Professional Learning and Development (PLD)



Public Schedule 2025

Online Professional Learning and Development

Supporting your drive for good teaching practice and greater success for learners





High quality, cost effective PLD for 2025

Since 2012, Ako Aotearoa has been extremely proud to support tertiary and vocational educators, trainers and kaimahi (staff) in growing their teaching and learning capability through our successful range of workshops and courses.

In 2025, prices for our workshops and courses across our PLD programme range between \$50 to \$150 + GST per person with special rates for selected offerings.

We're excited to bring you more opportunities to drive equitable and successful outcomes for your akonga with new additions to our courses and workshops schedule, delivered by expert facilitators.

Tailored PLD with staff groups (online, in-person, or blended delivery)

While our online delivery continues to be popular with staff from all areas of the sector, demand has increased for face-to-face events.

Not only are we well equipped to bring our PLD to your space, but we acknowledge that greater impact and benefits for organisations and individuals can be achieved if delivered in-person with larger groups of staff. This may include tailoring content to align with your organisation's capability development priorities.

Visit ako.ac.nz/inhousepld to browse our full list of professional development topics or contact us to discuss your needs in more detail.

Benefits of our PLD

Identified needs: We partner with experts to identify learning and development needs, and then create programmes to suit.

Manageable schedules: We schedule times to suit, and sessions are short to fit around busy work lives.

Accessible delivery: We deliver online or in-person to suit organisational needs.

Support diversity: Our workshops and courses support cultural diversity and capability building.

Build impact: We encourage participation across many organisations to enable the sharing of ideas and approaches that are known to work from our PLD.

Good value: We provide very good value with our affordable fees, and payment

Digital badges: We reward your new skills and knowledge with 'digital badges' or credentials. More at ako.ac.nz/digitalbadges

Giving back: Our event and workshop ticketing service allocates its proceeds to educational projects in Aotearoa/ New Zealand.

What our participants say

We are heartened by the strong support from our PLD participants, and we're pleased that they continue to see the value of our offerings in their capability development.

Read below to find out what people have been saying about our PLD.

Feedback from our participants:

- "The course gave me a greater understanding of some of the struggles our students face on a daily basis and now I feel more equipped to address these injustices."
- "The content of this course was great - made better by a good presenter who knew the subject material and delivered it in an interactive and professional manner."
- "I enjoyed all three workshops that were all easy to follow and a pleasure to view."
- "(The course) was beautifully balanced in terms of instruction and interaction."

Contact us



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Register now at www.ako.ac.nz/upcomingpld

Public Courses and Workshops 2025

Online Professional Learning and Development Programme

#,# = multi-session course # = one-off workshop

Workshop/Course title	Facilitator	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Supporting Māori Learner Success													
Te Tiriti o Waitangi - a visual history (for non-Māori) A brief visual history of Te Tiriti o Waitangi for beginners, including an overview of events, the consequences of colonisation, and Tiriti-related policy in the tertiary education sector.	Christine Herzog, Catherine Delahunty & Richard Green 9.00am-1.00pm		14	14	9	9	13						
Te Tiriti o Waitangi – a visual history (for Māori only) A brief visual history of Te Tiriti o Waitangi for tangata whenua, including an overview of events, the consequences of colonisation, and Tiriti-related policy in the tertiary education sector.	Daniel Tawhai 9.30am-1.00pm				14								
Addressing racism in tertiary education An introduction to racism in the tertiary education sector, this course defines types of racism and makes suggestions for how we can personally address it.	Christine Herzog & Catherine Delahunty 9.00am-12.30pm			7									
Applying equity in tertiary education This course will explore approaches to addressing equity issues in the tertiary education sector to enable participants to create a personal strategy for addressing an equity issue.	Christine Herzog 9.00am-12.30pm		21			23							
Māori Cultural coaching Online courses These self-directed courses are designed to support the application of five Māori values which have been adapted to enhance both teaching practice and interpersonal working relationships. Each course contains interactive kōwae (modules) of work to engage in, supported by a Māori Cultural Coach. A reflective practice task is completed at the end of each course that will reward you with a digital badge.	Managed by Dr Mei Winitana												
Māori cultural coaching Ako Course Engage in six kōwae/modules of work based on the contemporary Māori concept of Ako (learning and teaching).	Assessor: Mereana Parkinson			Opens 5 Mar							Closes 31 Oct		
Māori cultural coaching Manaakitanga Course Engage in three kōwae/modules of work based on the traditional Māori value and concept of Manaakitanga (enhancing the mana of others/ care and respect accorded to others).	Assessor: Mereana Parkinson			Opens 5 Mar							Closes 31 Oct		
Māori cultural coaching Rangatiratanga Course Engage in four kōwae/modules of work based on the traditional Māori value and concept of 'Rangatiratanga' (independent thinking, leadership, integrity, strategic decision-making, and diplomacy).	Assessor: Mereana Parkinson			Opens 5 Mar							Closes 31 Oct		
Māori cultural coaching Whanaungatanga Course Engage in three kōwae/modules of work based on the traditional Māori value and concept of Whanaungatanga/ relationships/ relationship- building).	Assessor: Mereana Parkinson			Opens 5 Mar							Closes 31 Oct		
Māori cultural coaching Wairuatanga Course Coming soon Dates TBD.													

