



Te Whatu
Kairangi

Aotearoa Tertiary
Educator Awards

Te Whatu Kairangi Awardee Profiles 2023



Images, front cover

Top left: Dr Ēnoka Murphy - 2023 Prime Minister's Educator of the Year

Top right: Dr Lisa Russell - 2023 General Group awardee

Bottom left: Tracy Hutton - 2023 General Group awardee

Bottom right: Mari Ropata-Te Hei - 2023 Kaupapa Māori Group awardee

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2023 Te Whatu Kairangi awardees gathered at the Parliament ceremony on 26 September

The Significance of Te Whatu Kairangi



From a Māori perspective, after the separation of Ranginui and Papatūānuku the world was originally void of superior forms of knowledge. It instead resided in the realms of the atua who dwelt in the heavens. This knowledge was obtained by the ascension of Tāne (or in some cases Tāwhaki) to the twelfth heaven and brought back to earth to be used by mankind.

From the heavens Tāne retrieved three baskets of knowledge: te kete aronui (knowledge pertaining to good, all things humane and peaceful), te kete tuatea (knowledge pertaining to all evil arts, warfare, and black magic) and te kete tuauri (knowledge of ritual and of all ceremonies designed to remove the restrictions (tapu) that are placed on the relationships that connect all things on earth and in the heavens). This knowledge formed the content of formal study in the whare wānanga (learning institutions of esoteric knowledge).

The curriculum of the whare wānanga was split in two: te kauwae runga (teachings concerning the Supreme Being, cosmogonic and anthropogenic myths, etc) and te kauwae raro (historical traditions, matters of this world). Students went through an intense learning programme, where the information was transmitted orally in a rote learning fashion, and they were then subjected to a series of tests to ensure that they had memorised the content of the whare wānanga to a satisfactory level.

Whatu or stones were used throughout the learning to embed the information within the students. Upon the conclusion of their time as a student of the whare wānanga, students were presented a particular stone called a whatu kairangi to symbolise that they had successfully completed the programme of learning. In essence, they were now tohunga, learned experts. In the Hawke's Bay district, some whare wānanga used small, flat, smooth stones that were red, black and, in some cases, white.

The term Whatu Kairangi is adopted as the name of the teaching awards. The awardees have spent a considerable amount of time becoming notable experts in their field, they have refined their teaching, and been assessed by a panel of experts to have fulfilled the criteria of the awards that leaves no doubt of the impact they have had on their students. The recipients have transitioned from one space to another. In essence, they have been recognised as the learned experts of teaching in their field.

Definitions:

whatu (noun) initiation stone - a small stone swallowed by the student (taura) during the initiation to become a tohunga. It was said to help in the embedding of the new knowledge within the student. The whatu is a physical symbol that acknowledges the student has reached a certain level in their learning. It is their 'tohu' or their 'award'. Where we might usually expect to see the word "Tohu" in a Māori name for the teaching awards (Ngā Tohu Whatu Kairangi), the use of "Whatu" serves the same purpose.

kairangi (noun) anything held in high esteem, darling, exalted chief, finest variety of greenstone, patron. This word is used in the Māori name for a PhD - He Tohu Kairangi. It also features on the Māori versions of the certificates presented to Kaupapa Māori Award winners. It, therefore, indicates something of the highest level.





Prime Minister's Educator of the Year

Tākura Ēnoka Murphy

Senior Lecturer
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Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato
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Nō Ngāti Manawa, nō Ngāi Tūhoe me Ngāti Ruapani ki Waikaremoana ngā tātai hono o Ēnoka Murphy. I whakatipuria ia ki te ao Māori, ā, he mea nui te mātauranga ki tōna whānau, arā, he rongonui ōna mātua mō ā rāua mahi whakaako e pā ana ki Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Nā whai anō, mai anō i tōna ohinga e ngākaunui ana a Ēnoka ki te ako, ki te kōrero hoki i te reo Māori. Ko te reo Māori tōna ao, tōna pou whirinaki e tū tangata ai ia, ā, he pērā anō te āhua o tana whakatipu i āna tamariki.

Kua neke atu i te 30 tau a Ēnoka e whakaako ana ki ngā taumata katoa o te ao mātauranga, mai i te Kōhanga Reo ki te Kura Kaupapa Māori, tae atu ki ngā pakeke nō tōna anō iwi. He hōhonu, he nui anō tōna mōhiotanga ki ngā mahi o te whare tapere, o te reo irirangi, ā, kua tū ia hei kaiwhakawā ki ngā whakataetae kōrero me ngā whakataetae haka. He ākongā ia ki te kura whakangungu kaiako rumaki reo Māori o Rangakura, kua mahi hoki ki Te Kura Matatini o Taranaki. I tēnei wā, kei te whakaako ia i te reo Māori me ōna tikanga ki te Whare Wānanga o Waikato.

Ko te ao Māori te pūtake o ngā mahi a Ēnoka. Kua takea mai tana kaupapa whakaako i ngā atua me ngā āhuatanga o te ao tūroa; mai i te orokohanganga o te ao, o te whānau marama, o ngā moana me ngā wai, o ngā mea ora katoa, ka puta mai tātou te tangata ki te ao marama. Koinei te pūtake, ā, ka hoki ia ki ngā kōrero tuku iho hei tūāpapa mō āna mahi whakaako. E whakapono ana a Ēnoka, ko ngā mahi whakaako reo Māori tētahi o ngā pou e tū anō ai te whare o te reo Māori, ā tātou tikanga me ō tātou mōtika.

He tohunga ia ki te whakaako i te reo mā te reo Māori, ā, he mōhio hoki ki te whakahihiko i te wairua o ngā ākongā hou o te reo, kia kuhu atu rātou ki ngā akoranga rumaki i runga i te harikoa me te wairua hīkaka. Kei te āta whakaako a Ēnoka i te katoa o te tangata – ko te taha whānau, ko te ngākau, ko te taha wairua me te taha hinengaro. E tino whakapono ana ia ki te whakaaro me noho mātāmua te ākongā, arā, kia nui te wā me te kaha e whakapaua ana ki runga i a rātou i te mea, kei ō rātou pokohiwi te oranga o te reo me te tuakiri o te Māori.

