


Certification Handbook



**Te Huinga o ngā Pīhopa
Katorika o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference

 **TE KUPENGA
CATHOLIC
THEOLOGICAL
COLLEGE**

Handbook for
Staff and School Boards
in Catholic State-Integrated Schools
in Aotearoa New Zealand

NGĀ KŌEKE TIWHIKETE

Certification Levels

FOR TEACHERS / KAIAKO
IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

This official Handbook is addressed to Principals, staff, and School Boards in Catholic State-Integrated Schools.

The Certification qualifications and processes detailed in this Handbook are expected to be progressively implemented in schools, as possible and appropriate, from January 2025 onwards.

This Handbook replaces the Certification Handbook which was promulgated by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference in 2014.

Preface

He hōnore he korōria ki Te Atua.
 He maungārongo ki te whenua.
 He whakaaro pai ki ngā tāngata katoa.
 Honour and glory to God, peace upon the land, and goodwill
 to all people.

Tēnā koutou katoa

Every member of our faith communities has the wondrous task of bringing Christ's good news to those whom we are privileged to serve. Kaiako in Catholic schools have a major role to play in demonstrating and confirming the Christian message to their students. "At the heart of the Catholic character of a school are the Catholic hearts of those who work in the school, ...they are witnesses to the students of a mature faith, and an integration of faith with life." [1]

"As Catholic educators we are [also] committed to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its principles of protection, partnership, and participation, thus reflecting the commitment of the Aotearoa New Zealand Catholic Church to bicultural partnership. This is an active expression of our Catholic Special Character." [2]

Under the terms of the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975, the bishops have a particular responsibility for determining, maintaining and enhancing the Special Character of Catholic Schools. To facilitate this, we emphasise the importance of gaining qualifications and continuing professional development. Staff in Catholic schools, if they are to adequately fulfil their role, require qualifications over and above their other professional qualifications.

Certification, as outlined in this Handbook, is a key element in ensuring the maintenance and development of Catholic Special Character in our schools and it is official recognition of the many efforts being made to support this. We expect those involved in our schools to use this Handbook, and to ensure that all staff achieve appropriate standards of knowledge and understanding. It is essential that School Boards and Principals give highest priority to continuing professional development relating to Catholic Special Character. Particular attention must be given to the level of Certification when making appointments.

† Paul Martin
 Archbishop of Wellington

† Richard Laurenson
 Bishop of Hamilton

† Michael Dooley
 Bishop of Dunedin

† John Adams
 Bishop of Palmerston North

† Michael Gielen
 Bishop of Christchurch

† Stephen Lowe
 Bishop of Auckland

[1] NZCBC. (2014). *Catholic Education of School Age Children*, p11.

[2] NZCEO. (2022). *Catholic Special Character Evaluation for Development*, p4.

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What is the Purpose of Certification?

"The Catholic educator is involved in a major work of evangelisation: the incarnation of the Christian message in the lives of young Catholics. The education and formation of teachers in Catholic schools are critical in ensuring that the formation offered to students is authentically Christian and Catholic." [3]

The major purpose of Certification is to ensure that our kaiako have the right formation and qualifications to confidently and capably develop and enhance the faith formation of their students and the Catholic Special Character of their school.

Certification highlights the importance of the need for staff in Catholic Schools to gain qualifications and experience appropriate to their role and to continue to develop these.

Certification provides a means of official recognition by the Church for staff who have committed themselves to ongoing professional development.

Certification provides a system by which teachers suitably qualified for positions in Catholic schools can be determined and applied nationally.

Certification ensures that kaiako become as professionally competent in teaching Religious Education as in other curriculum areas.

[3] NZCBC. (2014), *Catholic Education of School Age Children*, p12.

Certification for all

Certification recognises that all kaiako have a role to play in building and maintaining the Christian community dimension that is central to the Catholic Special Character of a school. Therefore, the Certification system applies to all teachers regardless of their position, or their religious affiliation or stance.

