2020 Awardee Profiles

Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards 2020
Celebrating outstanding educational leadership

Ngā Tohu Whakaako Whakahirahira 2020
E whakanui ana i te ārahitanga mātauranga whakahirahira
Ako Aotearoa has been managing the Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards since 2007 and we are immensely proud of the role we play in celebrating and sharing outstanding teaching and learning practice. In 2019 we modernised the brand to better reflect its position as a prestigious awards programme in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The dual lines inside the new logo’s koru shape are reflective of the Kaupapa Māori principle ‘Ako’ and its reciprocal relationship between the teacher and the learner. This also intentionally connects the new logo with the Ako Aotearoa brand, launched in November 2017.

The new strapline – celebrating outstanding educational leadership / E whakanui ana i te ārahitanga mātauranga whakahirahira – reflects Ako Aotearoa’s drive to widen the inclusivity and diversity of these awards; acknowledging that educational leadership involves teaching and training wherever it occurs across Aotearoa’s tertiary landscape.
Foreword

Tēnā koutou katoa

While 2020 is continuing to be a challenging year for us all, it is a pleasure to be able to share some great news and stories of teaching excellence. It is a real pleasure being part of an annual celebration – the 2020 national Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards (TTEA) – that highlights how much tertiary teachers contribute to the success of others; to their learners and ākonga, colleagues and organisations, and communities – local or global.

I am pleased to introduce this booklet that profiles the 2020 Awardees. The disciplines they represent are as diverse as ever; from sport and exercise science, medicine and nursing through to literature, ancient history, teacher education and Mātauranga Māori.

The journey towards making these awards more diverse and inclusive continues, and I thank Ako Aotearoa for leading this work. It is heartening to see such a high number of Kaupapa Māori Category awardees in this year’s group, and that one of them is also the recipient of the Prime Minister’s Supreme Award.

The 2020 Awardees have earned their place representing the very best of tertiary teaching practice in Aotearoa, and there are many more teachers and trainers like them who continue to deliver extraordinarily high levels of service to their learners and organisations. This includes past TTEA nominees who were not successful in their bid to win an award. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge them for their continued hard work and for being nominated by their institutions.

I finish with a big thank you to Ako Aotearoa and their unswaying commitment to managing these Awards since 2007. Prioritising the awards in a year where Covid-19 continues to test our mettle has not been easy but is a striking reminder to us all that excellent teaching is critical for how we succeed as a nation together.

Nāku noa, nā

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education
"We need to go beyond the concept of transformative learning within a Kaupapa Māori framework, and seek to transform educational curricula, educational institutions and the society in which they are embedded."

Rhys is a Māori public health physician and a Senior Lecturer in The University of Auckland’s Te Kupenga Hauora Māori (TKHM/Department of Māori Health). He has taught at the University since 2006 and, from 2011, has been TKHM’s Director of Teaching – Hauora Māori. This role involves leadership of Māori Health teaching and learning across the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences (FMHS). He leads strategic planning, Māori health curriculum development and implementation; and oversees broader curricula in FMHS programmes and capability building for Māori Health teaching and learning. His work extends into clinical programmes including Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy.

Rhys’s teaching and learning Kaupapa originates in the values and practices of Te Ao Māori, with core commitments to te reo and tikanga Māori. He sees teaching and learning within a Kaupapa Māori framework as inherently part of a wider struggle for decolonisation, Indigenous rights and social justice. He believes it must foster transformation, not just among learners, but ultimately within institutions, systems and structures. He says this requires educational environments that support dialogue, critique, empowerment and connection. Also, he believes that genuinely transformative education inspires learners to engage in the critical thinking and self-reflection that is vital for reforming organisations and systems in service of social justice.

"Transforming students’ learning experiences is an essential precursor to improving Māori health and achieving health equity."

Rhys believes that, given Aotearoa New Zealand’s colonial history and the many contemporary challenges faced by Māori seeking full expression of their human rights, a critical orientation is imperative. In Māori health, this means examining the root causes of social and health inequities through an Indigenous lens. To create a safe and effective learning environment, Rhys situates these discussions in the context of the wider sociological processes that shape individual beliefs and patterns of privilege and disadvantage. He believes that what students learn in the Māori health curriculum matters, and should be reinforced in the whole educational environment and beyond.

Rhys has developed and taught many undergraduate and postgraduate Māori Health courses and makes significant contributions to Māori Health components in other courses and programmes. His teaching style is collaborative and he deliberately positions himself as a learning facilitator rather than an information provider. He encourages open and uncensored engagement as he believes strongly in collective responsibility for learning and development.
He believes a primary goal of Kaupapa Māori health professional education is for learners to become ‘agents of change’, requiring critical awareness of systemic and structural factors perpetuating discrimination and intolerance. In his Becoming an agent of change in Māori health session for postgraduate Māori Health students, classes discuss tools for identifying their own biases and stereotypes, and for deconstructing problematic narratives.

In health professional education, students are frequently presented with information about the demography of disease with little, if any, attention given to factors such as racism, unequal distribution of social and economic resources, and health-care inequities. To counter this, Rhys has developed teaching and learning components that examine the complex factors contributing to ethnic health inequality. He is the academic lead for Māori Health Intensive, an interactive, four-day teaching and learning initiative involving over 500 students from five health professional programmes. This learning challenges superficial explanations for health inequities, and instead helps students understand how historical, social, political and structural factors powerfully shape Māori health outcomes.

Building a culturally safe health-sector workforce with a strong Māori presence is important to Rhys. In his advocacy role, he lectures at other universities, including the University of Otago, Massey University, and Auckland University of Technology. He has presented on the University’s curriculum innovations at: Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA); Tuia Te Ako; the Australia & New Zealand Association for Health Professional Educators (ANZAHPE); the Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME) network; the Pacific Region Indigenous Doctors’ Congress (PRIDoC); the Association for the Study of Medical Education (ASME); and the Association of Medical Education in Europe (AMEE). He is also frequently invited to give conference presentations on Indigenous health teaching and learning, such as keynote addresses for the LIME network, the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and ANZAHPE.

Rhys led the development of Te Ara, the common graduate profile in Hauora Māori, working with the directors of the Faculty’s four major undergraduate programmes to agree on a common set of learning outcomes – and saw it adopted in 2009. Prior to this, dedicated Māori Health learning in the medical programme consisted of two isolated blocks of teaching over the six-year programme, with no summative assessment of students’ achievement in the Hauora Māori domain. One of Rhys’s most significant achievements has been the development of a comprehensive assessment framework for the Hauora Māori domain, which is being phased in between 2017 and 2021. Now, medical students are required to demonstrate achievement of Māori Health learning outcomes in each year of the programme, independent of performance in other domains of learning.