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Supporting Pacific Learner Success													
Lalaga le fala Pasefika Weaving cultural responsiveness to Pacific learners Gain greater understanding of Pacific perspectives and explore a research-informed tool designed to assist you to engage more meaningfully with your Pacific learners.	Pauline Luafutu- Simpson, Ashalyna Noa & Jo Togiaso 1.00am-12.00pm						3, 10, 17						
Pacific leadership principles For the month of May, learn practical skills and strategies that can enhance your leadership skills and support learners and their communities.													
Pacific leadership principles Serving to serve: The heart of tautua This workshop explores the cultural principle of 'tautua' (service), a cornerstone of Pacific identity and leadership. Participants will explore how service is deeply ingrained as a sacred act of reciprocity and respect.	Pale Sauni & Saylene Ulberg 12.10pm-1.00pm					6							
Pacific leadership principles Serving to lead: Leadership through service Drawing on Pacific traditions, participants will learn how to embody the principles of 'tautua' (service) in their leadership practice, prioritising the needs of communities and teams. This workshop invites participants to shift from authority-based models to relational, service-centred leadership inspired by Pacific cultural values.	Pale Sauni & Saylene Ulberg 12.10pm-1.00pm					13							
Pacific leadership principles Leading to serve: Oriented leadership This workshop invites leaders to reflect on their roles as stewards of their communities, emphasising cultural focus to lead with service at the heart. The workshop prepares participants to sustain leadership practices that honour cultural values while addressing the needs of diverse communities.	Pale Sauni & Saylene Ulberg 12.10pm-1.00pm					20							

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Teaching and Learning Strategies													
Effective assessment that supports learning Learn how to ensure students undertake valid, reliable, flexible and fair assessments using assessment design skills and NZQA's Qualities of Assessment.	Michael Few 5.30pm-6.30pm				29	6, 13							
An introduction to dyslexia Supporting learners to achieve their potential Develop skills and knowledge to recognise and support learners with dyslexia, and other neurodiverse conditions, to achieve their potential.	Mike Styles 10.00-11.00am & 2.00pm-3.00pm			6, 13, 20			10, 17, 24						
Mentoring in education Principles, practices and skills Learn more about effective mentor/mentee relationships to improve mutually supportive and interactive connections.	Dr Lesley Peterson 9.00am-12.30pm					9							
Exploring Ako Six steps to success This workshop series will provide kaiako (educators) with an opportunity to access a fresh new resource to guide them in aligning their teaching practices with proven strategies for ākonga (learner) success.													
— Introductory Overview	Jane Terrell 12.00pm-2.00pm						19						
— Knowing your Ākonga	Jane Terrell 12.00pm-1.00pm							3					
— Knowing Relevant Practices	Jane Terrell 12.00pm-1.00pm							17					
— Interpersonal Relationships	Jane Terrell 12.00pm-1.00pm							31					
— Reflecting on Active Learning Experiences	Jane Terrell 12.00pm-1.00pm								14				
— Constructive Alignment	Jane Terrell 12.00pm-1.00pm								28				
— Expectations, Challenges and Motivations	Jane Terrell 12.00pm-1.00pm									11			
Learner agency For the month of April, learn about the key principles of learner agency, and gain essential skills and strategies you can use to foster learner agency.													
Learner agency Developing a positive learner identity This workshop describes learner identity and provides strategies that educators can use to develop positive identities. No prior knowledge is required.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm				9								
Learner agency Developing personal learning strategies A key goal of developing learner agency is to become good at learning! This requires supporting learners to develop their own personal learning strategies. This workshop presents several starting strategies and how these can be integrated into delivery. It also includes links to supporting resources. No prior knowledge is required	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm				16								
Learner agency Supporting learners to organise their learning Organising your learning is perhaps the most underrated aspect of learner agency and learner success. This workshop contains the secrets to supporting learners to rebuild their confidence, create 'success momentum', and become successful in any learning environment. No prior knowledge is required.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm				23								
Learner agency Supporting learners to solve problems, innovate, and learn effectively This workshop explores why learners become overwhelmed and why many hesitate or struggle to take action to solve problems or begin tasks. The workshop presents strategies learners can implement in difficult learning situations. No prior knowledge is required.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm				30								