Certification and Special Character Positions

Schedule 6, clause 47 of the Education and Training Act (2020) provides for the existence of special character ('tagged') positions. This provision, integral in each school's Integration Agreement, is the legal safeguard ensuring that the school employs Catholic teachers who endeavour to understand and live their faith. Teachers contribute to the creation, maintenance, and support of the school's Catholic community by everything they say and do. These kaiako support the Principal and Director of Religious Studies, who are also in special character positions.

A clause 47 special character position is one in which the person is 'deemed acceptable' to represent the Catholic community in a ministry role. It is the policy of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops that a teacher appointed to such a position must be a baptised Catholic who is active and in full communion with the faith community. (See <https://www.nzceohandbook.org.nz> for more detail).

Kaiako and leaders are expected to be appropriately certificated or in the process of achieving an appropriate level of certification. "Board policy and plans [should] support the expectation of the NZCBC that the principal and teachers of Religious Education are working towards a formal qualification in Religious Education or Special Character and that all kaiako are working towards the next level of Certification". [4]

Principals and Directors of Religious Studies should have gained Leadership Level of Certification. Any teacher appointed to a Special Character position and all teachers of Religious Education should have gained Classroom Level of Certification. In the event of appointments being made without the expected level of certification, the appointee should be required to work towards it and to be supported by the School Board to do so.

It is to be noted that School Boards are required in law and natural justice to appoint the most suitable applicant to a position in a school. When deciding about the suitability of applicants, especially for those in special character positions, Boards need to give special consideration to applicants who have Certification and take proper account of its level. It can be seen by referring to this Handbook that Certification is recognised by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference and therefore has considerable weight.

[4] NZCEO. (2022). *Catholic Special Character Evaluation for Development*, p17.

The Certification System

Certification Levels are gained by completing approved courses and qualifications in Religious Education and Catholic Special Character.

Teachers are expected to acquire credits over a period of time and Certification verifies that this formation has taken place. This continuing personal formation and qualification at each level includes the major components of Catholic Theology, Scripture, Religious Education, Spirituality, and Catholic Special Character.

In addition, all kaiako should be completing at least 12 hours of appropriate professional learning in Religious Education or Catholic Special Character every year (as organised by their school/diocese).

Successful experience in teaching Religious Education or in supporting the Special Character of a Catholic School are important components in the endorsement of certification levels.

Certification is attained by meeting the requirements for each level.



The Six Levels of Certification

- Foundation Level | Te Tuāpapa
- Classroom Level | Te Akomanga
- Classroom Plus Level | Tua o te Akomanga
- Leadership Level | Te Kaiārahi
- Certificate Graduate Level | Te Paetahi
- Q3+ Graduate Level | Te Paetahi Q3+

Foundation Level | Te Tuāpapa

This level is achieved by completing the Induction course that is organised by your Diocese.

This is the introductory level required of all teaching staff in a Catholic school.

Classroom Level | Te Akomanga

Classroom Level is achieved by:

[1] Gaining 20 credits in approved NZQA courses, and

[2] Completing 2 years of teaching Religious Education and/or supporting the special character of a Catholic school.

Endorsement by the Principal (or delegate) is also required*.

This is the required minimum for all special character positions.

Classroom Plus Level | Tua o te Akomanga

Classroom Plus Level is achieved by:

Gaining 40 credits in approved NZQA courses.

Endorsement by the Principal (or delegate) is also required*.

Leadership Level | Te Kaiārahi

Leadership Level can be achieved in two ways:

Path 1 – suitable for DRS or HOD positions:

[1] Gaining 60 credits in approved NZQA courses, and

[2] Completing 5 years of teaching Religious Education.

Endorsement by the Principal (or delegate) is also required*.

Path 2 – suitable for Principal positions:

[1] Gaining 60 credits in approved NZQA courses, and

[2] Completing 5 years of service in supporting the special character of a Catholic school.

Endorsement by the Principal (or delegate) is also required*.

This is the required minimum for Principal, DRS, and leadership positions.