Rhys is recognised nationally and internationally as a leader in Indigenous health education and research. In 2005–06, he was a Harkness Fellow in Health Care Policy based at Harvard Medical School in Boston, USA. In 2018, he received the FMHS Butland Award for Leadership in Teaching and, in 2019, the University of Auckland Teaching Excellence Award for Leadership in Teaching and Learning. He received the LIMElight Award for Leading Innovation in Curriculum Implementation in 2011 and for Excellence in Indigenous Health Education Research in 2019. He was International Lead Investigator of Educating for Equity, a multi-centre collaborative research project, resulting in Educating for Indigenous Health Equity: An International Consensus Statement, which was published in Academic Medicine, the world’s leading medical education journal (Jones et al, 2019).
"My teaching is about handing a korowai of inclusivity that celebrates diversity and that honours Māori as the Indigenous people of this whenua to the next generation of early childhood education (ECE) kaiako."

Yo feels fortunate to have been immersed in Kaupapa Māori and to have experienced the transformative potential of education when studying Māori education under Graham Hingangaroa Smith and Linda Tuhiaiw Smith at the University of Auckland in the 1980s. Those experiences inspired her own teaching praxis and focus on Kaupapa Māori. As an early childhood teacher educator, she is aware of the role she plays in shaping the next generation. She provides ākonga opportunities to think critically about societal issues by developing their capacity for reflection, questioning and engagement. It is important to her that early childhood teachers understand the power they have to make a difference as the critic and conscience of society, and how to use it positively. She uses mātauranga Māori as the vehicle to achieve this and is guided by Kaupapa Māori to ensure that Māori knowledge is respected.

Yo believes that ECE is a field of education that is under-valued in Aotearoa New Zealand and that teachers do not receive adequate recognition for the critical roles they play in supporting our future generations. Knowing that the greatest learning occurs in the early years of a child’s life, she works to reinforce the value of the profession, the view of tamariki as taonga, the impact teachers can have in children’s lives and why that carries with it a duty of care. Her pedagogy incorporates a range of Māori values, including manaaki tangata, whakamana, aroha, and whanaungatanga. She models the application of these values in her practice so that ākonga in the initial teacher education programme have examples of ways to build respectful relationships with whānau and community, based on tikanga.

Her key teaching role is to support the development and implementation of mātauranga Māori across all courses in Unitec Institute of Technology’s Bachelor of Teaching (ECE) programme. Her courses are carefully staged to scaffold ākonga knowledge of how to plan, implement, evaluate, and improve on the incorporation of te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori in practice. The first year course Te Kete Manaaki Tangata provides an introduction to oral skills in te reo Māori and develops understandings of manaaki tangata. In the second year kete, Te Kete Manaaki Whenua, ākonga critically consider Māori approaches to the environment. They experience how engaging children with resources in their natural environment nurtures their creativity, intuition, energy and imagination, and develops their relationship with Papatūānuku. She designed the final year kete, Te Kete Manaaki Taonga, to provide leadership opportunities for ākonga who are about to graduate as fully qualified teachers.

"The arts sets people free! By incorporating culturally appropriate pedagogies I promote tikanga connected with our cultural taonga so that ākonga gain insights into their roles as teachers in helping to preserve and respect mātauranga Māori."
As she is always mindful that she is preparing teachers with varying understandings of te ao Māori to work with under-5-year-olds, Yō introduces a range of language strategies, including waiata korikori, so ākonga gain knowledge and appropriate examples for working with tamariki from a range of cultures, including Māori. Her own background in kapa haka guides her approach to preserving the depth of this art form as a taonga to be passed on to the next generation. In 2018, Yō won a Unitec Staff individual award for Excellence in Teaching Kaupapa Māori, honouring her innovation and development of these three courses in the Bachelor of Teaching programme. In 2019, she was a member of the winning team awarded a Unitec Staff team award for Excellence in Teaching Kaupapa Māori.

Between 2014 and 2016, Yō was involved in Te Kura Whānui, a digital learning transformation project at Unitec, contributing to the development of mātauranga Māori in eLearning spaces. She also supported the development and delivery of mātauranga Māori across a range of disciplines including nursing, sports, ECE, health and social development, osteopathy, and medical imaging. Yō continued her leadership in Kaupapa Māori across disciplines when ECE became part of a Community Development Network between 2017-2019. She is currently Kaārahi across the School of Community Studies in addition to her senior lecturer role in ECE and supports their capability to embed Te Noho Kotahitanga and champion their Māori Success Strategy. As well, she coordinates wānanga for staff, which provides opportunities for reflection and a chance to show how Te Noho Kotahitanga is a guiding light, particularly during their transition through the upcoming Review of Vocational Education (ROVE).

"Toi tu te kupu, toi tu te mana, toi tu te whenua. This whakatauaki, handed down by Wanganui tūpuna, Tinirau, reminds us to hold fast to our land, our culture, our language, and our mana as Māori. This is at the heart of how and why I teach."

Yō acknowledges the leadership of the Pae ārahi, Matua Hare Paniora, who has walked alongside her for the last 20 years, supporting the advancement of mātauranga Māori, role-modelling tikanga to staff and ākonga. Matua Hare supported Yō and colleague Nicole Job to write the ECE karakia Te Noho Kotahitanga, a karakia which has gained traction in the wider institute. It is used in a number of other contexts, including professional learning and leadership. A further initiative of Yō’s was to establish Te Whare Tāpere, a culturally relevant teaching and learning space, used solely for the delivery of mātauranga Māori in the ECE programme.

Central to whanaungatanga in Yō's practice is a commitment to honouring people's whakapapa, validating culture and identity. Her classes provide time and space for all ākonga to speak of their traditions, landmarks and origins. She also works alongside colleagues, enhancing immersion learning for ECE ākonga. These relationships have resulted in an impressive academic output, promoting Unitec's vision for partnership between Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti. Yō plays an active role supporting partnership with Associate Teachers in the BTch ECE programme and is committed to supporting Māori aspirations in Early Childhood Education. In 2014 she was commissioned to write a literature review to support the development of a te reo Māori strategy at her local puna reo. She has developed a range of successful academic support systems within her programme and utilises tuakana-teina, scaffolding students to develop leadership qualities and confidence as professionals in their field.
“The kaupapa matua is the central purpose of why we’re here – in this class, and in the world, and that is mauri ora. Mauri ora is flourishing wellness.”

