, programme planning, assessment, project management and written communication; skills that also open up opportunities throughout the public and private sectors. For example, an education officer can be employed by museums, art galleries and zoos to provide educational activities and support.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SECONDARY TEACHER

8am	Arrive at school and prepare for the day
8.30am	Staff briefing
8.50am	Kaitiaki class – greeting students and providing pastoral and academic support
9am	Lesson one: teach Year 13s
9.10am	Lesson two: teach Year 9s
11am	Morning break: may catch up with other staff about pastoral care, extracurricular activities etc
11.30am	Non-contact period: lesson preparation and marking
12.30pm	Lesson four: teach Year 12s
1.30pm	Lunch
2.20pm	Lesson five: teach Year 10s
3.30pm	End of school day – department meeting
4.30pm	Planning for the following day; extracurricular activities (sports, music, drama, clubs etc)
Evening	Sometimes has marking, planning or assessments to complete at home

Note: This example is based on a typical school day, but schools have unique structures and timetables. Some have shorter lesson blocks – others have longer.



SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Very competent at communicating with students and adults from a wide range of backgrounds
- Highly organised and able to work well under pressure
- Able to collaborate across teams and departments
- Broad knowledge of different teaching methods and learning styles
- Excellent knowledge of teaching subjects
- Well-developed knowledge of curriculum assessment and planning
- Effective classroom management skills, including an understanding of behaviour management
- Good research skills to keep up-to-date with best practice in teaching
- Clear understanding of school rules and procedures, including safety and emergency procedures

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Dedication to inclusion and social justice
- Commitment to the Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi and biculturalism
- Understanding, open-minded and tolerant
- Firm and fair, with a sense of humour
- Positive and able to motivate young people
- Relationship-builder and team player
- Creative and confident
- Student-centered and inquiring

SALARY GUIDE

Most secondary teachers are employed on a national collective agreement contract that includes a salary scale and is reassessed periodically.

If you're changing careers to become a secondary teacher, you can apply for a salary assessment that may put you on a higher starting salary scale depending on your previous role and experience.

	Salary (per year)
Secondary school teacher	\$55,948–\$90,000 Teacher graduates with postgraduate education will start on a higher salary
School principals	\$78,000–\$148,000

Salary range is sourced from TeachNZ and PPTA. It is indicative of the New Zealand job market at the time of publication (mid-2023) and should only be used as a guideline.

In addition to a teacher's base salary, secondary schools may assign "units" worth \$5,000 to educators in management roles or with additional responsibilities. Those who possess advanced subject or specialist qualifications can also earn a higher starting salary, allowing for faster advancement up the pay scale.

Source: Education NZ

The voluntary bonding scheme (VBS) helps schools with hard-to-fill vacancies to recruit and retain new graduates. This includes low decile state and state-integrated schools in Auckland, shortage subjects nationwide, and Māori medium kura nationwide. The scheme pays teachers at the end of their third year of teaching in an eligible school or subject. Payments are made against the teacher's student loan or as cash if they don't have a loan.

Source: TeachNZ

THE AUT APPROACH

Our programme offers a supportive and collegial environment with small intakes of only 30–40 students per semester. Our curriculum workshops are led by currently practising teachers. **The Graduate Diploma in Secondary Teaching** has two intakes per year, February and July. Over the year students complete 16 weeks of practical teaching in schools, also known as practicums. Our courses are designed to make clear connections between educational theory and teaching practice. It is also the only secondary teaching programme in New Zealand that has a mid-year intake.

FURTHER STUDY OPTIONS

First-year secondary school teachers are provisionally registered with the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, and are issued with a practising certificate. After two years of satisfactory teaching work they gain full registration.

The Master of Education is of interest to those looking to continue their understanding of educational ideas, contexts and practice.

Research areas for teaching staff:

- Bicultural issues in education
- Pasifika
- Alternative education
- Professional, curriculum, and resource innovation and development
- Aims, competencies, content, processes, and learning/teaching tasks
- Course and programme design



SOPHIE RODIE

Food Technology and Nutrition/
Health and Physical Education teacher

Year 10 and 12 House Dean/
Leader at Western Springs College Ngā Puna o Waiōrea

Graduate Diploma in Secondary Teaching, Bachelor
of Exercise and Sports Science, Postgraduate Diploma
Clinical Exercise Physiology

"I decided to go secondary school teaching after working in exercise rehabilitation and health promotion. I realised I loved helping, facilitating and educating people, but I wanted to work with teenagers rather than adults.

I now teach PE, food technology and health at Western Springs College where I'm also a House Dean for Year 10 and 12 students.

I plan for and teach 16 hours of the school week. The rest of the time I'm 'deaning', which involves meeting with students and parents providing academic and/or pastoral support.

I get to school about 7.45am and go home around 4.30pm. As a classroom teacher I usually do an hour or two of marking and planning after school – and on a weekend day as required. I also spend one week of each holiday break marking/planning. Dean work is done during the school day and after hours as needed.

First days

I still remember my first days in a classroom without an associate teacher. It was quite surreal taking charge of 28 students! However, I learned from practicum experiences how essential it was to put effort into getting to know the students in front of me. My first week of lessons now is always spent focusing on whanaungatanga and building positive relationships. Content delivery and behaviour management is much easier if you have good relationships with your students.

During non-contacts in my practicums I always observed as many teachers in different subjects as I could. Through this I gained more great tips and learned more about classroom management. Being adaptable and having a growth mindset is key for beginning teachers, along with building positive learning relationships."

EMPLOYER COMMENT

"It sounds clichéd, but you need to love kids and love the job. We want kids to come to class knowing you like them and care about them, because then they will want to know what you know.

So, the first few weeks is all about forming relationships. They are tough to form but having those relationships will then make your job easier because they open learning pathways. You also need to be a team player.

Sophie has this down pat. She is strict but loving with a genuine love of teenagers and they respond to that. She is very collegial.

If you think you're a teacher to just tell students what to do, forget it. Secondary teaching has to be a partnership and you have to be humble."

Geraldine Victor
Deputy Principal and Head of Moana House
Western Springs College

USEFUL WEBSITES

TeachNZ

teachnz.govt.nz

Ministry of Education

education.govt.nz

Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand

teachingcouncil.nz

Aotearoa New Zealand Education Gazette

gazette.education.govt.nz

Post Primary Teaching Association

ppta.org.nz

FURTHER INFORMATION

For the most up-to-date information on studying to become a secondary teacher, visit aut.ac.nz/highschoolteaching

For other Future Career Sheets visit:

aut.ac.nz/careersheets

EMPLOYABILITY & CAREERS

For employability and career support, AUT students can book an appointment through <https://elab.aut.ac.nz/>

 @AUTEmployabilityandCareers

FUTURE STUDENTS

Contact the Future Student Advisory team for more information: aut.ac.nz/enquire
futurestudents@aut.ac.nz

 @AUTFutureStudents

CURRENT AUT STUDENTS

Contact the Student Hub Advisors team for more information: 0800 AUT UNI (0800 288 864)
aut.ac.nz/enquire | studenthub@aut.ac.nz

NORTH CAMPUS

90 Akoranga Drive, Northcote, Auckland

CITY CAMPUS

55 Wellesley Street East, Auckland Central

Connect with us now:



The information contained in this career sheet is correct at time of printing, mid 2023.