E whakapono ana ia ko te ākongā te aronganui o te akomanga whakaako reo, arā, me hīkaka te wairua, me nui te kōrero, me ngahau hoki ngā mahi. He koanga ngākau ki a ia te noho ngātahi me te ākongā kotahi ki te āta whakarongo, ki te wetewete, ki te whakamātau anō, ki te akiaki, ki te tuku urupare hoki i runga i te koa me te ngākau whakaiti hei whakanui i ō rātou

whakapaunga werawera. Ka tae moata ia ki te akomanga ki te āwhina i te hunga e noho tōmuri ana, i te hunga pākikī rānei. Ka whakarongo ia ki ā rātou kōrero whaiaro, ka āwhina ia i te ākongā ki te whakahāngai i ōna whakaaro, ka tirohia ā rātou mahi, ka tāpae atu anō rānei i ētahi atu mahi hei whai mā rātou.

“Ka mau noa tōna ngākau hīkaka me tōna wairua ngahau.”

“E mātau ana tēnei kaiako ki te whakaako i te reo; he ngahau te akoranga, he hīkinga wairua, ka werohia te hinengaro, ā, he wā tōna, ka noho noa mātou i runga i te ngākau pāpaku.”

Kei te whakamanahia te tangata e āna mahi whakaako i te mea ka waihanga ia i tētahi wāhi haumarua kia ako te tangata. Ka kōrero ia i runga i te wairua mārire, i te mauri tau me te ngākau tuwhera.

Ko tētahi o ngā tohu nui o te mahi whakaako a Ēnoka ko tana kaha ki te hāpai i ngā hangarau hou. Kei te mihi ia ki ōna hoamahi, nā rātou ia i āwhina ki te whakatū i ngā momo ara hou hei aromatawai i ngā tūmahī reo Māori mā te hangarau, mā ngā tūmahī ā-waha hoki. Kei te taunakihia ngā kōrero mō te pai o tana mahi whakaako e ngā raraunga arotake mai i ngā akoranga e ono e whakaakohia ana e Ēnoka ki te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. Otirā, hei tā tētahi 94% o āna ākongā he “tino pai” āna mahi whakaako.

Kua whakanuia a Ēnoka i tōna ngākaunui ki te whakaako i te reo Māori. I te tau 2013, ka whakawhiwhia ia ki tētahi ‘Faculty Teaching Excellence Award’ i te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. I te tau whai muri mai, arā, i te tau 2014, ka riro i a ia te ‘Sustained Excellence Award’ mō āna mahi whakaako i raro i te kaupapa Māori o te Ako Aotearoa Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards. I taua wā, ahakoa he pai ake ki a ia te noho whakaiti, i kite hoki ia i te hiranga o te tohu, me tana mihi ki ngā kaiwhakaako whakahirahira kua hia tau e whakaako tonu ana, e whakaako tonu ana.

I te tau 2020, ka whakaurua atu a Ēnoka ki te ‘Divisional Teaching Excellence Award’ me te ‘Nola Campbell Memorial eLearning Excellence Award’ i te whare wānanga. Ka whakanui ngā kōrero a ngā ākongā i tōna kaha ki te whakawhanake tonu i āna tikanga whakaako;

“...nā tōna manawaroa, nā tōna wairua whakahoahoa me tōna aroha ki te reo Māori, he kaiako whakahirahira, he kaiako ahurei ia.”

“Ka waihanga ia i ngā ara hou hei whakamārama anō i ngā kōrero. Kei te rangona tōna aroha me tōna hīkaka ki āna akoranga, kia eke ngā ākongā katoa ki te angitu.”

“He nui te aroha o Matua Ēnoka, kei te tino whakapono ia ki āna akoranga me te kaha o āna ākongā katoa. He tangata atawhai, e toro atu ana ki te whatumanawa o te tokomaha – ehara ia i te kaiako anake.”

Kei raro i tana tūranga hei kaiwhakaako ki tētahi whare wānanga, kua manaaki hoki a Ēnoka i ētahi atu kaupapa ki te taha papori. Kua toro atu ia ki ngā tāngata ki te hōhipera, ki ngā kōti, kua tuhituhi ia i ngā reta tautoko mō ngā ākongā, kua tae ia ki ngā wānanga me ngā momo mahinga wairua. Ka tautoko ia i ngā Māori kei ētahi atu wāhanga o te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, ā, kua mahitahi ia ki te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga ki te tautoko i te hōtaka reo Māori o ‘Poipoiā te Reo.’

Ka kuhu atu a Ēnoka ki ngā momo wānanga e pā ana ki te ao Māori, ā, ka whakapuaki ia i ngā take o te ao hou e tohea ana e te Māori o nāianei. I te tau 2022, ka whakapuaki a

Ēnoka i tētahi kauhau mō 'Ngā tohunga wāhine o te rautau 19' ki te taha o ngā tohunga mātauranga o te ao Māori. He wāhi tana kauhau o tētahi wānanga i tū ki te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi ki Whakatāne e kīia ana ko 'Te Whare Makatea'. Ko te aronga matua, ko te wāhi o te mātauranga Māori me te mātauranga o te ao whānui hei whakatutuki i ngā tini hiahia o ō rātou hapori.

Koia nei a Ēnoka Murphy!



Prime Minister's Educator of the Year

Dr Ēnoka Murphy

Senior Lecturer
Te Pua Wānanga ki te Ao
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Indigenous Studies
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato
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Ēnoka Murphy has proud tribal links that extend from Ngāti Manawa, Ngāi Tūhoe and Ngāti Ruapaniki Waikaremoana in the Eastern Bay of Plenty. Steeped in te ao Māori/ the Māori world, he was raised within a whānau who value education and where both his parents are highly acclaimed as Te Tiriti o Waitangi educators. As a result, Ēnoka has been an avid learner and speaker of the reo since his youth. He regards the Māori language as everything in his world, his refuge, and his whole identity, and has raised his children in the language in the same way.