Anne-Marie's late Māori mum and Pākehā dad never finished high school. They worked hard as a shed hand and shearer respectively. Her Mum dreamed of educational opportunities for her children and would frequently be heard saying “I love those Physedders – they’ve got a lot of life about them”. Now, at the University of Otago, Anne-Marie co-leads the only stand-alone Māori curriculum in sciences at undergraduate and postgraduate level. For her, the values of Kaupapa Māori stem from who she is as a person, and how she was brought up. At the centre of Kaupapa Māori is whānau.

Anne-Marie's students are unique - they are physical education (PE) students. Many are dominant in a kinaesthetic learning style, so they learn by doing. She says they often have a strong sporting or physical activity background, they like to be challenged, and relish opportunities to be pushed outside their comfort zone. They are confident and energetic, like to lead, but also thrive in group situations. Anne-Marie normally has 15-20% Māori students in her classes, so ensures their mana is intact, recognising there are multiple valid understandings of what it means to be Māori.

Anne-Marie has led the development and delivery of eight Kaupapa Māori academic papers from 100 level to postgraduate study in Māori PE and health. She has published (Jackson, Hakopa, & Jackson, 2017; Jackson et al., 2015) on her teaching and has been invited to lead professional development activities, review external providers, teach in other departments, and deliver teaching and training opportunities for iwi, hapū, whānau and community organisations in English and te reo Māori. She has supervised and co-supervised over 65 students (90% Māori) to completion from undergraduate community placements, internships, masters and PhDs. Her postgraduate students receive an average examined grade of A and her first lead supervised PhD thesis was awarded exceptional thesis status in sciences. Her students, under her mentorship, have presented more than 30 papers at international conferences, won awards, competitive scholarships (Health Research Council, Brain Research New Zealand, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga), internships and research funding. This work was profiled in the world's leading multidisciplinary science journal Nature.

The journey of Anne-Marie's students to graduate from Te Koronga as doctoral students begins in the undergraduate curriculum. She uses an overarching poutama (staircase) curriculum design and, within that, teaches specific papers based on her own tribal philosophy. Within these papers, she creates opportunities for students to explore theory and research. The poutama relating to Anne-Marie's Māori PE and

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1 Te Koronga comprises two parts: Graduate research excellence and an Indigenous Science Research Theme.
health curriculum goes from comfort (first year), and content (second year), to application (third year). The curriculum has included around 37 noho marae (stays at traditional Māori meeting houses) for experiential learning and is critical for PE students.

Anne-Marie structures each course on a Ngāpuhi creation genealogy. For example, in her large (approximately 80–100 students) early stage class, she draws upon Te Korekore (the world of potential being), Te Pō (the world of becoming) and Te Ao Mārama (the world of being) to inform the three sections of the course. All of her papers have a significant group research project, which includes a written report and an oral component, such as a research presentation or poster.

"Noho and wānanga are critical for us – this is where the magic happens. For us as physical educators, where theory and practice intersect is pure beauty – it’s where time stands still, it’s where our students live in the moment being their true authentic selves."

Anne-Marie leads noho marae and wānanga for all levels of the curriculum. The aim is to provide Te Ao Mārama or ‘lightbulb’ moments for students through application, nurturing their mauri and mana. This aligns with the praxis elements of Kaupapa Māori and favours kinaesthetic, experiential and affective learners. Relationships are critical in noho marae. Because students are high energy, and their discipline is Māori physical education and health, the context they operate within leads to an action-packed few days. The classes work alongside the local marae, Puketeraki and Arai Te Uru, with support from Te Whare Tū Taua o Ōtepoti (School of Māori weaponry), Hauteruru ki Puketeraki (hapū led waka club), Fire in Ice Waka Club (Otago Harbour based waka club), Coastguard Boating Education, Ministry of Primary Industries and Water Safety New Zealand (for in-water survival and training). These are relationships Anne-Marie has fostered over many years. On the marae, Anne-Marie is in charge of tikanga on behalf of her classes to ensure all are safe spiritually.

Anne-Marie creates opportunities for students to explore their own identity and worldview in all of her teaching. She encourages them to express who they are and where they are from, so that they can create whanaungatanga (relationship) bonds with her and community members around them. She teaches with mana, which means to show kindness to the students, and creates an āhuri mōwai for the students to be themselves and to be comfortable in their identity. This recognises that, first and foremost, they are students, and in a learning environment. She relates the learning process to Ngāpuhi philosophy, which provides an environment where the strengths and potential of each student is recognised and valued.

For teaching excellence, Anne-Marie has won divisional, University-wide and national awards. She and her Te Koronga team were awarded the University of Otago Division of Sciences Māori/Pacific Content Innovation in Teaching Award in 2015 and 2017. In 2016, she was awarded the Otago University Students’ Association Division of Sciences Supervisor of the Year and was supreme winner of Supervisor of the Year. In 2019, she was awarded the University of Otago Kaupapa Māori Teaching Award and the Royal Society Te Apārangi Te Kōpūnui Māori Research Award for her leadership in graduate student excellence. Her innovations include a new paper focusing on Māori community internships for creating internships for students with local Māori organisations.

“I will provide you an āhuri mōwai – a safe harbour. I will grow your tumu – your mooring posts, for you to always come back to. I will nurture your mauri – your spark – your mana – your uniqueness. I will help you carve out your own waka. So that when you leave this class, you can lead a life of mauri ora, of flourishing wellness and share that mauri ora with everyone around you.”
“I made the choice to learn te reo Māori. I love it and will always be a learner. I love teaching the history of our land and seeing a spark in those I teach from connecting with language, culture and identity.”

Kay-Lee’s father grew up in a small town on the East Coast of the North Island and was the first Māori Fire Fighter in Ōtautahi (Christchurch), a great achievement. He and his whānau had a great affinity with the land but, like many others at the time, his parents refrained from speaking Māori in the home. Kay-Lee grew up hearing the odd Māori word or phrase (generally pertaining to kai), but te reo Māori was not a normalised language. Kay-Lee’s mother, whose whakapapa descends from the bottom of Te Waipounamu (South Island), has whakapapa Māori, but she was not raised with cultural knowledge, nor was this talked about in her upbringing. Both of Kay-Lee’s parents taught her values and ways of being that inspire her as a kaiako today. Her mother’s tautoko, akiaki and high expectations gave Kay-Lee the confidence to continue her learning as well as a passion for transferring this love for learning to her trainee kaiako. Her father taught her the importance of whānau and to work hard.