Certificate Graduate Level | Te Paetahi

This level is achieved by gaining 80 credits in NZQA approved courses.

Endorsement by the Principal (or delegate) is also required*.

This level can be gained by completing the Certificate in Christian Studies (Religious Education).

Q3+ Graduate Level | Te Paetahi Q3+

This level is achieved by gaining 120 credits in the Graduate Diploma in Theology offered by Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College.

Endorsement by the Principal (or delegate) is also required*.

A teacher with the Graduate Diploma in Theology qualifies for Q3+ salary level.

Special Notes

*Endorsement confirms the teacher has completed at least 12 hours of appropriate professional learning each year. Satisfactory classroom observation should also have taken place. For the Principal, endorsement should be made by somebody appropriate, (eg the presiding member of the School Board).

Certification levels should be viewed as a Poutama or staircase which supports ongoing professional leading in a Catholic context. Those aspiring to Catholic leadership should also consider qualifications at higher levels.

Secondary teachers of Religious Education should have a Graduate level qualification in a relevant field. Teachers holding positions of Secondary Director of Religious Studies, HOD Religious Education or their equivalent, which require subject specialist knowledge, should have appropriate Graduate Level qualifications at Bachelor, Masters, or Doctorate levels.

Approved NZQA Courses Suitable for Teachers

Offered by Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College

New Zealand Certificate in Christian Studies (Religious Education)

The NZCCS (RE) consists of six 10-credit papers and one 20-credit capstone paper. (80 credits total).

This is a Level 5 qualification on the National Qualifications Framework.

Each of the required strands (Religious Education, Scripture, Theology, Spirituality and Catholic Special Character) are covered by completing this qualification.

Papers matching the four themes of Tō Tātou Whakapono Our Faith are indicated in the table below.

By completing one paper per year, a teacher could qualify for Classroom Level Certification after 2 years, Classroom Plus after 4 years, Leadership Level after 6 years and Certification Graduate Level after 7 years.

These papers can be delivered to school staff groups, combined groups, face-to-face or online. Times of delivery can be negotiated to suit the teachers involved.

Code	Paper Name	Credits	TTWOF Theme
RE501	Religious Education Today	10 credits	Te Atua
RE502	Spirituality for Teachers	10 credits	Te Atua
RE503 RE504	Teaching Practice, or Teaching in a Catholic School	20 credits 20 credits	Te Atua Te Atua
SC501	Understanding the Old Testament	10 credits	Te Rongopai
SC502	Interpreting the New Testament	10 credits	Te Rongopai
TH501	What Catholics Believe	10 credits	Te Atua / Ā Tātou Whakapapa
TH502 TH503 TH504 TH505 TH506	What is Theology, or Church and the Sacraments, or Catholic Social Teaching, or Issues in Christian Ethics, or He Timatanga – A Beginning	10 credits 10 credits 10 credits 10 credits 10 credits	Te Atua / Ā Tātou Whakapapa Kia Noho Hāhi Kia Noho Hāhi Kia Noho Hāhi Te Atua



New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies (Religious Education)

The NZDCS consists of eight 15-credit papers. (120 credits total).

This is a Level 6 qualification on the National Qualifications Framework. (It does not qualify for Q3+ salary status).

This qualification has a number of Religious Education papers that are suitable for aspiring leaders. As an example, completing the four RE papers gains the 60 credits required for Leadership Level Certification.

These papers can be delivered to school staff groups, combined groups, face-to-face or online. Times of delivery can be negotiated to suit the teachers involved.