With over 30 years of teaching at all levels of education, from Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori, to adults within his tribal community, Ēnoka has brought a rich, wealth of experience in the performing and oral arts of theatre, radio work, judging Māori language competitions and kapa haka. He was a student of Rangakura/ Teacher Training in total Immersion te Reo Māori, with experience at Te Kura Matatini o Taranaki/ Western Institute of Technology. He is currently teaching te Reo Māori me ōna tikanga/ the Māori languages and associated cultural practices at Waikato University.

Centered in the Māori worldview, Ēnoka has a teaching philosophy that originates from the spiritual elements and the natural forces of the environment; from the time when the world was created, including the stars, the oceans and waters, all kinds of life, and we as humans were formed as part of this world. This is his reference point, and he uses the cultural stories and narratives to underpin his teaching. Ēnoka believes that teaching te reo is at the core of the reclamation of our language, our culture, and our rights.

His chosen specialty is teaching language through total immersion, and making people who are new to the language happy and excited about immersion. Ēnoka actively teaches in a holistic way, addressing the social, the heart, the spiritual, as well as the thinking dimensions of his students. He believes strongly that putting the student first and spending one's time and energy on them is crucial, because the life of the language and Māori identity rests on their shoulders.

He believes that a language classroom should be learner-focussed, vibrant, noisy, and enjoyable. He thrives on the one-on-one interactions with students to actively listen,

analyse, try again, encourage, and provide positive feedback in humble ways that value their attempts. He arrives early to class to help those who are behind or who have questions, listens to their personal stories, assist the student to seek preciseness in their thinking, checks their work, or provides extra challenges. Of this approach, his learners say,

“His enthusiasm is infectious (as is his) sense of humour”.

“This kaiako had a knack for teaching te reo; it was lively, it was energetic, it was challenging, and at times humbling”.

His approach to learning is empowering because he creates a safe environment for learning, his communication style is calm, collected and approachable.

Embracing new technology is a hallmark of Ēnoka’s teaching style too. He acknowledges the support of his colleagues to assisting him to develop new ways of combining technology and oral forms of reo Māori assessment tasks. Recent evaluation data from the six classes Ēnoka teaches at Waikato University, reinforce the success of his teaching style, and 94% of the students are “highly- satisfied” with his classes taught in this way.

Ēnoka has gained recognition for his dedication to teaching te Reo Māori. In 2013, he was recipient of a ‘Faculty Teaching Excellence Award’ from The University of Waikato. The following year in 2014, he received the ‘Sustained Excellence Award’ for teaching in a kaupapa Māori context at the Ako Aotearoa Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards. At the time he expressed that while happier not being in the limelight, he recognised the importance of the award, acknowledging that there are already excellent Māori teachers who continue to do this for many years.

In 2020 Ēnoka was promoted for the ‘Divisional Teaching Excellence Award’, and ‘Nola Campbell Memorial eLearning Excellence Award’ from the university. Student feedback of his teaching style emphasise how Enoka has continued to develop his teaching style with:

“...patience, charisma, and his devotion to Te Reo Māori make for an outstanding and unique teacher”.

“He creates opportunities for further explanations and is so passionate and enthusiastic about what he is teaching and wants every student to succeed.”

“Matua Ēnoka wears his heart on his sleeve, believes wholeheartedly in what he teaches and believes in the ability of all his students. A very kind human being, who touches the lives of many, he is beyond a teacher.”

Being a university educator carries some social responsibility too for Ēnoka. In his position he has done many things over the years for people, hospital and court visits, letters of support for students, various seminars and spiritual activities. He supports Māori within other parts of Waikato University, and has been working with the Ministry of Education, sponsoring their Māori language program ‘Poipoia te Reo’.

Ēnoka contributes to intellectual discussions in the Māori world by opening contemporary and contentious issues facing Māori right now. In 2022, Ēnoka presented a keynote address on ‘19th century Ruahine (tohunga wahine)’, alongside some of the leading mātauranga tohunga/ experts in the Māori world. This presentation was part of the ‘Te Whare Makatea’ Symposium hosted by Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi in Whakatāne. The focus was on how mātauranga Māori and mātauranga o te ao are utilised to meet the many and varied needs of their communities.

This is Ēnoka Murphy!



Te Whatu Kairangi
Kaupapa Māori
Group Award

Led by Professor Huia
Tomlins-Jahnke, with
Mari Ropata-Te Hei,
Nadell Karatea-Kokiri,
Hona Black, Te Rina
(Krystal) Warren, and
Rahera Filiata

Te Pūtahi-a-Toi
School of Māori Knowledge
Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa
Massey University

“E whāngaihia ana ā mātou mahi whakaako e Te Aho Matua, arā, koia anake te kaupapa whakaako taketake nō Aotearoa. E kauawhi ana ngā tikanga me ngā āhuatanga o Te Aho Matua i ngā mea katoa, i ngā tāngata katoa. Kei te whakatairanga a Te Aho Matua i te kanorautanga me te ngākau tuwhera, ā, e matua arahina ana ngā whānau ki te whakatutuki i ngā whāinga me ngā wawata e hāpai ana i a rātou anō me ō rātou hapori ki te kimi i te ara tika mā rātou me ā rātou tamariki.”

Ko Te Aho Tātirangi me Te Aho Paerewa he hōtaka rumaki Māori i raro i te Initial Teacher Education (ITE). Koia anake te hōtaka ITE o Aotearoa e whai ana i Te Aho Matua, ā, koia anake hoki te taura e tūhono ana i te whare wānanga ki te whare whakahaere o te pūnaha mātauranga o te kura kaupapa Māori, arā, ki Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa (TRN). Ko te rōpū tiaki tēnā o Te Aho Matua i raro i te ture.