“My goal is to empower pre-service kaiako with the tools to inspire our tamariki to speak our ancestral language and understand that our Indigenous knowledge is precious.”

After completing her undergraduate degree, Kay-Lee taught at a range of kura, including a rural, bilingual school. She loved the tamariki and knew their whānau, interests and passions. Kay-Lee made the difficult decision to leave the primary school classroom to achieve the bigger goal of returning to tertiary teaching, with the hope of inspiring future kaiako to demonstrate a genuine heart for te ao Māori and normalise te reo Māori me ōna tikanga in their practice. Now, as a lecturer in the College of Education, Health and Human Development at the University of Canterbury, she shares her experiences in Māori education, fostering a passion to grow knowledge within te ao Māori, which relates to the whakataukī Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai, “nurture the seed and it will blossom”.

In 2010, Kay-Lee taught in the School of Māori and Indigenous Studies at the University of Canterbury. She then returned to the primary school setting as a teacher and deputy principal. In 2015, she completed a Master of Education degree and resumed tertiary teaching. During her time within the School of Teacher Education she has taught in a number of programmes and courses, interacting with approximately 2,000 students, teaching either face-to-face or online. She says Māori often seek places and spaces in which they feel a certain wairua, where they feel comfortable and can seek guidance, and this is what she aims to provide for her ākonga. She wants non-Māori teacher trainees to consider how to create culturally rich spaces for the tamariki they will teach, with her there to tautoko.

Each year, Kay-Lee helps to facilitate numerous noho marae for her Bachelor of Teaching and Learning and Post Graduate programmes. She organises activities that help to build students’ confidence and
understanding of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga whilst fostering a sense of whanaungatanga. This year she has co-facilitated three noho marae, benefiting more than 80 students. She believes the teaching and enactment of tikanga Māori and te reo Māori in the right space and place cannot be replicated with the same authenticity in the classroom. She says noho marae is a transformative experience where a majority of her students are well out of their comfort zones. To help ease their minds, she often shares personal stories and experiences within te ao Māori. She also reminds them that they are all on the same waka, all tuākana or tēina in different situations and roles and that we are all learning.

Kay-Lee uses innovative techniques to engage learners in communicative language learning experiences. When teaching te reo Māori courses, she says it is essential to intertwine aspects of culture, tradition and mātauranga Māori. By doing this, she immerses her students into a truly integrated learning experience. She embeds different traditional Māori ways of knowing, such as the Maramataka (Māori lunar calendar), in her programme and shows her ākonga how they might use traditional pedagogies in their teaching. This is an area of interest for Kay-Lee and, she admits, she is on her own journey of learning in regard to traditional ways of knowing, being, and doing.

Kay-Lee’s approach to leadership is based upon ‘he tangata māhaki’ and incorporates a sense of humbleness, humility, service, knowledge sharing and tautoko. It is about first getting to know people and their whakapapa and then understanding what is important to them and their whānau. Her role includes setting high expectations and aiding goal setting. Kay-Lee herself has a strong work ethic and has high expectations of her teaching, which includes ongoing reflective practice.

Around 10% of kaiako in Aotearoa are Māori, and an even lower percentage are school principals with whakapapa Māori, and Kay-Lee is aware of the need to equip teachers in the New Zealand education system with the ability to embed Māori worldview, te reo Māori, culture and traditions, in the curriculum. This year, she led the development of a suite of pilot courses in collaboration with a Ngāi Tahu Rūnanga partner Mātauraka Mahaanui to strengthen te reo Māori me ōna tikanga competence and confidence of qualified kaiako. “It is a privilege to teach and learn alongside mana whenua.” The courses are delivered in night classes, wānanga and noho marae. All assessments reflect a practical element with transferrable skills for the classroom.

Kay-Lee mentions that there are further challenges in regards to teaching te reo Māori and Māori concepts by distance. In an online medium, whanaungatanga and manaakitanga of your ākonga is just as important as kanohi ki te kanohi. You have to be creative, innovative and engage the students through real-time Zoom hui, Zoom recordings, guided PowerPoint slides to support Zoom sessions, Learn, online quizzes, Education Perfect (a language learning tool), podcasts, videos and websites.

In 2017, Kay-Lee completed a Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts. As a former kaihaka for Te Pao a Tahu, she enhanced her understanding of kapa haka and also deepened her language proficiency. She started doctoral study in 2017 and is in her fourth year, exploring the stories of teachers in Level 2 Māori immersion programmes. She has won teaching honours, including University of Canterbury, College of Education, Health and Human Development Teaching Excellence Awards in 2017 and 2019. She sits on the New Zealand Association for Research in Education Council and was on the organising committee for their 2019 Conference. At the 2019 IndiGEN Conference, Kay-Lee co-presented a paper on a bilingual pathway at the University of Canterbury and co-facilitated interactive activities emphasising the importance of sharing Indigenous knowledge. Outside of university, Kay-Lee sits on the Board of Trustees/Te Tautarinui o Matariki for Te Pā o Rākaihautū, a 21st century learning village catering for early childhood to tertiary education, this is the pā her three tamariki, Wi, Cina-Rose and Hawaiki attend. They are her taonga, her ‘why’.

“All of our tamariki, mokopuna are a taonga, as kaiako we need to keep this at the forefront of our minds. We (as parents) entrust our most precious taonga with kaiako and this is a message I try to portray to our pre-service teachers. In supporting our teacher trainees I recognise that all students come with their own kete of knowledge. I aim to add to that kete, and they to mine.”
"Our students come to us with a very diverse range of experiences. My role is to create space for all of those experiences to be valued and recognised."

Awanui’s teaching and research, guided by her psychology background and underpinned by Kaupapa Māori methods, is driven by a strong desire to understand her students’ learning processes. Her research (published in journals nationally and internationally) is strongly focused on the experiences of both Māori and Pākehā learners of te reo Māori and their varying learning needs and challenges. She uses the understandings she gains from research to adapt teaching practices to fit with what learners find useful for Māori language acquisition.

As a Kaupapa Māori educator, she thinks critically about the environments she is consciously a part of creating and ensures that manaakitanga and aroha ki te tangata are central pillars of her teaching practice. She is encouraged by the way her tauira (students) are able to overcome challenges, such as the accumulative impacts of colonisation, to reach their educational, cultural, and linguistic goals. Part of her role involves assisting Māori students to negate feelings of guilt and shame that they feel for not knowing more about their cultural heritage prior to enrolment.

"Practising Kaupapa Māori requires that I invite students to regain control over areas of their academic, social and cultural lives to create a narrative that is aligned with their goals."

