

The Ako Aotearoa Tapatoru Ako Professional Practice Award

Introduction

The Tapatoru Ako Professional Practice Award is a key initiative of the Manako programme. Formerly known as the Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Cultural Capability (ALNACC) programme, Manako continues the partnership between Ako Aotearoa and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) to enhance educational capability across Aotearoa New Zealand. Building on our expertise in literacy, numeracy, and both Māori and Pacific cultural capability, the Manako programme remains committed to delivering inclusive and effective tertiary education and training.

Developed by Ako Aotearoa, the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence, the Tapatoru Ako Professional Practice Award ('Tapatoru') represents an advancement in tertiary education and foundation learning. Tapatoru aims to enhance the success of both educators and learners. This briefing paper examines its approach and application in blended learning, advocating for its recognition and development.

The programme is rooted in Māori and Pacific cultural values, encompassing language, literacy, numeracy, and neurodiversity. This paper will explore its impact on adult learning and educator professional development, highlighting its transformative potential in Aotearoa New Zealand's educational landscape.

Approach to facilitation and delivery

Cultural integration and respect

The Tapatoru programme integrates Māori traditions, such as beginning and ending sessions with karakia (prayers) and exploring concepts like whanaungatanga (relationships) and Ako (reciprocal learning). This practice fosters inclusivity and celebrates Aotearoa New Zealand's cultural heritage.



Interactive and reflective learning

Interactive learning is a cornerstone of the programme, encouraging the sharing of experiences and fostering critical thinking. This approach emphasises practical application and reflective practice in teaching.

Structured and purposeful delivery

Lessons in the Tapatoru programme are methodically structured, balancing theoretical knowledge with practical application. This approach addresses the varied needs of adult learners and ensures clarity and comprehensive coverage.

Emphasis on reciprocal learning and respect

The programme embraces a reciprocal teaching approach, promoting mutual respect and learning. It values contributions from all participants, reinforcing the principle of Ako and enhancing the learning community.

Resource utilisation and multimodal support

Diverse resources, including multimedia tools and follow-up materials, are utilised to cater to different learning styles. This multimodal approach underscores continuous learning beyond classroom sessions.

Flexibility and responsiveness

Flexibility and adaptability are key in the programme's lesson plans, allowing facilitators to respond to group dynamics and individual needs. This responsiveness ensures relevance and effectiveness for diverse adult learners.

Forward planning and continuity

Each session previews upcoming topics, maintaining learning continuity. The structured progression builds knowledge, fostering a cohesive and in-depth understanding of complex concepts.

The Tapatoru programme's teaching approach is marked by its respect for cultural values, employs interactive and reflective methods, maintains structured delivery, promotes reciprocal learning, and utilises diverse resources and adaptive lesson planning. It aligns with adult learning principles, emphasising engagement, practical application, and cultural diversity, contributing to an inclusive, dynamic educational environment.



Conclusion

The Tapatoru programme, as detailed in this briefing paper, aims to enhance Aotearoa New Zealand's tertiary education through cultural integration, interactive learning, and innovative pedagogy. It strives for excellence in adult education, aiming to set new standards for culturally inclusive teaching.

This paper recommends the programme's recognition by the Ministry of Education and its integration into Aotearoa New Zealand's national educational framework, highlighting its role in cultivating a skilled, culturally aware educational workforce. The Tapatoru programme's methods should play a crucial part in shaping a diverse and effective teaching community.

In summary, the programme presents a promising model for the future of tertiary teacher education in Aotearoa New Zealand, aiming to create a community of educators skilled and committed to cultural inclusivity. Recognising and supporting this approach is important for a vibrant, responsive, and diverse educational future.