Code	Paper Name	Credits	TTWOF Theme
RE601	What Makes a School Catholic?	15 credits	Te Atua
RE602	The Religious Education Curriculum	15 credits	Te Atua
RE603	Issues in Catholic Education	15 credits	Te Atua
RE604	Leadership in Catholic Schools	15 credits	Kia Noho Hāhi
SC601 SC602	The Gospel in Aotearoa, or Bible in Religious Education	15 credits 15 credits	Te Rongopai Te Rongopai
TH601	The Sacraments Today	15 credits	Kia Noho Hāhi
TH624	Values for Religious Education	15 credits	Kia Noho Hāhi
TH609 TH620 TH625	He Turanga Whakaaro, or Studies in Church History, or Theology for Religious Education: Special Topic	15 credits 15 credits 15 credits	Te Atua Ā Tātou Whakapapa

Graduate Diploma in Theology

The Grad Dip Th consists of eight 15-credit papers, including one compulsory paper and five Stage 3 papers. (120 credits total). Teachers can include two RE papers in their Graduate Diploma. There is a large number of paper choices available.

The pre-requisite for this course is any Bachelor's Degree, making it suitable for a wide range of teachers.

This is a Level 7 qualification on the National Qualifications Framework.

It qualifies the holder for Q3+ salary status.

The Grad Dip Th papers (also available for Bachelor of Divinity) are delivered face-to-face at Catholic Theological College (Ponsonby, Auckland) and are also available through distance learning.

Code	Paper Name	Credits
D2000	Fundamental Theology	15 credits
	Choose five Stage 3 papers from Bachelor of Divinity	Total of 75 credits
	Choose further papers at any level from Bachelor of Divinity, or Religious Education papers from NZCCS or NZDCS	Total of 30 credits

An example programme:

Code	Paper Name	Credits	TTWOF Theme
D2000	Fundamental Theology	15 credits	Te Atua
D3000 B3000 B3010 H3060 M3010 M3030	The Trinity Psalms and Wisdom Johannine Literature The Catholic Church in New Zealand Catholic Social Teaching Contemporary Issues in Moral Theology	15 credits 15 credits 15 credits 15 credits 7.5 credits 7.5 credits	Te Atua Te Rongopai Te Rongopai Ā Tātou Whakapapa Kia Noho Hāhi Kia Noho Hāhi
RE601 RE603	What Makes a School Catholic? Issues in Catholic Education	15 credits 15 credits	Te Atua Te Atua



Graduate Diploma in Theology (cont)

Another example programme:

Code	Paper Name	Credits	TTWOF Theme
D2000	Fundamental Theology	15 credits	Te Atua
D3010 H3040 B3020 H3050 M3000 D3100	Creation, Anthropology, Grace and Eschatology Reformations: Churches in the 16th Century Apocalyptic Literature Modern Church History Sexual Ethics, Marriage and Family Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist	15 credits 15 credits 7.5 credits 15 credits 7.5 credits 15 credits	Te Atua Ā Tātou Whakapapa Te Rongopai Ā Tātou Whakapapa Kia Noho Hāhi Te Atua
RE502 RE504	Spirituality for Teachers Teaching in a Catholic School	10 credits 20 credits	Te Atua Te Atua

Procedures for Recognition of Certification Levels

Kaiko should use the appropriate application form for the level of certification. These forms can be found in this handbook.

The principal (or delegate) should endorse the application. This verifies the years of teaching Religious Education and/or supporting the special character of a Catholic school, and that satisfactory performance has taken place. It also endorses that the teacher has completed at least 12 hours of relevant PLD every year.

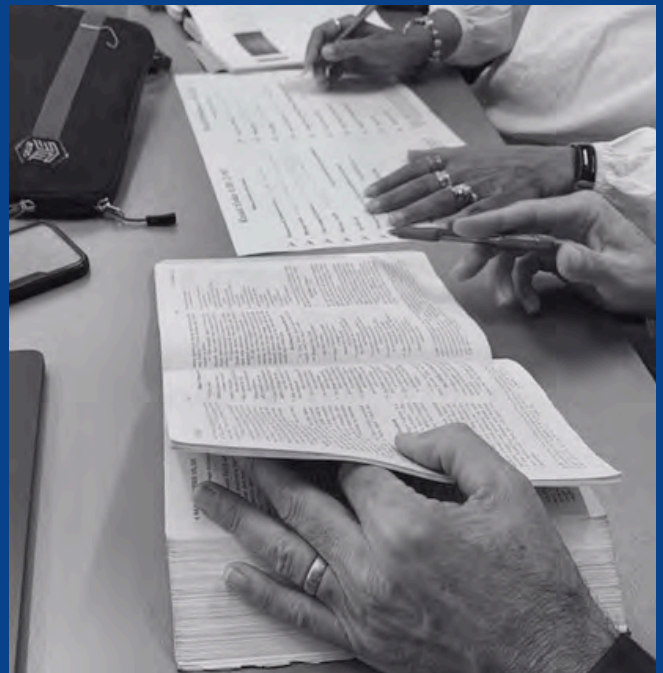
Completed application forms are to be sent to the Diocesan Education team (in your Diocese) and to Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College.