Awanui says her own and other Māori research indicates that many Māori students enrolling in te reo Māori classes want to avoid showing incompetence at learning their own language and culture, particularly in tikanga marae-related courses. She encourages them to think critically about how such colonially influenced circumstances came to be and seeks to understand the socio-political and economic constraints her students may be experiencing, without limiting her expectations of them. Awanui uses models of tuakana-teina to bridge the gap between students with high levels of cultural/linguistic exposure and those who may be closer to the beginning of their learning journeys. Students bring with them multiple skills and, when these resources are shared, positive benefits can occur.

The papers Awanui teaches and co-ordinates have a strong focus on mātauranga Māori and mātauranga ā iwi. Te Tū Marae, a course she has co-coordinated and team taught for 5 years with Dr Mike Ross, involves supporting students to understand tikanga related to marae, hui ora and hui tangata mate and the impending challenges that marae are facing. It enables students to explore how tikanga are employed within their own marae, as well as learning how they are embedded in the university marae’s practices. Awanui’s research project with Tohu Māoritanga found that some students needed more support to deal with the new learnings
In Te Tohu Māoritanga, Awanui uses a number of practical activities, such as role-play and facilitated discussions, so that students develop confidence in their skills. Drawing out humour and wit that students bring with them to the learning environment are also used to communicate complex discussion points. Students are given experiential learning opportunities, such as active engagement in karanga, and are supported in this. Awanui gives individual coaching, allowing students to practise in a culturally safe space, taking into account their different levels of confidence. At a postgraduate level, she encourages students to reconnect with their mātauranga-ā-iwi by teaching Māori research methods, which also allows her to combine research knowledge with teaching.

Most of the courses Awanui teaches are at the foundation level as te reo Māori is both her teaching specialty area and her research focus. Since she began teaching te reo Māori, the university has seen almost a 100% increase in enrolments, from 120 to 220 students enrolled at the introductory level. She has adapted technologies to suit these classes, and focuses on interpersonal relationship development through a range of student-led interaction activities. Because there are limited resources for teaching specific grammatical structures in Māori, she supervised the development and refinement of targeted audio language resources, coupled with listening comprehension questions and an answer booklet. Students can remotely access Quizlet revision tasks for every lesson, which has improved their ability to retain new vocabulary and sentence structures. Awanui was awarded a Learning and Teaching Grant to evaluate the effectiveness of the Quizlet tools between 2019-2020. She also finds using mātauranga Māori through waiata has been an effective teaching tool. In response to feedback from students who found language assessments overwhelming, Awanui introduced the option of students creating short films.

Awanui believes whanaungatanga and feeling a sense of connection with other students and teaching staff helps give tauira a sense of belonging at university and in their courses and that holding noho marae encourages students to foster close relationships with one another.

As a collaborative academic, Awanui has been an external post-graduate essay examiner for Margaret Mutu's course MĀORI 732 Rangatiratanga since 2018 and also invites other teachers to view her teaching through the Open Classrooms series. As a PhD graduate of psychology, she is often called upon by the School of Psychology to support their clinical teaching programme, teach in their social and Indigenous psychology courses, and liaise with management about their Māori academic recruitment. She has also co-supervised two psychology based PhDs.

Awanui was a co-coordinator of MAI ki Pōneke, a Māori and Indigenous PhD support programme between 2013 and 2016 and continues to support MAI. Since 2015, she has supervised 11 post-graduate students, from honours through to PhD, as well as providing summer internships for five students. In 2016, she was awarded an Early Career Teaching Award. Not only does Awanui give substantial support to post-graduate students, but she provides high levels of pastoral care to second-chance learners. Her impressive list of publications, written in both English and te reo, demonstrate the impact of her novel teaching approaches.

"Creating mana enhancing environments that are fostered through manaakitanga helps learners to progress to higher levels of Māori language proficiency."
"Learning is deeply personal. Students acquire knowledge best when teaching is tailored to their specific requirements. I put students at the centre of my teaching and connect with them as distinct individuals."

Having grown up in India, Anuj’s desire to help people led him to teaching. After starting as a medical teaching fellow at the University of Otago, he joined the University of Auckland’s Physiology department in 2005. Having faced challenges during his own medical degree, he enjoys creating positive learning experiences for his students. The rich diversity of his students has inspired his teaching framework. He teaches Māori, Pasifika and international students, for whom English is often their second language. Many are the first in their family to attend a tertiary education provider. Outside the classroom, he connects his students with industry contacts and shares ideas about learning and teaching with his peers.

“Mastering these ideas rewards them with a new level of lifelong knowledge. ‘Oh, I get it now!’ moments drive my teaching and my search for innovative teaching methods.”

Anuj teaches physiology to around 800 second and third-year Medical and Bachelor of Science students in large lecture, small group and laboratory settings. Whatever the setting, he gives each student his respect and attention. His holistic teaching philosophy develops students, initially focused on memorisation and comprehension, into independent learners who can synthesise, communicate and effectively apply their disciplinary knowledge. He sees physiology as a cornerstone subject for understanding medicine. As it relies on abstract concepts, which can be difficult for students to grasp, he uses real-life examples to demonstrate physiological principals at work, enabling students to contextualise and substantiate ideas. He says superficial, rote learning is inadequate in physiology, which requires a deep understanding of key concepts.

By providing personal support, guidance and extensive feedback, Anuj enables his students to build confidence in core understandings, from which they can explore and take ownership of their learning. He has developed and implemented blended or hybrid learning strategies which respond to students’ diverse learning styles. As well as using real-world examples for context, he promotes an interactive learning environment by encouraging student dialogue during lectures and draws on the student-centred model of constructivism, where the learner interacts with experience and environment to construct knowledge. Anuj supports critical inquiry in his students and develops assignments which give them a sense of the detail and depth involved in scientific research. He provides opportunities for self-reflection and peer review of fellow students’ work which further enriches their learning. His informal communications with students provide the impetus for many of his educational initiatives, such as an interactive online discussion board, ‘Piazza; for ‘virtual office hours’. 
In order to better understand his students’ different learning strategies, Anuj began using a short questionnaire (Biggs, 1999a) in 2007 to determine whether his students had previously perceived themselves as superficial or deep strategists. He then offered a consultation to identify the learning strategies they needed, a process which also encouraged self-reflection. Anuj has increasingly employed case-based learning strategies in his practical laboratory sessions and lectures, encouraging learners to take responsibility for their own learning and apply concepts to practice.