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Universal Design for Learning (UDL) For the month of March, learn practical skills, strategies, and explore new ways of putting UDL into practice.													
Introduction to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) In this workshop we will introduce UDL and explore how it can help us proactively design for learner variability. We will also discuss strategies for getting started with UDL and provide you with pathways to further your learning.	Chrissie Butler 12.10-1.00pm			4									
UDL Improving the inclusive design and teaching of learning activities In this workshop we will introduce a design process that you can use in any context. We will also examine common barriers in the teaching or facilitation of activities and how to minimise these barriers.	Chrissie Butler 12.10-1.00pm			11									
UDL Culturally inclusive practice In this workshop we will highlight how the UDL guidelines can help us recognise barriers to learning that may lead to discrimination and exclusion and consider ways to minimise them.	Chrissie Butler 12.10-1.00pm			18									
UDL Supporting learner agency We will discuss the focus on addressing bias and identifying practices that may inadvertently lead to exclusion. We will also highlight how the updated guidelines can help us design practice spaces for learning, where students have access to useful choices and usable supports.	Chrissie Butler 12.10–1.00pm			25									

Manako (Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Cultural Capability)	Facilitator	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numeracy For the month of October, these workshops will address topical Numeracy issues faced by educators and provide guided strategies to support your learners' development.													
Numeracy Introduction to dyscalculia This workshop explores adult dyscalculia and the strategies educators can use to support learners. It links to a range of resources educators can use to support dyscalculic adults.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm										8		
Numeracy Identifying the numeracy in your course This workshop provides a method any educator can use to identify the numeracy demands of their courses and how to prioritise these. This is a great skill and can be applied to any environment or context.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm										15		
Numeracy Fractions, decimals and percentages This workshop introduces new research, strategies and key concepts for teaching and understanding fractions, decimals and percentages.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm										22		
Numeracy Talanoa Numeracy Join us to explore how Talanoa Numeracy can help educators engage learners in meaningful discussion around numeracy, in a way that leads to enhanced engagement and learning. Talanoa Numeracy draws on the deep traditions of the Pacific Islands, specifically the concept of talanoa to support numeracy instruction.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm										29		

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Language and Literacy For the month of July, these workshops will provide practical skills, strategies, and knowledge to teach and embed language and literacy in your practice.													
Making meaning Activating background knowledge This workshop focuses on one key reading comprehension strategy, 'Activating background knowledge', and how we can support learners to connect their background knowledge, interests and experience with the new learning. No prior knowledge is required.	Dr Janet McHardy & Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm							9					
Structured literacy: Not just for children This workshop offers an exploration of the key components of literacy teaching and how these can be integrated to ensure learners can build a solid foundation for literacy success. No prior knowledge is required.	Dr Janet McHardy & Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm							16					
Creating the 'write' environment This workshop is designed to equip educators with a good understanding of the writing process and some key aspects of writing instruction, which will foster writing success for learners. No prior knowledge is required.	Dr Janet McHardy & Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm							23					
Literacy The LNAAT reading assessment This workshop explores the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (LNAAT) in the context of supporting learners' reading skills. Specifically, it covers how to interpret a learner's assessment results, and then know what to do to support the learner, and where to find resources. No prior knowledge is required.	Dr Janet McHardy & Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm							30					
Language, Literacy and Numeracy Development For the month of June, these workshops will provide practical skills and strategies for identifying priority learning areas, using assessment results, and designing targeted instruction.													
Numeracy in the workplace This workshop presents a research-informed process for planning and delivering numeracy in a workplace context. It draws on the Learning Progressions for Adult Numeracy, assessment, and Workplace LLN needs analysis.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm						9						
Workplace LLN The LNAAT assessments Assessment is the foundation of effective instructional practice. It informs both the educator and learner of the strengths the learner has, where they need support, how to plan for learning, and what activities will be most effective. This workshop covers how to read and interpret the LNAAT reports, how to design effective plans, target specific needs, and select suitable activities.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm						16						
Workplace LLN Reading and writing in the workplace This workshop answers the question: 'How do I support learners to read and write in the workplace?' It presents a range of workplace-oriented strategies that can be applied to almost any workplace training programme.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm						23						
Workplace LLN Needs analysis Conducting a Workplace Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) needs analysis is the cornerstone of an effective Workplace LLN programme. framework. In this workshop we will discuss a methodology for conducting a Workplace LLN needs analysis and developing a plan.	Dr Damon Whitten 12.10pm-1.00pm						30						

Facilitator

Workshop/Course title

Workshop/Course title	Facilitator	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Supporting Māori Learner Success For the month of September, these workshops will explore ways of embedding and applying te reo Māori and Māori values into your teaching practice.													
Embedding tatari (wait time) in your practice 'Tatari' is a traditional Māori concept and conversational skill meaning 'to wait' that also carries cultural protocols. Some of these cultural protocols will be shared during the workshop in real-time, small group situation.	Charmaine Tukua & Dr Mei Winitana 12.10pm-1.00pm									4			
Embedding wānanga (considered and respectful discussion) in your practice 'Wānanga' as a traditional Māori value and practice can mean a 'considered and respectful' form of discussion.	Charmaine Tukua & Dr Mei Winitana 12.10pm-1.00pm									11			
Embedding te reo Māori (the Maori language) in your practice In this workshop we will discuss some of the barriers that can exist and some practical strategies to incorporate te reo Māori in your practice.	Charmaine Tukua & Dr Mei Winitana 12.10pm-1.00pm									18			
Embedding wairuatanga (spirituality) in your practice 'Wairuatanga' (spirituality) is a traditional Māori value and practice that has evolved to include Christian forms of beliefs and practices. In this workshop, we will examine some of these to consider for use in our practice.	Charmaine Tukua & Dr Mei Winitana 12.10pm-1.00pm									25			

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Technology and Online Learning													
Engaging learners online Teaching through technology Explore and assess technology and resources that support enhanced teaching, learning and overall engagement.	James Oldfield 5.00-6.00pm		13, 20, 27				5, 12, 19						
Digital literacy During the month of November, learn practical skills to improve your cyber-security and build safer online environments for both you and your learners.													
Digital literacy The importance of cyber security in education This workshop introduces educators to the growing importance of cyber security within the education sector. You'll explore the current cyber threat landscape, including common attacks like phishing, ransomware, malware and data breaches, which are becoming more prevalent in tertiary organisations.	Michael Grawe 12.10pm-1.00pm											4	
Digital literacy Strengthening passwords and managing authentication In this workshop you'll learn how to create and manage strong, unique passwords for all your accounts. You will explore password management tools and be introduced to Two-Factor / Multi-Factor Authentication (2FA/MFA) and Single Sign-On (SSO).	Michael Grawe 12.10pm-1.00pm											11	
Digital literacy Phishing and social engineering threats This workshop will help you identify and avoid phishing attempts, including emails that attempt to steal sensitive information. Participants will review real-world examples of phishing emails and explore practical strategies for verifying the authenticity of emails and links.	Michael Grawe 12.10pm-1.00pm											18	
Digital literacy Data privacy, device security, and incident response In this workshop you will be introduced to the best practices for protecting sensitive learner data and securing their devices against cyber threats. You'll explore how to safely store and share sensitive information using encryption and cloud services, and how to secure your devices through strong passwords, encryption, software updates and the use of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs).	Michael Grawe 12.10pm-1.00pm											25	
Neurodiversity For the month of August, learn practical skills and strategies to help you better support neurodivergent learners.	1												
Autism	Rachel Wiltshire 12.10-1.00pm								5				
ADHD	Tracey Rountree 12.10pm-1.00 pm								20				
Dyslexia	Sarah Sharpe 12.10pm-1.00 pm								26				
Dyspraxia	Jacqui Scott 12.10-1.00pm								12				

Our facilitators

Our high-quality and evidence-based workshops are run by experts in their fields, including: Dr Althea Gamble Blakey (Alfie) has a passion for helping people work well together. Alfie researches transgender healthcare issues and owns a small business offering workplace

researches transgender healthcare issues and owns a small business offering workplace bullying intervention and support services.