He hōtaka motuhake ēnei, e whai mana ana i te ao whānui, waihoki koinei anake ngā momo hōtaka pēnei i te ao. Kei te puta atu ngā ākonga whakahirahira i tēnei hōtaka, arā, ko ngā rangatira o āpōpō ēnei kua whai kaha ki te kōkiri, ki te hāpai hoki i ngā huringa nui o te rāngai kaupapa Māori i runga i ngā wawata o te whānau, o te hapū, o te iwi me ngā hapori Māori.

E whāngaihia ana ēnei hōtaka e te mātauranga o nāiane, e ngā wheako me ngā rangahau e pā ana ki te mātauranga i raro i te kaupapa Māori, waihoki e ngā mātauranga ā-hapū, ā-iwi hoki e mau mai ana i ngā ākonga. Ko te mātauranga o te whānau, o te hapū me te iwi te tūāpapa e tū ai te whare mātauranga o ngā ākonga kia whai pūkenga ai rātou hei kaiako mō te kura kaupapa Māori.

“Ko te tino rerekēngatanga i waenganui i tēnei kaupapa me ētahi atu hōtaka, ko te tū o Te Aho Matua hei pou matua mō te kaupapa, arā, ko te ākonga te aronga matua, kua ko te aromatawai. (Ākonga, tau tuarua)

Ko te reo Māori te reo matua o ngā whakaakoranga. E haere tonu ana te pakanga mō te oranga tonutanga o te reo Māori, ā, he kaupapa nui tonu tētahi hōtaka whakaako kaiako hou e whakangungu ana i ngā kaiako ki te whakaako ki te rāngai mātauranga Māori. Ko te whāinga o ngā hōtaka, he whakangungu i ngā kaiako ki te whakaako ki roto i ngā akomanga rumaki reo Māori o te motu, he whakapakari hoki

i ngā kaiako hou kia āhei ai rātou ki te pakanga i te ‘pakanga nui’ mō te oranga tonutanga o te reo Māori.

Ko te kaupapa o ēnei hōtaka rumaki, he whakapiki i te mōhio o ngā ākonga ki te reo me te mita o ngā reo ā-iwi. Ka tutuki tēnei mā ngā akoranga reo Māori e whai ana i ngā tikanga me ngā kaupapa Māori o Te Aho Matua. E whai ana te marautanga i ngā momo kaupapa o te marautanga Māori, e hāpai ana i ngā reo me ngā tikanga ā-iwi me ngā momo mahi tuku iho a te kura kaupapa Māori, kia kite, kia rongu ngā ākonga i te huhua o ngā mātanga reo, o ngā mātanga whakaako me ngā tohunga wetereo. Kia tautoko hoki ēnei mātanga i a rātou.

“He hikinga ngākau tēnei momo kaupapa, arā, he kaupapa e kawē ana i ngā taonga me ngā akoranga a ō tātou tīpuna.” (Ākonga tau tuarua)

Nā ā mātou mahinga ngātahi ki Te Runanga Nui (TRN) kua whakatū te rōpū whakaako o Te Aho i ngā hononga pai, i ngā hononga mārō ki ngā momo hāpori huri noa i Aotearoa. E hāngai tonu ana tēnā ki ngā kaupapa me ngā akoranga motuhake o te Kura Kaupapa e whakapūmautia ana e ngā kaupapa me ngā mahi a Te Aho Matua me te whakapakaritanga ake o te hononga ki TRN.

Nō te whakatūnga o ngā ākonga ki tēnei hōtaka whakaako ā-kura, ka noho rātou i raro i tētahi kura hāpai. Ko te kura hāpai tētahi kura kaupapa Māori kua whakaae ki te manaaki i tētahi ākonga mō te roanga o ngā akoranga o te ITE. Otirā, kei te whiwhi ngā ākonga i ngā hua o tētahi wāhi ngaio, o tētahi wāhi e aro nui ana ki te whānau. Ka āhei ngā ākonga ki te whakamahi i ngā rorohiko me ngā pūrere kōrero ataata, ā, ka tautokona ō rātou akoranga e ngā kaiako. He wāhi nui tēnei o ngā akoranga ā-kura, ā, ka pūmau te noho o te hunga e ako ana mai i tawhiti ki te kaupapa nā runga i ēnei āhuatanga. Ka haere hoki ngā ākonga ki ētahi atu kura kia mōhio rātou ki ngā momo āhuatanga rerekē o tēnā kura, o tēnā kura.

Ko Te Ao Ako tētahi o ngā mātāpono matua o Te Aho Matua e mea ana me whakaako i runga i te koanga ngākau me te wairua whakaihiihi. Ko te kaupapa o Te Ao Ako, ko te waihangatanga o tētahi taiao ako pai kia ako te ākonga.

E whakatairanga ana ngā tikanga me ngā mahi whakaako o ēnei hōtaka i te kuhunga atu o te ākonga ki ngā akoranga. Ka ākina ngā ākonga ki te kuhu ā-tinana atu ki ngā mahi, ki te whakaaroaro hoki ki ō rātou ake akoranga. I a rātou e whai ana i te mātauranga me ngā pūkenga, me whakawhanake hoki te ākonga i tōna mōhio ki a ia anō, ki ōna anō pūkenga hoki hei kaiako o te kura kaupapa Māori.

Waihoki, i te mea e whakahaerehia ana te kaupapa i raro i ngā tikanga Māori, he rautaki nui te mahi ngātahi huri noa i ngā akoranga. Ka ako ngātahi te ākonga me te pūkenga, te ākonga me te ākonga me ētahi atu mā ngā whakawhitinga kōrero, mā te kōrerorero me te mātakitaki. He kāhui ako kotahi ngā kaimahi me ngā ākonga e mahi ngātahi ana kia ako te ākonga.

