

Introducing Manako, the Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Cultural Capability development programme for foundation learning provided by Ako Aotearoa, the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence

Introduction

The Manako programme, formerly the Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Cultural Capability (ALNACC) programme, continues our partnership with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and its funding since 2015 of our services to enhance and build the sector's educational capability for foundation learning in Aotearoa New Zealand. Embracing our roots and expertise in literacy, numeracy, together with Māori and Pacific cultural capability, Manako expands our commitment to delivering inclusive and effective education, informed by the values, and learning needs of all New Zealanders.

The Manako programme is funded by the TEC to build capability in the tertiary foundation education sector and to provide advisory work to the TEC and Ministry of Education (MoE).

Manako is the internationally recognised Language, Literacy, Numeracy (LLN) and Cultural Capability programme of Ako Aotearoa, New Zealand's National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence. LLN has an importance in the international context of UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals (specifically Goal 4: Quality Education) and the OECD's PIAAC survey of adult skills.

The Manako team works alongside educators and organisations to build their capability and support them in achieving Tertiary Education Strategy objectives. Manako received the internationally recognised award of Successful Practices Honoree at the Library of Congress Literacy Awards 2023 (United States of America).

Manako priorities

The Manako team offers a comprehensive suite of professional learning and development courses, workshops, and webinars, and has developed a collection of resources to support the sector. Other significant initiatives from Manako include:

- » the New Zealand Dyslexia-Friendly Quality Mark (DFQM): 12 tertiary organisations have been awarded the DFQM since September 2021, and we are currently supporting 19 more organisations through the DFQM process, with regular new intakes



- » the [Tapatoru Ako Professional Practice Award](#): an innovative whole-of-organisation approach to capability building
- » our [Neurodiversity Community of Practice](#) is a diverse international community with around 500 members, including educators (primary to tertiary), parents, supporters, entrepreneurs, specialists, researchers, government agencies, and businesses
- » our [Manako Community of Practice](#) is a space for educators to connect with each other and the Manako team about LLN and cultural capability

Research projects

The [Ako Aotearoa Research and Innovation Agenda](#) (AARIA) has funded projects connected with Manako and aligned with the Tertiary Education Strategy. They include:

- » [Ako Mai Me \(Teach Me and help me learn\): The dyslexic learner journey and experience](#) – Dr Linda Rowan and Dr Lesley Petersen
- » [Digital Skills Framework](#) scoping project – Dr Anne Alkema
- » [Tapatoru Digital Professional Learning and Development Tool](#) – Education Technology Ltd, The Tarn Group, and the Tapatoru Team at Ako Aotearoa
- » [Engaging construction apprentices in the online environment](#) – Dr Janet McHardy
- » [In the starting blocks: Scoping the experiences, vulnerabilities, and potential of dyscalculic adult learners in Aotearoa New Zealand](#) – Dr Damon Whitten (2024, in progress)
- » [Scoping the integration of AI in adult tertiary education: An equitable and outcome-focused approach in Aotearoa New Zealand](#) – Graeme Smith and Michael Grawe (2024, in progress).

Current priorities

Following on from its [White Paper](#) submitted to the Minister of Education in March 2022, the Manako team continues to advocate and provide support for the tertiary sector and the Ministry of Education's work in the following areas:

- » contributing to a new Language, Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Strategy
- » building capability and sustainability across the tertiary foundation education sector
- » increasing professional development opportunities that build on the existing infrastructure for adult LLN and cultural capability for foundation education
- » supporting educators working with Māori and Pacific learners and their communities
- » supporting neurodiversity-affirming approaches.

Proposed ongoing engagement and collaboration with the TEC and MoE

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this briefing paper with you and your team. This includes the value of foundation learning, and the risks associated with a lack of educator capability building and inaction for underserved learners in local, national, and international contexts. We would like to propose a second ministerial directive for us to work with the TEC and MoE to address the challenges outlined in our summary of the March 2022 White Paper (included in this digest) through improved policy settings and engagement.

