



# Primary School Teachers' Sabbatical Application Guide

## About the Primary School Teachers' Sabbatical

The Primary School Teachers' Sabbatical provides 10 weeks' paid leave to reflect, rejuvenate, and undertake professional learning. Each year, the Ministry offers 50 sabbaticals to teachers in state or state-integrated primary schools.

### Purpose of the award

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The sabbatical aims to:

- Improve knowledge, skills and practice, through engagement in professional learning
- enhance a teacher's enthusiasm for teaching
- improve overall retention rates of experienced and effective teachers.

And more broadly:

- enhance the learning experiences of primary students
- enhance professional learning cultures in schools.

### Eligibility

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To apply for a Primary Teachers' Sabbatical, you must:

- be employed as a primary teacher in a New Zealand state or state-integrated school
- have support from your school's principal and school board, or employer
- hold a current Tiwhikete Whakaakoranga Tūturu | Full Practising Certificate (Category One)
- have completed at least 5 years' service as a teacher, at least three of which must have been spent in New Zealand state or state-integrated schools
- be employed under the Primary Teachers' Collective Agreement (PTCA) or applicable individual employment agreement (IEA).

We give preference to applicants who have not received a study award or sabbatical in the last 5 years.

## How to apply

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Applications are made through the application form on our website: [Primary Teachers' Sabbatical | Education Workforce](#)

First, provide your personal details including your name, date of birth, and contact information.

Provide your current employment information as detailed below.

- Your teacher registration number. This can be found on the teaching council website. (<https://teachingcouncil.nz/find-a-registered-teacher/>)
- Your Ministry of Education employee number. This can be found on your payslip.

You will then be asked for information about your school, your employment history, and the period of leave sought on your sabbatical.

## Late applications

We will give consideration to late applications where:

- you have experienced technical issues that could not be resolved before the closing date
- you have experienced an exceptional personal or family-related issue that resulted in missing the application period.

## Sabbatical proposal

The core of the application is a written statement. We recommend writing your statement in a word document or other application and then copying it into the form to avoid data loss.

The statement is separated into five sections:

### **Purpose of the sabbatical (250 word limit)**

State the purpose of your sabbatical and describe the professional learning you intend to undertake. Clearly state the work planned for this period, which should occupy at least 50% of your time over the period of leave sought.

### **Programme Outline (250 word limit)**

Provide a programme outline for the period of the sabbatical. Where travel and visits are intended, please provide details of the location, personnel (where possible) and the purpose of the programme. You must ensure you give enough information for the selection panel to judge your proposal and ensure it is realistic and achievable within the period of leave.

### **Benefits of the sabbatical (250 word limit)**

Outline the benefits of your sabbatical activities to yourself, your school, other teachers and the wider education sector, and how you intend to apply them.

The proposal should demonstrate links to:

- issues important to the school
- the school's strategic or annual plan
- your personal professional development
- current Ministry of Education priorities in education.

### **Professional Isolation (250 word limit)**

Identify how the sabbatical will help address any disadvantages you have experienced because of distance or professional isolation, the socio-economic status of the school or community, or specific requirements of the school.

### **Intent to share (250 word limit)**

Describe how you intend to share your findings and who you intend to share them with, including your Board and colleagues in the wider education sector.

### **Previous Awards/Supported leave**

Indicate the method by which you will supply your principal and School Board support documents. This can be a signed letter of support, a copy of a relevant School Board motion, or an email from the principal/School Board, uploaded with your application.

You must upload your documents in this section of the form, or you will not be able to submit your application.

If you cannot supply evidence of your support with your application before the closing date, you must email [teacher.studyawards@education.govt.nz](mailto:teacher.studyawards@education.govt.nz) to have your application considered as a late application.

You will also be asked about any previous study awards, sabbaticals, or supported leave you have taken in the past.

### **Applicant declaration**

Finally, tick the boxes to declare that all your information is true and accurate. A privacy statement is provided at the bottom of the form.

### **How is my application assessed?**

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A selection panel will assess your application on the following:

- Your proposal shows that the professional learning you're planning to complete during the sabbatical is in one or more of the approved activities
- Your proposal is clear and it shows:
  - That it is achievable within the allocated timeframe and with available resources
  - The intended outcomes of this sabbatical, such as benefits to you, your students, and your school
  - How it will support the current Ministry of Education's priorities in education including policy that aims to improve the learning outcomes for priority student groups, this includes:
    - Māori and Pacific students.
    - Students from low socio-economic backgrounds.
    - Students with Learning Support needs.

- How your sabbatical will help you address any issues you face because of distance or professional isolation
  - How you intend to share your experience at the end of the sabbatical

Preference is given to teachers who have not received a study award or sabbatical in the last five years.

The role of the selection panel is to ensure the process is transparent, fair, consistent, and impartial, while promoting equal opportunity and non-discrimination.

## **Expectations if awarded a sabbatical**

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If awarded a sabbatical, you must:

- notify the Ministry of Education if you are accepting or declining the sabbatical
- notify the Ministry of Education of any changes to information included on the application form, (for example your employment status, contact details, your proposal, or if you take up a new position)
- undertake the professional learning activities as stated in your proposal.

If you are successful and then decline the offer of a sabbatical, you can re-apply with no consequences in a subsequent year.

A sabbatical cannot be postponed to the following year, however, under exceptional circumstances the principal and school board/employer may agree to postpone the leave to the first or second term of the following year, subject to notifying the Ministry of Education.