Anuj has won several Faculty awards for his dedication to teaching and his leadership in innovation. These have recognised his commitment to small-group learning, the development of teaching programmes for Māori and Pacific medical and science students, as well as outreach to these communities in high schools, and the development of digital resources. In order to shift from a teacher-centred approach to a student-centred learning environment, Anuj complemented traditional class time with online materials. Using “KuraCloud”, an on-line platform, he made previews of laboratory sessions available, overcoming many of the difficulties of lengthy clinical laboratory sessions.

As the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences (FMHS) contains a significant number of students from diverse backgrounds with diverse learning needs as well as high-achieving students, Anuj delivers information in flexible ways. He supports the Māori and Pasifika Admission Scheme and the Faculty’s Vision 20:20 objective of increasing the proportion of Māori and Pacific health professionals to 10% of the health workforce by 2020. He is an active participant in the Whakapiki Ake Project – an outreach and recruitment programme that engages with rangatahi (youth) Māori enrolled in secondary schools. In 2016, he initiated the Manaaki academic support programme to provide academic support for Year Two and Three Māori and Pasifika students, also providing leadership opportunities for many students.

To foster a supportive community of learners, Anuj worked with students to establish the Student Association for the Medical Sciences (SAMS), which has helped him organise career events and student mental wellbeing initiatives. Since 2009, he has designed and organised School of Medical Sciences professional development events, careers expos and networking events to connect BSc students with industry contacts. He also developed a demonstrators’ training programme in 2008.

Anuj works in collaboration with his colleagues, inspiring and empowering them to refine their teaching strategies, such as online tools for students, which allow prior access to teaching content and provide help with lab reports and literature reviews. He has contributed to the Business School’s Learn, Do, Share and other university-wide teaching seminars as well as being a long-term contributor to CLeaR’s Learning Catalyst induction workshops. He has worked with colleagues on design thinking implementation and cloud-based learning within their respective teaching spaces and formally empowers his peers through the FMHS Teaching and Learning Community (TLC) professional development sessions.

Over the last fourteen years Anuj has embraced the challenges of stimulating enthusiasm in students for physiology, and identifying pedagogical and social strategies to sustain students’ curiosity in the subject. He has focused on holistic learning initiatives that prepare students for life-long learning.

“Student voices are my inspiration for developing Auaha (creative approaches) and for creating Wānanga (creative spaces) within my teaching domain.”
"Effective learning outcomes achieved through reflective storytelling techniques provide a fertile base for deeper critical thinking."

Josie inherited the gift of storytelling from her grandfather, Alfred Crawley, who presented stories as an intriguing cache of possibilities and a way of considering multiple points of view. Learning that the story is as important to human beings as science has influenced her career path in nursing and education and now underpins her teaching practice.

Starting as a registered nurse, practising in community settings, Josie later completed a Bachelor of Arts, then a Masters in Education, while teaching prisoners, parents with intellectual disabilities; and facilitating listening courses. In 1994, she became National Education Advisor for the Royal NZ Plunket Society and for the next six years focused on community development, planning and coordinating education for volunteers, Plunket Nurses, Kaiāwhina and fieldworkers. She joined the Otago Polytechnic School of Nursing in 2000, where she works as a Principal Lecturer. Her teaching responsibilities have encompassed more than 20 courses and 3 curricula. She has a postgraduate certificate in tertiary teaching and a certificate in Mata a Ao Māori. As well as her regular teaching, she guest lectures at the University of Otago (Physiotherapy and Health Sciences) and facilitates sessions for community groups.

"Valued within the school for my narrative approach to nursing education, one of my key roles is to develop compassionate nurses."

Josie’s philosophy stems from reflecting on and learning from her experience and practice as a registered nurse, counsellor, lecturer and nurse educator. She regards stories as potentially transformative teaching tools, and seeks and responds to feedback from students, colleagues and stakeholders. Her respect for individuals and concern for their success drives her to construct learning environments that enable her students to gain confidence, skills and knowledge, take increased responsibility for their education and achieve their highest potential.

Josie believes that caring partnerships are crucial in nurse education and that, in forming professional relationships with clients, students must practise empathy and compassion through listening and responsive practice. She creates and adapts narrative teaching strategies that encourage reflective awareness and draws on students’ learning stories, client narratives and clinical experiences to facilitate this. She co-negotiates paths of learning for individual students and assists them to achieve the national nursing standards and reach their personal potential.

In partnership with students and industry nurses (preceptors), Josie facilitates personal, theoretical and clinical learning. Her teaching context is shaped by concentric influencing circles of curricula, Nursing Council, Ministry of Health, client and industry bodies. Using narrative methodologies, she assists students to acknowledge and value their cultural backgrounds, develop new knowledge and ways of thinking and
adopt a critical approach to their practice. Often the stories she shares resonate with individual students, resulting in interventions that enhance personal and professional growth. Whatever the setting, Josie employs teaching strategies that actively involve the students in the learning process, such as the use of Brechtian interactive roleplays, props and children’s picture books. Josie pioneered the use of the latter as a teaching tool in nursing and has been published internationally since 2009. Josie uses a toolbox of quick useful methods to gain informal feedback from students, which includes Feedback Sandwich (positive comment, growth, positive comment), Body Language (to detect confusion, engagement), and Stop, Start and Continue (students leave feedback at end of class, which she responds to online).

Josie scaffolds learning to best prepare student nurses to enter the profession and make positive differences in the health sector. Her first-year students’ exposure to professional nursing roles and multiple theories is supplemented by an introductory clinical opportunity which Josie originally designed and developed. One of the students’ tasks during their practicum is to ascertain clients’ stories through thoughtful questioning. Students were provided with a week-by-week programme to support their clinical activities, enabling them to integrate key frameworks with clinical experience.

“CHASE sparks students’ individual passions. Learning in action fosters student confidence and promotes effective outcomes for community health.”

In 2013, the pressure on community nursing placements made it unsustainable to retain in both year two and three of the degree. In response, Josie co-developed the CHASE Model (Community Health Assessment for Sustainable Education). She adapted community development theories and established an ethical and sustainable process of partnering with Kaitohutohu (iwi representative), as well as designing an explicit teacher/learner ethical framework for CHASE. After being trialled and fine-tuned for three years, the current version of CHASE was published in 2017. The model is now used by students working with communities in Vanuatu and Bishop’s Castle, Shropshire, Great Britain. It is also used in a Texas School of Nursing.