E ākina ana ngā ākonga ki te whai i ngā mahi rauhanga, ki te kimi i ngā ara hou ki te whakaea i ngā raruraru, ki te kimi i ngā whakatutukinga auaha hoki. Ko te aranga matua, kia whakawhanakehia ngā pūkenga e taea ai te whakawhiti atu ki wāhi kē ki tētahi wāhi manaaki, kia kuhu atu rātou ki ngā momo mahi whakaako tūturu me ngā momo wheako nō roto, nō waho hoki i te marautanga.

He mea hoahoa ngā hōtaka o Te Aho kia whakakotahihia ngā mahi ā-kanohi, ā-hiko, mai tawhiti, ā-wāhanga me ērā atu momo ara ako o te ao hangarau. Kua āta tīkina atu ēnei momo ara whakaako kia āhei ngā ākonga ki te kuhu mai ki ngā hōtaka, ahakoa kei hea rātou e noho ana.

He mahi nui tonu te whakaako kaiako. Me whakapau kaha ngā kaiwhakangungu o ngā kaiako ki ngā tauira whakaako; ki te hanganga o ngā akoranga tino whaihua; me āta whai whakaaro ki te ahunga whakamua o te ākonga, ki te māramatanga me te mahi; me āta aromatawai ngā mahi a te ākonga; me paihere hoki i te ariā ki te mahi, kia rite ngā ākonga ki te tū hei pūkenga ki tō rātou kura. I kitea te hiranga o ngā whakatutukinga o ēnei hōtaka hei tauira i te ao mātauranga Māori ki roto i te pūrongo o Te Kura Huanui.

“Taku ki ngā ākonga, ngā whanaunga rānei, haere, haere ki Te Aho Paerewa, ki ngā tohunga ... ahakoa te tawhiti he pai kia puta i te kāinga, ētehi wā ka ngahoro koe ki roto i ngā mahi o te kāinga, ... i ēnei rā tonu ka pānui tonu au i ngā pukapuka rā, i whakamiharo atu nei i au i ngā rauemi i tukuna koutou ki a mātou, atu i ērā momo āhuatanga, ko te whanaungatanga waenganui i a mātou ko ngā kaiako o Te aho Paerewa, i tino awhina, i marama ana ki ngā kaupapa o te kāinga” (Feedback from a graduate, now an assistant principal who recently designed and opened their own kura in Kaitaia).

“Taku ki ngā ākonga, ngā whanaunga rānei, haere, haere ki Te Aho Paerewa, ki ngā tohunga ... ahakoa te tawhiti he pai kia puta i te kāinga, ētehi wā ka ngahoro koe ki roto i ngā mahi o te kāinga, ... i ēnei rā tonu ka pānui tonu au i ngā pukapuka rā, i whakamiharo atu nei i au i ngā rauemi i tukuna koutou ki a mātou, atu i ērā momo āhuatanga, ko te whanaungatanga waenganui i a mātou ko ngā kaiako o Te aho Paerewa, i tino awhina, i marama ana ki ngā kaupapa o te kāinga.”

(He kōrero nā tētahi o ngā akonga o mua, e tū ana ināianei hei tumuaki tuarua ki tētahi kura nāna anō i hoahoa, i whakatūwheratia hoki ki Kaitāia)

E whakaahua ana ngā hōtaka o Te Aho i ngā kawenga o Te Tiriti o Waitangi, ā, he ariā matua Te Aho Matua ki te ao mātauranga e whai painga ai ngā tamariki Māori. He mea motuhake rawa ngā hōtaka me te hononga ki Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori ki Aotearoa whānui, otirā hei tauira tēnei mō te ao mātauranga o ngā iwi taketake o te ao. Kāore e hapa, ka tino rongu ngā tamariki Māori, te reo Māori me Aotearoa whānui tonu ki ngā hua o ngā mahi a ō rātou ākonga i ngā tau e heke mai ana.



Te Whatu Kairangi
Kaupapa Māori
Group Award

Led by Professor Huia
Tomlins-Jahnke, with
Mari Ropata-Te Hei,
Nadell Karatea-Kokiri,
Hona Black, Te Rina
(Krystal) Warren, and
Rahera Filiata

Te Pūtahi-a-Toi
School of Māori Knowledge
Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa
Massey University

“Our teaching practice is informed by Te Aho Matua, currently the only philosophy and theory of teaching and learning to emerge from Aotearoa. The fundamental values and concepts inherent in Te Aho Matua are all encompassing and inclusive. Diversity and flexibility are encouraged and whānau are actively guided towards goals and aspirations that empower them and their communities to define their own destinies and those of their tamariki.”

Te Aho Tātairangi, the Bachelor of Teaching and Learning Kura Kaupapa Māori, and Te Aho Paerewa, the Postgraduate Diploma Teaching and Learning in Māori Medium, are kaupapa Māori immersion Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes. They are the only Te Aho Matua ITE programmes in Aotearoa and the only university-based partnership with Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa (TRN), the overarching organisation for the kura kaupapa Māori education system with legislated authority as the kaitiaki of Te Aho Matua.

The programmes are unique and internationally recognised, the only ones of their kind in the world. The programme produces outstanding Māori graduates and future leaders, enabled to effect and maintain systemic and transformational change in the kaupapa Māori sector in line with the aspirations of whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities.

The programmes are informed by current knowledge, experience and research in kaupapa Māori education, and the hapū and iwi-specific mātauranga that students bring. Whānau, hapū, and iwi knowledge are foundations upon which students build their skills and expertise as a kaiako for kura kaupapa Māori.

“The fundamental difference between this and other programmes is that it is taught with te aho matua at the forefront, meaning that everything is student focused not assessment focused.”
(Second year student)

Māori language is the language of instruction. There has been a battle for the continuity and survival of the Māori language, and the implications of an initial teacher education programme aimed at preparing teachers for the kaupapa Māori education sector are significant. The programmes aim to prepare exceptional teachers for the nation’s te reo Māori immersion classrooms, and to ensure graduate teachers are

adequately prepared to contribute to the 'all important' battle for the continued survival of te reo Māori.