The awarding of Foundation Level | Te Tuāpapa certification will be recorded on the kaiko's diocesan certification database.

Certificates for the other five levels of certification will be provided by Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College (on behalf of NZCBC) in collaboration with the Diocesan Education Managers.

Teachers who have undertaken relevant prior learning may apply to have this assessed for recognition. Teachers who have obtained appropriate qualifications overseas may apply to Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College with transcripts to have these recognised for equivalence.

Teachers who have obtained Certification Levels prior to the end of 2024 under the 2014 guidelines will have these recognised moving forward.



Application Form for Certification

FOUNDATION LEVEL | TE TUĀPAPA

Teacher Name:

(for entry on Diocesan Certification database)

School:

Diocese:

Induction course attended:

Date:

Teacher Signature:

Principal (or delegate) Signature:

Date:

When completed, scan and email this form to:

[1] Your Diocese Education office, and

[2] Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College admin@ctc.ac.nz

Application Form for Certification

CLASSROOM LEVEL | TE AKOMANGA

Teacher Name (for certificate):

School:

Diocese:

Courses completed (must add to 20 NZQA credits):

Years of teaching Religious Education and/or Supporting the Special Character of a Catholic School (must add to 2 years):

School:

(Calendar) **Years applicable:**

Teacher Signature:

Principal (or delegate) **Signature:**

Date:

When completed, scan and email this form to:

[1] Your Diocese Education office, and

[2] Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College admin@ctc.ac.nz

Application Form for Certification

CLASSROOM PLUS LEVEL | TUA O TE AKOMANGA

Teacher Name (for certificate):

School:

Diocese:

Courses completed (must add to 40 NZQA credits):

Teacher Signature:

Principal (or delegate) **Signature:**

Date:

When completed, scan and email this form to:

[1] Your Diocese Education office, and

[2] Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College admin@ctc.ac.nz

Application Form for Certification

LEADERSHIP LEVEL | TE KAIĀRAHI

Teacher Name (for certificate):

School:

Diocese:

Courses completed (must add to 60 NZQA credits):

Years of teaching Religious Education and/or Supporting the Special Character of a Catholic School (must add to 5 years):

School(s):

(Calendar) **Years applicable:**

Teacher Signature:

Principal (or delegate) **Signature:**

Date:

When completed, scan and email this form to:

[1] Your Diocese Education office, and

[2] Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College admin@ctc.ac.nz

Application Form for Certification

CERTIFICATE GRADUATE LEVEL | TE PAETAHI

Teacher Name (for certificate):

School:

Diocese:

Courses completed (must add to 80 NZQA credits):

Teacher Signature:

Principal (or delegate) **Signature:**

Date:

When completed, scan and email this form to:

[1] Your Diocese Education office, and

[2] Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College admin@ctc.ac.nz

Application Form for Certification

Q3+ GRADUATE LEVEL | TE PAETAHI Q3+

Teacher Name (for certificate):

School:

Diocese:

Courses completed for Graduate Diploma in Theology

(must add to 120 NZQA credits):

Teacher Signature:

Principal (or delegate) **Signature:**

Date:

When completed, scan and email this form to:

[1] Your Diocese Education office, and

[2] Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College admin@ctc.ac.nz