Ashalyna Noa is a New Zealand-born Samoan currently working as Kaiārahi Pasifika with the UC Pacific Development Team and studying towards a PhD at the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies.

Catherine Delahunty is a writer, grassroots activist, and teacher of Te Tiriti o Waitangi workshops since 1988. While in Parliament she was spokesperson on education with a focus on adult education and Te Tiriti issues.

Charmaine Tukua has been a kaiwhakarite/pouako at Ara | Te Pūkenga for 20+ years. She has experience in Kaupapa Māori and adult education sectors as a pouako, curriculum developer, programme reviewer, researcher, and workshop facilitator.

Chrissie Butler is a UDL and inclusive design and practice specialist, passionate about the value inclusive design can bring to education and the workplace.

Christine Herzog has facilitated more than a thousand Treaty and related workshops for central and local government, large institutions, community groups, and the general public.

Dr Damon Whitten is a professional development specialist focusing on adult literacy and numeracy. He connects research to real-world contexts to develop effective teaching and learning approaches.

Daniel Tawhai is of Ngāti Porou and Ngāti Uepohatu descent. His masterate study examined secondary school HPE teachers, drawing upon Te Tiriti o Waitangi. He has previously guest-lectured and tutored at Massey University.

Darrin Bull is the chair of ADHD New Zealand. He advocates for better support for the ADHD community, as well as improving understanding and removing stigma.

Graeme Smith's work includes delivering professional development and training, as well as providing consulting and advisory work. His expertise includes literacy, numeracy, cultural capability, and the Tapatoru framework.

Jacqui Scott is the CEO and National Fieldworker of the Dyspraxia Support Group of NZ Inc. She is passionate and knowledgeable about Developmental Dyspraxia/Developmental Coordination Disorder.

James Oldfield is the Digital Learning Manager at United Institute of Technology. James provides leadership and strategic direction to United in matters relating to digital learning and teaching.

Dr Janet McHardy has extensive experience teaching, mentoring, and advising in adult literacy and numeracy, and vocational education. Her expertise includes reading skills with a focus on research-informed practice.

Jo Togiaso is a Samoan Southlander from Invercargill and has a background in ECE and Tertiary teaching, currently studying towards a PhD in Education.

Dr Lesley Petersen has over 30 years' experience in training and development in mentoring and evaluation research. She developed a mentoring model to support professional development and enhance leadership capabilities.

Dr Mei Winitana is Kaiwhakahaere Māori Cultural Capability at Ako Aotearoa. As an experienced researcher, resource developer and workshop facilitator, she works in several collaborative projects focusing on literacy, numeracy, and cultural capability.

Michael Few is a Learning Advisor with a focus on research, development, and implementation of change initiatives. His expertise includes culturally responsive pedagogy, assessment, and application of technology.

Michael Grawe is a Professional Learning and Development Consultant at Ako Aotearoa and the Professional Learning Manager for Pathways Awarua.

Mike Styles has worked in the areas of adult literacy, numeracy, and dyslexia for over 20 years. He specialises in supporting adults with dyslexia and advising organisations in matters of neurodiversity.

Pale Sauni is a senior Samoan educator who has delivered financial wellbeing workshops for over 15 years. He has insights on engaging with Pacific learning communities through understanding how money works.

Pauline Luafutu-Simpson is a Samoan Kiwi involved with the Christchurch Pasifika community over several years and has an enduring interest and passion in Pasifika education.

Rachel Wiltshire is an Advisor at Altogether Autism. She found out she was autistic when she was 12 and has been passionate about supporting other autistic people ever since.

Richard Green has been facilitating Te Tiriti courses since 2001 after completing a certificate of Treaty Education at MIT. He has facilitated courses for the education, arts, and health sectors, with a special interest in equity for school students.

Sarah Sharpe works as a Neurodiversity Consultant through her company 'Sharpe Minds'. She has facilitated professional development in both the education and private sectors.

Saylene Tanielu-Ulberg is a Pacific educator who specialises in how to better support Pacific learners. She contributed to the development of the Pacific Cultural Centredness Pathway tool.

Suzanne Cookson is the Chief Executive of ADHD New Zealand. Improving educational achievement for those with ADHD is a key focus for her.

Tracey Rountree is an ADHD coach, educator, and advocate with over a decade of experience facilitating workshops, a background in psychology, and lived experience as both a parent and adult with ADHD.