In 2010, Josie was awarded an Otago Polytechnic Teaching Excellence award and, last year, received an invitation to speak in Swansea, Wales, at an international conference on storytelling in health. Her teaching strategies using children’s picture books, poetry and reflective learning have been used to build empathy in student-nurses in Britain, South America, Canada, areas of the United States and the Philippines. Since 2012, she has mentored many lecturers and has worked with a new academic to research ePortfolio platforms. The findings of this research have been published and her Nursing School was the first in New Zealand to incorporate this technology into an undergraduate nursing degree.

Josie has delivered 21 peer refereed presentations at national or international conferences and published 17 peer reviewed articles and chapters in education and nursing publications on the use of narratives, reflective processes, the CHASE model, empathy in practice, flexible learning strategies and rural nurse context in Aotearoa New Zealand. In 2019, she co-edited Stories of Rural Nursing in Aotearoa: A landscape of care which has been distributed to nurse education facilities throughout NZ and requested by several overseas health humanities centres.

“I select storytelling strategies and processes that are designed to deepen students’ thinking, encourage them to listen to other perspectives, relate content to clinical contexts, and fuse their learning across courses.”
“I feel privileged to teach subjects that I am passionate about to enthusiastic students from whom I learn so much. I am deeply committed to bringing knowledge of the ancient Greek and Roman world to students in Aotearoa New Zealand, while celebrating how their unique knowledge and approach sheds new light on this ancient material.”

A senior lecturer in classics and ancient history at the University of Auckland, Maxine keeps three key premises at the front of her teaching practices. They are: education must be meaningful, equitable and accessible; teaching should respond to individual students; and self-reflection and continual professional development are crucial.

Maxine began teaching the history, culture and languages of ancient Greece and Rome at the University of Sydney in 2007. Since joining the University of Auckland in 2012, she has regularly taught six courses a year, spanning both language and history. She teaches a wide range of students, from first-year undergraduates to Masters students and has created new courses with content taken from her academic research. She has radically revised existing courses and taken a leadership role in curriculum planning in her department. She also co-teaches and coordinates team teaching, highlights of which were co-teaching Study Abroad courses in Rome with Associate Professor Jeremy Armstrong (2014, 2017, 2020) and working with the Ako Arts team to deliver a Classics course within a Māori pedagogical framework, for which her team won a Faculty of Arts Staff Excellence Award for Rangatiratanga (2019). In 2016, she won a Faculty of Arts Teaching Excellence Award.

In her large lecture courses, Maxine’s te reo pepeha is the first step of many that she takes to bring te ao Māori into a disciplinary space more often associated with European culture. It signals her respect for tangata whenua and their understandings of the world. She shows how Māori worldviews can help scholars navigate ancient Greek and Roman mythology and culture. With new Latin cohorts, she uses a Latin introduction as, like the pepeha, sharing important aspects of her life connects her authentically with the students.

Maxine is passionate about making ancient Greek and Roman material accessible and uses multiple techniques to show students how we can decolonise Classical Studies. She includes marginalised voices from Ancient Greece and Rome by teaching sources produced by women, slaves, ethnic minorities and those with transgressive sexual identities. She teaches students about the histories of the discipline, asking them to consider how knowledge is produced, shared and used, and its historical effect. During their Study Abroad course in Rome, as well as visiting classical sites, Maxine and her co-teacher, Jeremy investigated sites that Mussolini created, showing students how Ancient Roman architecture, language and iconography were used to try to legitimize fascism.
Maxine adopts specific teaching practices to create a welcoming tauhi vā, a space among the participants, and tailors these to the particular course. The Study Abroad course in Rome requires almost a month of intensive teaching and round-the-clock pastoral care. Extra-curricular activities may include ancient Rome-themed games or informal, spoken ‘Latin clubs’. On campus, all her classes are interactive, regardless of size. She learns students’ names, regularly invites comments and thanks students who bring questions. After posing her own questions to classes, she gets students into small groups to workshop their responses and circulates between these. When the students share their ideas with the whole group, the class hears a range of voices.

To create a safe learning environment for at-risk students, such as LGBTQI youth, Maxine teaches Greco-Roman texts that depict same-sex desire and fluid gender practices. In 2014, she published a book chapter on how to foster trans- and intersex inclusivity when teaching Latin. As a proponent of diversity and equity in education, she focuses on providing manaakitanga for Māori and Pasifika students.

In 2018, Maxine was invited to take leadership of her department’s biggest course, Classical Mythology. After seeking advice, she came up with a new Ako-based version of the course for Semester 1, 2019. She themed the course around orality, oral traditions and the functions of myths, including transmitting genealogy/whakapapa, knowing that these elements resonated with Māori and Pasifika students. The ako framework led students to excel in achieving the course’s learning outcomes, especially those relating to oral and written communication, and Māori and Pasifika performed extremely well. A vocal advocate for Ako Arts, she has disseminated her teaching strategies, mentoring colleagues one-to-one in History and Classics, and running an ako training session at the School of Humanities’ planning day.

“I encourage them to think beyond grades, to the way that learning a language opens new worlds for us that we can explore our whole lives.”

Whilst many of Maxine’s students are initially focused on achieving “A” grades, she considers real success is embedding a language in one’s life so that it has ongoing personal meaning and relevance and ensures it isn’t forgotten. To this end, she develops a relationship with each student and gives them individual help. This may be help with translating a modern song into Ancient Greek, sourcing Latin videos and podcasts, or giving a bonus tutorial in Medieval Latin to inspire further reading.

Maxine tailors her teaching methods to fit individual students and student cohorts, for example, teaching Ancient Greek. To cater for the variance of students’ learning styles, she created a suite of audio and audio-visual materials. She also offers a range of techniques students can use to learn vocabulary, such as online self-testing sites, flash-cards, listening to her recordings and videos or learning words in context.

Learning languages is a vital part of Maxine’s professional development and helps her understand people and their culture. In 2014 she started learning Italian, to better facilitate her Study Abroad course. That led her to begin learning to speak Latin and, since 2017, she has attended three international Latin speaking camps, taken an online spoken course, and begun her own informal speaking group on campus for students and staff. Most recently, she has been studying te reo Māori. As students learn language best through a combination of listening, speaking, writing and reading, not just translating, Maxine has built up the range of Comprehensible Input (CI) activities used in the Latin classroom. These include scaffolded written texts, speaking in Latin, using props and staging dramatic scenes. Students in her classes still read original Latin, learn authentic vocabulary, write grammatically correct Latin and rigorously apply the rules of grammar, but they do so in an engaging and collaborative classroom context.
“The foundations of what I consider to be excellence in teaching lie in this childhood memory: discovery, the joy of connection, and magic.”