As full immersion programmes, they build the te reo Māori proficiency of student teachers while ensuring that tribal mita (pronunciation) are not compromised. This is achieved through intensive te reo Māori learning grounded in Kaupapa Māori values and perspectives, as expressed through Te Aho Matua. The curricula include kaupapa Māori pedagogical practices that takes account of tribal variances in dialect, customs and traditions that are practised within kura kaupapa Māori, so ākonga are exposed to and supported by a range of Māori language experts, teaching professionals and linguists.

"I'm so grateful to know that there is a kaupapa like this out there that is carrying the taonga and the teachings of our ancestors." (Second-year student)

The Te Aho teaching group has established positive relationships and deep engagement with stake-holder communities throughout Aotearoa through the partnership with TRN. This aligns directly to the specific philosophies and pedagogies of Kura Kaupapa Māori that are upheld by integrating Te Aho Matua philosophies and practices and building on the partnership with TRN.

Once selected onto the practice-based programme, Ākonga are assigned to a kura hāpai. Kura hāpai are kura kaupapa Māori who volunteer to host ākonga for the duration of their ITE studies thereby providing the benefits of a professional and whānau-centred environment. Ākonga are given access to computer and video conferencing facilities and they receive professional support from teaching staff. This arrangement is a key facet of the practice-based delivery and ensures retention of ākonga studying at a distance. Ākonga also undertake teaching placements in other kura to ensure they are provided with a variety of experiences.

Te Ao Ako, one of the key principles of Te Aho Matua, requires that teaching and learning should be a happy, stimulating and spiritual experience. Te Ao Ako is about creating a learning environment that is conducive to the learning of the ākonga.

The programme's pedagogy and practice emphasise active learning. Students are encouraged to actively participate and reflect upon their own learning. As part of the acquisition of knowledge and skills, ākonga learning involves developing their self-awareness and self-development as kaiako within the context of kura kaupapa Māori.

Also, because the pedagogy is based on kaupapa Māori values, collaborative learning is a significant strategy employed in the courses. Collaborative learning occurs between students and lecturers, between student peers and others, through dialogue, discussion and observation. Staff and students form a collaborative unit working together to achieve student learning.

Ākonga are encouraged to take initiatives that demonstrate resourcefulness, to identify new ways to solve old problems, and to develop innovative solutions. The focus is on ākonga developing and acquiring transferable skills within a supportive environment that fosters opportunities for them to engage with applied teaching and learning experiences both within and alongside the marautanga (school curriculum). are encouraged to take initiatives that demonstrate resourcefulness, to identify new ways to solve old problems, and to develop innovative solutions. The focus is on ākonga developing and acquiring transferable skills within a supportive environment that fosters opportunities for them

to engage with applied teaching and learning experiences both within and alongside the marautanga (school curriculum).

The Te Aho programmes are designed to integrate face-to-face, online, distance, block, and other technologically enhanced learning. This blended learning approach to teaching has been exploited to ensure that the programmes are accessible to students located anywhere in the country.

Teaching teachers is demanding. Teacher educators must constantly model practices; construct powerful learning experiences; thoughtfully support progress, understanding, and practice; carefully assess students' progress; and help link theory and practice so that graduates are ready to stand as pūkenga for their kura. The success of these programmes as exemplars for Māori education was identified in the recent Te Kura Huanui report.

The Te Aho programmes give expression to the provisions of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Aho Matua provides a critical philosophical approach to education that is beneficial for tamariki Māori. The programmes and the partnership with Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori are unique in Aotearoa and is a model for global Indigenous education. The impact of students on tamariki Māori, on the future of te reo Māori, and on Aotearoa, cannot be underestimated.



Le Moana Mua Award

Vijay Pillay

Pacific Healthcare Tutor
Healthcare Programme
New Zealand Skills and
Education College

“As a Pacific Healthcare Tutor, my goal is to prepare our Pacific students to develop, connect and achieve their success, which is the most powerful tool for excellence and freedom in their lives.”

Vijay teaches in the Healthcare programme at the New Zealand Skills and Education College (NZSE). There are four New Zealand Certificate of Health and Wellbeing qualifications in the programme between level 2 and level 4. The programme is designed to provide and improve the physical, mental, emotional, and psychological wellbeing of both the individual and the whole community, and is carried out by trained health professionals.

Her approach is Pacific-centric and person-centred. This approach helps all her students, including Pacific students, feel welcome, respected, culturally safe, and provides a warm friendly environment for study. It enables students to settle in class well and be prepared to observe, listen, and take new challenges day-by-day until the course is completed. They can express their feelings, ideas, and knowledge to others and to her as their tutor. Her foremost expectation is to know her individual students' cultural and family background, and their expectations during the class sessions, so they can participate openly without feeling nervous, stressed, or overwhelmed.

The Healthcare modules of the programme are complex; the words and jargon used can be overwhelming, and can make Pacific students nervous, particularly those with poor literacy and numeracy skills. As a tutor, Vijay ensures the course materials for the Healthcare programme are about embedding everyday healthcare knowledge and practice at a level suitable for the students she teaches.

“I can prove the positive impact that her teaching and programmes have had on my own personal development. Through Ms Vijay Pillay's teaching styles, I have achieved a wider knowledge and critical view of healthcare.” (Graduate, 2021)

The challenges she faces while teaching Pacific students can be impacted by external financial and personal reasons. In class, Pacific students can also be hesitant or shy to participate in group discussions or presentations, due to their social and cultural norms.

To overcome these barriers and improve the input by Pacific students during group or individual presentations or discussions, Vijay incorporates a person-centred and

Fonofale model of teaching. This method of teaching has a deliberate focus on developing the whole person including intellectual, moral, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual dimensions and capabilities in an education setting.

Vijay creates a family-like environment. When a new cohort starts, she ensures all the cultures are mixed, so that they will communicate with and understand each other, rather than having individual cultures sitting together as a group and not communicating or participating during class. This approach results in high achievement rates for Pasifika students and a significant reduction in withdrawals during the programme.

