

Just the Job Information Sheet

TeachNZ, Ministry of Education

Job title

Secondary School Teacher

Job description

Secondary school teachers teach students 13-18 years old in either state-owned, state integrated or private secondary schools.

Secondary school teachers specialise in one or more subject areas. They may teach several subjects in one area (such as social sciences teachers) or teach only one subject in that area, for example, History.

Qualifications required

To become a secondary school teacher you need to complete one of the following:

- A specialist subject degree followed by a one-year Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Secondary).

Entry requirements: A subject-based degree or equivalent is generally the entry requirement into the one-year Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Secondary). Students whose degree is not subject-based can often complete a one-year graduate diploma in order to gain the requisite number of subject credits to have a major and a minor secondary school curriculum subject to teach.

OR

- a combined specialist subject degree and secondary teaching qualification:

Entry requirements: In general you will need university entrance (NCEA Level 3) to enter a combined specialist subject degree and a Secondary teacher education programme.

Please note: Entry requirements vary between teacher education qualification providers.

You need to train to teach at least two curriculum areas, as this gives you more flexibility with timetabling and makes you more attractive to schools. It is a good idea to discuss your plans with your tertiary provider when planning your degree to make sure it keeps the teaching option open for you.

Registration:

You must also attain formal teacher registration from the NZ Teacher's Council. The teacher registration process is the same for early childhood, primary and secondary and you have to meet same teaching standards i.e. you do your teacher education qualification followed by provisional registration before you get your full registration. Generally this registration process takes two years full-time working as a teacher.

Training costs

If you study full-time toward your teacher education qualification, your fees for a year will range from \$3,700 – \$6,300* plus text books, other materials and expenses. Teaching qualifications vary in duration between one year full time (for post-Graduate students), to up to four years full time. Contact your teacher education provider for specific information about costs.

*As at 2011, this is subject to change.

Career path

Teachers have a wide range of professional development opportunities to develop their personal and professional skills – allowing them to go as far within the profession as they choose.

Experience and training can help you progress in this job. Secondary school teachers may work up to senior roles such as dean or principal.

You may also move to roles in youth/community work or general training, using the organisational and interpersonal skills gained through teaching.

Salary range

Teachers are offered attractive salary packages, compatible with their qualifications, and competitive with that of graduates in other fields. The pay structure also recognises and accommodates teachers who take on additional responsibilities.

The current starting salary for a secondary school teacher with a Level 7 subject or specialist qualification (the qualification must have at least 72 credits at level 7) and a teacher education qualification is \$47,023. Assuming satisfactory performance, teachers can progress up to a top rate of \$71,000 after seven years' service. Secondary schools can also allocate 'units' to teachers in management positions or to those with extra responsibilities. Each unit is worth \$4,000 and is paid on top of a teacher's base salary. Higher subject or specialist qualifications lead to higher starting salary enabling progression to the top of the scale sooner.

Other careers this profession could lead to

You could:

- teach trainee teachers in tertiary institutions or teach in organisations at other levels across the community
- work in curriculum development, research or education policy with the Ministry of Education, or other local and central government agencies
- move into advisory roles such as school support or education review officer, advising teachers and schools
- work in professional development roles introducing the latest from research to existing teachers
- move into training and education roles in other sectors – for example an art teacher may work as an Education Officer in a museum or art gallery.

How to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry

- Proven leadership ability – ie coaching a sports team or experience working with young people are an advantage.

- Experience in the subject, area or field that you wish to teach – eg. Having worked in the Performing Arts industry herself, Trey Salanoa (featured in this Just the Job segment) has real life experience and knowledge to pass onto her students.
- Commitment and passion to work with and mentor young people.
- Ability to relate well to a diverse range of people.

Other places to source information about this job

www.TeachNZ.govt.nz (TeachNZ offer scholarships to people studying to become teachers.

Conditions apply)

www.careerservices.govt.nz

www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz

Also talking to current and recent student teachers and experienced teachers can be a great help in deciding whether teaching is for you.

Other relevant points

- Teaching is a profession in which you can work throughout your life, move in and out of, and travel nationally and internationally.
- Teaching as a career is a desirable lifestyle option with a range of value-added benefits – holidays, variety and autonomy.
- TeachNZ offers a number of scholarships to people who want to train as early childhood teachers: www.TeachNZ.govt.nz

Personal benefits for Secondary Teachers:

- Being able to teach a subject, area or field that you are passionate about
- Opening a students eyes to the range of possibilities out there
- Building relationships with the students
- Preparing students for tertiary study and their career path.

Personal benefits for Secondary Performing Arts Teachers:

- Helping young people to engage in their learning by using their strengths (eg. drama and music)
- Empowering students to believe in themselves and be leaders of their craft
- Seeing young people's confidence and skills grow
- Giving young people confidence in their identity and culture.