

Administration Support Staff Pay Equity Claim **Settlement Implementation**

Work Matrix Guide for schools and kura

Use this to check employees have been translated to the right grade and to correctly grade new employees, or employees in a new role

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Purpose

This guide is to help you understand and navigate the implementation of the Administration Support Staff Pay Equity Settlement and how to use the new Work Matrix.

The Work Matrix is primarily used to determine in which grade new employees should be placed. It may also be used when an employee takes on a new role with different skills, demands and responsibilities, or to confirm that an employee has been placed in the right grade on translation.

Background

The Ministry of Education, the New Zealand Schools Trustees Association (NZSTA) and New Zealand Education Institute Te Riu Roa (NZEI) investigated the administration support staff pay equity claim and found there to be a sex-based undervaluation of administrators' work. Information was gathered to inform and reflect the wide range of work that administration support staff do. A new Work Matrix was developed which better acknowledges the value of the skills, responsibilities and demands of administration support staff work roles. The new Work Matrix has seven grades (1-7) that determine the pay rate an administration support staff employee is on.

The audience for this guide is primarily principals, school boards and school administration support staff (covered employees and new employees), and their supervisors or managers.

Who the Administration support staff pay equity settlement applies to

The following are the job titles of administrators identified who are affected by this pay equity settlement:

Personal/Executive Assistants; Financial Administration; Inquiry Clerks and Receptionists; Administrative Assistants; Executive Management; Office Management; Project, Programme and Contract Administrators.

[The designation codes that apply to the range of roles these titles cover are here.](#)

Most administration support staff are covered by the *Support Staff in Schools' Collective Agreement* (SSSCA) negotiated by NZEI. The remainder of the workforce is covered by the



Special Residential Schools' Collective Agreement (SRSCR), the Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu Specialist and Support Staff Collective Agreement, or they are on individual employment agreements (IEAs) based on the applicable collective agreement. The pay equity settlement applies to the covered administration support staff on the collectives and those on IEAs based on the collectives. All covered employees will use the same Work Matrix.

The Work Matrix

The Administration Support Staff Work Matrix has seven grades and sets out the most common skills, demands and responsibilities that apply to employees working within these grades.

For employees covered by the pay equity claim settlement, the Administration Support Staff Work Matrix replaces:

- » the Position Elements Table in the *Support Staff in Schools' Collective Agreement (clause 3.4)*
- » the Position Elements Table in the *Special Residential Schools' Collective Agreement (clause 4.3)*; and
- » the Position Characteristics Table in *Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu Specialist and Support Staff Collective Agreement*; pages 7 – 9.

The collective agreements and the individual employment agreement of each employee covered by the claim will be varied automatically to incorporate all the changes necessary.

As an employer you do not need to make these changes for current employees, nor do employees need to sign these varied IEAs.

Employees will be translated automatically to their new pay equity pay rate. This translation is based on their current point on the pay scale in their current agreements.

Leading into implementation of the pay equity claim settlement

It is important that all employment documents – specifically for those on IEAs – are current and that the person has had regular appraisals including an annually reviewed and updated signed job description. Your employee should be on the correct [designation code](#). This is business as usual.



How and when employers use the Work Matrix

Primary use

School boards and principals will use the Work Matrix to place new employees, or someone in a new role, in the correct grade. They will also use it when making grading adjustments.

Secondary use

School boards and principals use the Work Matrix to check that their employees have been translated to the correct grade, reflecting the regular and ongoing skills, demands and responsibilities outlined in their current job descriptions.

How to use the Work Matrix table for new or changed roles

The job description for the intended role needs to accurately reflect the expectations, duties and responsibilities of that role.

When determining the grade for a new or changed role, the employer will need to:

- » assess the regular and ongoing skills, demands or responsibilities of the role
- » consider what makes up the majority of the role
- » not include anything that is a one-off or isolated event.

It is important that the grade reflects the highest-level skills, demands and responsibilities routinely required for the overall competent performance of the role. Note: not every activity in a grade has to be part of the role for an employee to be placed in that grade.

When deciding on the highest-level skills, demands and responsibilities and assessing the work, an employer should look for the key descriptor words in the matrix such as: substantially routine, varied, non-routine, in-depth knowledge, complex, confidential, advanced knowledge, expertise, specialised knowledge, multi-functional, management.

It is important to remember that if an employee is expected to routinely do work at a certain grade on an ongoing basis, then they should be placed at that grade.

The Administration Support Staff Work Matrix table, which applies from **20 August 2021**, is set out below.



	General description	Elements
Grade 1	Sufficient skills and knowledge to perform work assignments which have substantial routine elements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Operate office equipment such as photocopier or scanner. » Responsible for own work under general supervision. » Problems to be solved will be clearly identified and solutions will fall into established patterns and procedures. » Problems outside the norm will be referred on for guidance. » Communicating with others includes cooperation with colleagues, the ability to request and provide information.
Grade 2	Skills and knowledge required to carry out general office work, involving varied routine and non-routine procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develops the experience to consider the most appropriate process or procedure to follow to take account of changing work circumstances. » Responsible for own work under limited supervision. » Applies interpretation and judgement to solve problems within established policies and procedures. » The role has frequent interactions with others inside and outside the school. » Active listening, patience, discretion and tact will be required, and persuasion may be necessary from time to time. » Difficult situations are generally referred up. » Provides occasional mentoring or short-term supervision.
Grade 3	Specialised skills and in-depth knowledge of more complex methods and processes to provide multi-faceted or confidential services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The role has substantial independence on a day-to-day basis and will use initiative to identify and resolve problems that may be complex or unusual. » Receives or provides complex or sensitive information and may have to utilise a range of different approaches to ensure understanding. » Persuasion, influencing and negotiation may be required to diffuse difficult situations. » Mentors or trains colleagues. » Supervises junior staff.



Grade 4	Provides advanced specialised technical services which are complex in nature within their area of expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Analyses a wide range of problems before selecting the most appropriate solution(s) and has the freedom to resolve these within established policy frameworks. » Involves supervision of staff, which may include contractors. » Provides confidential executive secretarial services. » Provides translation from one language to another. » Communication skills are a critical element in determining success. » Achieves outcomes through logical and reasoned arguments, negotiations or building ongoing empathetic relationships.
<p>The positions in the next three grades require specialist and/or broad knowledge of school and/or kura practices and settings.</p>		
Grade 5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Positions at this grade tend to fall into two categories: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subject-matter experts within a particular field. Operates independently and applies established principles in a particular field. The role requires either extensive practical experience or a tertiary level qualification plus experience. 2. The first level of 'management' where planning, controlling, implementing plans and/or projects are required. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Staff supervision, including the ability to develop, motivate and appraise performance, is usually required. › Holds clear accountability for results. › Influences medium-term decisions through direct control or expert advice.
Grade 6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Positions at this grade manage functions within the school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Responsible for short- and long-term planning and the resulting outcomes for their function, as well as a contribution to wider results. › Responsible for policy and business development for their function within the school's overall business plans and objectives. › Strong collaboration with other areas is essential in order to align priorities and achieve successful results.
Grade 7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Positions at this grade are senior management roles with multi-functional responsibilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Integrates several business functions and resolves internal conflicts. › Assigns resources to optimise results rather than focusing on a single function; typically with a medium- to long-term outlook.



Some situations an employer may encounter

Managing an employee who has more than one distinct role

An administrator employed for two or more distinct positions must be placed in the appropriate Work Matrix grade for each position. For example, they may be an administrator for 25 hours a week and a teacher aide for 10 hours a week.

Use the guidance above for determining the correct grade for each role. The correct designation code needs to be assigned to each distinct role.

How to establish what step within a grade a new employee should be on

The pay rate can be at any step within the minimum and maximum steps of the Work Matrix grade. Please refer to the Administration Support Staff Pay Equity Claim Settlement to see what steps are available within each grade. When deciding where to place an employee, employers need to take into account:

- » any particular skills and qualifications held by the employee
- » any previous relevant paid or unpaid work experience, particularly within the education sector.

If an employee was employed in an administration role under a collective agreement or IEA covered by the Administration Support Staff Pay Equity Claim Settlement, and any break in employment (including between employers) has been less than 12 months, then placement on appointment must take into account:

- » their previous service
- » any relevant information provided by any previous employer
- » any relevant skills development and qualifications undertaken
- » previous relevant paid or unpaid work experience.

When the skills, demands and responsibilities of the new role are within the same Work Matrix grade as the previous role, the starting step should be at least the step last held.



Case study

The following case study describes a common scenario that may apply to new employees.

Case study 1

Rona is a new employee, as Office Manager in a high school.

Her job description clearly describes what she is expected to do.

She will be the first point of contact with students, parents and visitors. Rona will manage three support staff, overseeing the reception area, financial processing and administration duties. Rona will be responsible for the school's communications, collating, designing and distributing the school's newsletter, updating the school's website and managing the school's social media presence.

Rona will purchase all the school's supplies and resources, organise quotes for services and manage the school's asset register. Rona holds a first aid certificate and will help students in the sick bay, as required.

Using the Work Matrix, Rona would be placed at Grade 5 because of her skills, knowledge and responsibilities. She would start at the first step: Grade 5, step 1.

If Rona had considerable experience in a similar role in previous employment, an employer might consider starting her on Grade 5, step 2.

Annual progression limits

Progression will occur on an employee's anniversary date each year through the steps within the minimum and maximum rates that apply to their pay grade, and sometimes between grades, subject to the conditions for progression in the employee's employment agreement.

However, there are some limits to progression through the steps and grades:

- » Employees paid in Grades 1, 5, 6 and 7 will progress through the steps within each grade on an annual basis. Progression does not occur beyond the top step of any of the grades unless an employee's role has changed.
- » For employees paid in Grades 2, 3 and 4 progressions through the steps of each grade will be on an annual basis. Progression from the top of one grade to the first step of the next occurs as a natural annual progression and does not require proof of new or different work. Progression does not occur beyond the top step of Grade 4.



What if your employee thinks they are on the wrong grade after automatic translation?

On occasion, the automatic point-to-point translation may place an employee on a grade in the new Work Matrix that does not cover all the skills, demands and responsibilities of their role. Where the employee and their principal/tumuaki or supervisor agree that the employee's grade is incorrect, the school can apply for pay equity regrade funding.

This process is provided only for changes to grades that are from the direct result of the pay equity settlement and not due to correcting historic employment issues, changes to responsibilities or incorrect placement under the previous grading system.

See the [Pay Equity Regrading Guide](#) for further information.



Key takeaways

- » The pay equity settlement covers administration support staff, union and non-union members, in all schools and kura, including special residential schools and Te Kura (the Correspondence School), except employees who opted out of the claim.
- » The relevant collective agreements are the *Support Staff in Schools' Collective Agreement*, *Special Residential Schools' Collective Agreement* and *Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu Specialist and Support Staff Collective Agreement*. The same Work Matrix is used for all these collective agreements and IEAs based on them.
- » In most cases, schools and kura will not have to do anything as translation to the new pay equity pay rates is automatic.
- » The Work Matrix is to be used from now on for all new administration support staff and applies to anyone whose work is described in the Work Matrix – regardless of their job title or designation.
- » The grade for a new role/employee should take into account the routine and ongoing skills/demands/responsibilities of the role so that the grade recognises the highest-level skills/demands/responsibilities required for competent performance of the role.
- » If the school or kura does not use Education Payroll as its payroll provider, they will need to process the pay changes through their own system, guided by the Work Matrix and Translation Rules.
- » Those employees covered by the claim who are on IEAs will also be translated automatically. Schools and kura do not have to change IEAs, nor do employees need to sign them.
- » If an employee and/or employer believe the employee has moved to the wrong grade, the employee can be regraded to a higher grade and pay equity regrade funding can be applied for. See the [Pay Equity Regrading Guide](#) for further information.

Who to contact for further advice

- » Ministry of Education – Ohumahi Support Team, email ohumahi.support@education.govt.nz, log an enquiry on your Taku portal at education.govt.nz/taku, or call **0800 114 117**
- » NZSTA (for employers), email eradvice@nzsta.org.nz, or call **0800 782 435 (#2)**
- » NZEI Te Riu Roa (for NZEI members), email nzei@nzei.org.nz, or call **0800 693 443**
- » Citizens Advice Bureau, call **0800 367 222**
- » Employment advocate of your choice.

We **shape** an **education** system that delivers
equitable and **excellent outcomes**

He mea **tārai** e mātou te **mātauranga**
kia **rangatira** ai, kia **mana taurite** ai ōna **huanga**