The magic, joy and wonder Kirstine discovered when her father read to her as a child led her to a stellar teaching career in the School of Arts at the University of Waikato. Her success in transmitting her love for stories to others is reflected in the teaching excellence awards she has won - University awards in 2012 and 2019, and Faculty awards in 2011, 2012, 2018 and 2019.

Kirstine’s work allows her and her students to enter storyworld every day. Although the stories may now be longer, more complex, and more challenging than her childhood favourites (except she still makes room for ‘Rapunzel’ in her Adaptations paper and The Lorax in her Utopias and Dystopias paper), she says the joy of discovery is just the same. She believes discovery is what education is about - teaching the new, while instilling in students both the tools and the desire to discover things for themselves. She considers connection is crucial and, just as her father acted as both guide and interpreter, she seeks to help her students navigate the demands of study. She seeks to bridge the distance between teacher and student by creating a learning environment that is welcoming and inclusive, where students can ask challenging questions, while feeling safe and valued.

“I want my students to be active agents in their own learning, not just passive recipients. I want to engage the head and heart, cognition and emotion.”

As a teacher of literature, Kirstine’s subject is the story. She shares novels, poems, plays, and films with her students, acting as an interpreter. She is also an author of stories and a teller of tales, connecting with students through her innovative and creative teaching style. The natural fusion between her subject and creative and dynamic ways of presenting material allows her to use interactive performance, costume, disruptions to space, and immersive experiences which prompt her students to think and to feel. Such interactive experiences require students to participate, invest, and give something of themselves.

Kirstine is pleased that, through engaging with English literature, she is able to not only pass on to her students skills that will help them in their professional lives – the ability to read critically, communicate clearly, and argue convincingly – but also to stimulate them to reflect on some of the big questions of life, such as coping with grief and loss, balancing individuality and social responsibility, and finding the courage to speak.

Because Kirstine creates a learning environment characterised by discovery and creativity, she has increasingly become more experimental with student assessments, incorporating options that foster student engagement and empower them to think for themselves. Students can
now write a blog about their learning reflections or create a story/poem/script/short film accompanied by a reflective analysis. In this way, students become invested in the assignment, frequently seeking to expand its parameters. Her role as a supervisor of Masters and PhD students is equally focused on helping students acquire a confident academic voice. She regularly co-authors publications with her students as they start their academic journey and feels proud when they build on the foundations she provides to publish articles and attend conferences. Her insistence on independent thought and clarity of oral and written expression has been invaluable to her students, who have gone on to become academics, advertising executives, tour guide operators, curators, corrections officers, teachers, researchers, actors, writers, civil servants, and social activists.

Kirstine’s students come from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences. They may come straight from school, from the workforce, from parenthood and many different countries. Some are the first in their family to attend university. Kirstine finds that, whatever the situation, individually and collectively they can offer wisdom and insight gleaned through listening to, and learning from, them. At the beginning of each paper she talks to her students about the classroom as a space of honesty and trust, making it clear that they are all on a learning journey together and that their thoughts and feelings matter. As the course progresses, she makes time for in-class feedback and is open to changing aspects of the course content or her teaching.

“By connecting with my students ... I can create a learning environment in which they feel invested and heard.”

As part of her leadership role, Kirstine finds pastoral care of her students is an increasingly important part of her job. Through the connections she establishes with her students, especially with Masters and PhD students, but increasingly also with undergraduates, she provides guidance on everything from time management to building confidence and self-belief or coping with illness and stress. Further leadership roles included overseeing a regrouping and refocusing of English around new teaching initiatives as Convenor of English from 2010 to 2014, and that of Associate Dean Postgraduate from 2015 to 2018. Drawing on her skills as mediator and problem-solver, she undertook initiatives such as the organisation of an annual graduate conference, the introduction of awards for students presenting the best Kaupapa Māori research paper, and the provision of Postdoctoral Writing Awards to foster a positive research culture.

At her university, Kirstine presents at CeTTL workshops (Teaching Large Classes/Effective Presenting) and runs workshops on creativity and teaching for visiting academics from Zhejiang University City College and Hebei University of Science and Technology. Beyond the University, she has run a successful workshop at the 2009 New Zealand Association for the Teaching of English Conference, which led to requests for teaching resources and an invitation to write an article for English in Aotearoa on multiple ways of reading texts. She presented the keynote address on creative assessment at the 2016 Assessment Matters Forum held at AUT and has shared her research at New Zealand Association for Research in Education and Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia conferences. She was part of a TLRI-funded research project (2012–2014) on threshold concepts and their work on subjective interpretation as a threshold in the Arts and Humanities has been published in Arts and Humanities in Higher Education and Waikato Journal of Education. Her teaching on aspects of the films River Queen and novel and film Kingsman has resulted in articles in Moving Worlds and Adaptations respectively. Beyond the tertiary sector, she visits and shares resources with Waikato and Bay of Plenty secondary schools, adjudicates secondary school competitions in the arts, and gives talks on music and literature to community organisations.
The name Rauaroha was chosen for the korowai that is worn by each recipient of the annual Prime Minister’s Supreme Award. The korowai is a chiefly garment that recognises the mana of the supreme award and the person who receives it. It will be passed on each year to the Supreme awardee.

The karakia (ancient invocation) Te Hokai tells the story of how Tāne-nui-ā-rangi climbed to the uppermost of the twelve heavens to obtain the three baskets of knowledge – te Kete Tuauri (sacred knowledge), te Kete Tuatea (ancestral knowledge), te Kete Aronui (life’s knowledge).

Before he received the three baskets of knowledge on arrival at the entrance of the uppermost heaven, Tikitiki-o-Rangi, Tāne was met by the spiritual beings who guard the doorway to Tikitiki-o-Rangi. After undergoing a ceremony, Tāne was guided to Io (the supreme being) where he was asked about the reason for his visit. Tāne was then taken to a place called Rauaroha where the male and female beings of Tikitiki-o-Rangi are, and he underwent ritual ceremonies to prepare him to receive the knowledge.

Rauaroha has been made entirely of muka (flax fibre) and bird feathers by Te Atiawa weaving expert, Veranoa Hetet. Rauaroha was six months in the creation and is the result of painstaking and fastidious work. During that time Veranoa allowed her hands the luxury of just three weeks rest.

It has been created using traditional methods handed down through six generations of Veranoa’s whānau. Veranoa says that korowai are made to last and based on the longevity of similarly created Māori chiefly garments, Rauaroha will last for more than three hundred years. Ako Aotearoa acknowledges Veranoa’s contribution to the Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards.