



# Supporting Maori Students

## “Our Voice”

FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING



COFFEE BREAK GUIDE

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### Overarching Themes

Establishing relationships between tutors and the class are fundamental to learning. Many Māori students are uncomfortable sharing with or contributing to group activities when they are clustered with people they don't know.

- Plan an introduction session with other students and teaching staff at the beginning of the course so an initial bond can be formed.
- In classroom interactions, students may demonstrate a shyness or whakamaa - particularly when they are in unfamiliar surroundings or with people they don't know.
- In sports and activities such as the wero, or whaikōrero individual excellence is encouraged, but Māori culture also teaches that the needs of the tribe are sometimes more important than the needs of the individual so some students may not want to appear whakahihi, meaning that they are demonstrating arrogance or being self-centred.
- Give students feedback that is unique to them, and delivered one on one. Students appreciate tutors who take the time to catch up with them outside of class.

### Where did this information come from?

A group of students identifying as Māori were surveyed in a focus group to determine the types of behaviour that helps their learning. The students came from a wide range of programmes at an Institute of Technology.

### Specific Strategies

Students reported these things as being vital or important to their learning:



Having good facilities and materials to work with

Being shown an example of a task or required output before being asked to perform the same task

Providing a Māori mentor who can act as a mediator between the student and the academic staff

Having one on one support – either by the tutor or by learning support

Having informal talks with their tutors either in or outside of class to build the students trust and respect.

Practical – making it interesting by using different techniques

Having someone monitor their progress and intervene if there appears to be problems

Having a tutor or support worker with a good attitude toward supporting their learning – particularly someone with a passion for the subject who can share that passion.

Being shown respect by correct pronunciation of the student's name

“You want to know that the tutor is helping you [to learn] because they want to, not because they have to. You can tell the ones that are only there because they are being paid.”

#### Advice from students on:

Checking my understanding of a subject	Don't ask the class generally who doesn't understand, or to put up your hand if you don't understand. I will not answer you. If you want to know if I understand, come to my table and look at my work. Make sure nobody else can hear. Ask me quietly if I need any help. I will be honest as long as I don't feel embarrassed in front of my friends or classmates.
Getting me to participate in class discussions	I need to feel comfortable in the class. I need to know my classmates and where they are from. Make sure there is a welcome and introduction session at the beginning of the course so that we can feel united and friendly with each other, otherwise I won't share.
Giving me feedback	If my work needs more attention, please tell me quietly – one on one if possible. If I have done well on a task, I would also like you tell me quietly. I value your praise, but may not want to be singled out in front of the class. When you tell me that I've done well on an individual basis it makes me feel proud and I want to try harder in your class.
Giving me instructions	Give me written instructions and explain them verbally. If I have it in writing then it is easier for me to check anything I don't understand with a mentor or support person. Please don't assume that I always know what all of the academic terms you use mean.

#### Further Resources

Mātauranga Māori – Ako Aotearoa

Long URL <http://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/mi/node/199/group-category-resources/4765>

Short URL <http://bit.ly/ruyD3>

Māori Education Trust – Including scholarships

Long URL <http://www.maorieducation.org.nz/sch/>

Short URL <http://bit.ly/iKznn>

Ministry of Education – Māori Education Publications

Long URL [http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/maori\\_education](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/maori_education)

Short URL <http://bit.ly/JfWlIQ>

Waikato University – Te Kotahitanga Research

Long URL [http://edlinked.soe.waikato.ac.nz/departments/index.php?dept\\_id=20&page\\_id=820](http://edlinked.soe.waikato.ac.nz/departments/index.php?dept_id=20&page_id=820)

Short URL <http://bit.ly/NHQHI>