She ensures that both Pasifika students and other students become group leaders, so all of them feel included and welcome in class. This leads to very good participation, particularly as the groups must organise themselves to prepare the topic and ensure each member shares their ideas with the group. As a result, there was improvement in punctuality, time management, organisational skills, and communication skills amongst Pasifika and other students during and after class sessions.

“My tutor, Ms Vijay Pillay, was always willing to answer questions and encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone. She challenged me, but was patient at the same time. She motivated me to bring out my potential and increase my confidence. She believed in everyone, we could do it, not to give up. I was able to complete this course through the support shown by my tutor and dedication she gave to each one of us.” (Student, 2022)

Vijay says it is important to apply literacy and numeracy in class with Pasifika students. As English is not their first language, these students have difficulty participating in activities and assignments. She encourages and guides them to enrol in Pathways Awarua and do self-directed learning at home to improve their literacy.

Vijay honours her students’ cultural identity and whakapapa by incorporating traditional Pasifika practices, stories, and language links into the curriculum and her lessons. This fosters a strong sense of pride and identity among her students, empowering them to embrace their heritage while excelling in their academic work.

In applying a Pacific-centric approach, Vijay must be creative and empathetic. When teaching a cultural competency module, she encourages Pasifika students to plan, design and present to the rest of class about their own cultural values, beliefs, customs, habits, language, and religion using the person-centred Fonofale model approach.

“Vijay ... makes sure that all her students are involved in whatever discussions or activities we did. She has been a source of motivation for all the students and especially for me.” (Student, 2021)

Vijay has also initiated other programmes. She has talked to high school students at twelve South Auckland schools, especially those with a high number of Pacific students, about the STAR (Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource) programme in healthcare. This STAR programme is aimed at students interested in a career in the health sector and those looking for a career pathway. As a result of her efforts, 51 students will participate in the first offering of the health and wellbeing STAR programme in 2023.

The Careers Advisor of a mainly Māori and Pacific South Auckland school valued the input from a Pacific health educator:

“I am writing in reflection of Ms Vijay Pillay’s outstanding performance with our school to inform and assist students’ decisions about career pathways, understanding ways to accumulate NCEA credits externally and building students’ confidence.”

Vijay has also worked with local aged care providers to organise industry placements for her students, but mainly focusing on Pasifika students, to provide real world, hands-on, experience in a healthcare environment.

She is described by the Head of School at NZSE as “an exceptional tutor” whose “... commitment to cultural inclusivity and academic excellence has made her a highly respected and sought after tutor within the Pasifika community and within NZSE.”



Le Moana Mua Award

Filoi Genevieve Togiasso

Head of Department
Health Practice
Ara Institute of Canterbury
Te Pūkenga

Tēnā koe, Ou te fa'atalofa atu, ma le agaga fa'aaloalo, mālō le soifua maua, ma le lagi e mama. "My name is Filoi Genevieve Taula-Togiaso, New Zealand born Samoan. My father is Taula from the village of Taga, my mother Apaau from the village of Avao in Savaii, Samoa. I was born and raised in Christchurch, and I am a single mother of four children."

Genevieve is a Registered Nurse with 30 years' experience. She did her training at CPIT in 1993, now known as Ara Te Pūkenga. In 2013, she worked as a full-time lecturer in the Bachelor of Nursing for one year before moving overseas with her family. She returned in January 2020 to be close to her aging parents and continue her own academic journey. She resumed teaching in the Bachelor of Nursing and was appointed the Pacific Academic Lead. In March 2022, Genevieve was seconded to the position of Head of Department for Health Practice at Ara Te Pūkenga, which is her current role.

Genevieve has qualifications in both health and community leadership, as well as extensive knowledge and experience in both clinical and organisational development, leadership, and governance. She completed her Certificate in Adult Teaching in 2021 and graduated in 2023 with her Masters in Professional Practice (Leadership).

Genevieve's portfolio provided some wonderful insights to her practice as a Pacific educator and leader within the tertiary sector and how those practices link to the 10 habits of phenomenal educators for Pacific learners.

Fenua: Pedagogy of reflection. This aligns well with Genevieve's practice as a registered nurse. Reflecting on her practice has always enabled Genevieve the opportunity to further grow and challenge the status quo; as an educator she feels it is important to learn and identify areas of improvement and to learn from experiences.

Moana: Know your Pacific learner and context. Genevieve aims to be a transformative educator by gaining a deeper understanding of Pacific learners. She thinks it is essential that educators understand this diversity and respect it.

An important part of the process of getting to know Pacific learners at the beginning of their courses are introductions. This helps Genevieve to understand and find connection with the ākongā, but also for ākongā to get to know their fellow students. Everyone must come to the front of the room,

write their full name on the white board, then explain who they are named after, how they got their name, their links to the land, and why they chose nursing. Genevieve starts with writing her name and then goes on to share her 30-year nursing journey and experience in nurse education.

This experience can be challenging, and some ākongā choose to disclose little about themselves. Genevieve facilitates the session to ensure that everyone taking part feels safe and has adopted this process into many of her practices, including working with her leadership team.

Vaka: Educate with phenomenal Pacific-centric methods. Genevieve's learning journey has evolved considerably over many years. She struggled immensely during her training as a Registered Nurse in the early 1990s. There was little or no support for Pacific ākongā. She struggled as a New Zealand-born Samoan during the period after 1992 when Cultural Safety was introduced into the nursing curriculum and attracted negative media attention. The pressure and uncertainty led her to conform and leave who she was as a Samoan at the door in order to complete and gain her qualification. Genevieve completed her studies feeling very ill-prepared and lacking confidence.

However, once Genevieve began her nursing career, she found several opportunities that led to her working with the Pacific community. She began working for a Pacific provider where she eventually found her voice and confidence as a Pacific nurse. Coming into education reminded her of her previous experiences and motivated her to ensure her teaching practices are Pacific-centric.

Le Teu le Va: Build teaching and learning relationships with Pacific learners. Genevieve is very familiar with the Samoan protocol, *teu le va* (reciprocal relationships), which means to take care, nurture, and value (*teu*) the spaces (*va*); the relational space brings together connections between families and communities.

Establishing this connection and relationship is key for the success of the Pacific ākongā. Therefore, Genevieve actively strives to ensure that the introduction practice enables her to build trust and credibility with them. It is also important for her to be visible at Pacific-specific ākongā events, supporting her ākongā; showing she is approachable, and that being seen will help remove any barriers.

Ola: Develop phenomenal practices. There are many evidence-based practices that enable and enhance learning for ākongā success. These include opportunities such as group work, discussions, presentations, and drop-in sessions specifically for Pacific ākongā to unpack and understand assessment questions. She observed that ākongā grades improved as they progressed through the course.

Teatea: Instil motivation and good work habits. Genevieve helps learners to make the transition to tertiary education as empowering as possible. She focuses on the strengths that the learner brings to the classroom and builds on these strengths. She helps motivate and nurture her learners and helps them visualise what is possible for their future. She supports her learners to realise their abilities and strengths and how these can be used throughout their lives.

Aupuru: Cultivate creativity and enthusiasm. In the foundation course 'Professional Responsibility', the topic of policy and legislation is a difficult one for ākongā to understand. Through storytelling, Genevieve is able to give ākongā insight into the reasons why this

paper is an important component of their study. Her teaching engages and stimulates ākongā to explore the subject.

Putuputu: Construct a Pacific learning community. The building of community fosters learners' cultural identity and encourages a sense of belonging. Genevieve is inspired by her Pacific ākongā and she has a great desire to see them succeed. Understanding their needs and actively motivating them to continue to try hard, are great enablers of success.

Arofa: Enable mentoring to be a natural part of your teaching. Genevieve uses mentoring to foster the growth and development of her students. Her mentoring acts as a catalyst for improving Pacific ākongā success. She notes that it is also important that ākongā remain linked to their aiga and communities.

Ti'ama: Deconstruct and emancipate your Pacific learners' experiences. Genevieve believes it is important to focus on what works for learners, rather than on what they do not have. She enables Pacific ākongā to be involved in activities, advocates for Pacific ākongā with colleagues and normalises aiga obligations to ensure they are not disadvantaged because of who they are. She also works very closely with the institution's Pacific team.

Genevieve says:

“I have learnt and understand my learning style which has enabled me to be an effective educator and leader. The way we see and engage with the world is what influences my pedagogical practice as a Pacific person, teaching and linking theory to my experiences through story telling enables Pacific ākongā to visualise and link to their own similar experiences.”



Te Whatu Kairangi General Group Award

Category: Progressing educational
partnerships and collaboration

Ara | Te Pūkenga – Awanui Collaboration

Led by Tracy Hutton,
with Heather Compton,
Clare Hutchinson,
Derek Chirnside,
Alan Hoskin,
Dr Grant Bennett,
Marion Hale, and
Elaine Rutherford

Ara Institute of Canterbury
Te Pūkenga
Awanui Group

In 2018, the Awanui Group approached Ara Institute of Canterbury | Te Pūkenga about the development and delivery of an industry-recognised qualification that would seamlessly integrate online learning with workplace competency training. This would enable Awanui kaimahi to work fulltime while completing a tertiary level qualification relevant to their profession.

Those involved in the partnership included Heather Compton, Learning and Capability Manager for Awanui Group; Alan Hoskin, Marion Hale, and Derek Chirnside, educational developers from Ara; and Grant Bennett, Tracy Hutton, Elaine Rutherford and Clare Hutchinson, managers and kaiako (teachers) from Ara.

Heather wanted the focus to be a collaborative blending of academic skills and professional practice so kaimahi (staff) could understand the “why” behind their work. The team objective was to create a pathway to develop professionally and meet medical and community needs, while looking after and retaining kaimahi for Awanui.

Once implemented, a graduate spoke of the difference between the old process of sitting the exam, and the new programme as, “learning for your career, not for an exam.”

Before this programme, Awanui’s training for employees was not recognised outside their industry, or within the NZQA framework. Awanui found this detrimental to kaimahi development and retention and created risk to the organisation. To solve this, the Ara-Awanui team created a responsive, authentic pathway of learning relevant to their work, and recognised by NZQA and industry.

The Ara-Awanui partnership and the programme’s principles demonstrates alignment with the Tertiary Education Strategy; particularly aligning with TES Objective Four: Future of Learning and Work and TES Objective Two: Barrier Free Access.

The team engaged akōnga (learners) by structuring the programme to make strong connections between their learning, activities, work, and assessments. This constructive alignment places the akōnga at the centre of a learning space that is reflective, focused on continuous improvement, and with scaffolded support (TES Objective One: Learner at the Centre).

Passionate about akōnga success, the team has expertise in science disciplines, as well as extensive teaching experience in the classroom, laboratory, and workplace. Delivery has been supported by a culture of professional reflection using course and akōnga feedback to maintain quality and relevance (TES Objective Three: Quality Teaching and Leadership).

The team designed a programme that scaffolded learning with work-based practice. This included weekly checkpoints and a range of activities to support various learning styles; for example, videos filmed in Awanui laboratories, workbooks, assessments for learning, and other interactive online activities. The team encouraged akōnga to apply theory and practice together in the workplace and reflect on the “why” behind it. The design was enabled by a structure that followed business workflow rather than academic semesters, with five intakes and terms spread across the year.

This approach met the needs of akōnga who were in full time employment, widely distributed geographically and/or from diverse backgrounds, while also meeting the industry’s need for sustainable kaimahi development.

The first cohort of akōnga who graduated from the programme were managers and trainers, allowing Awanui to create a collegial network of mentors across their business. A coordinated ‘Train the Trainer’ approach was also used to support these work-based trainers across the country in their roles to support and engage with their kaimahi.

“Yes, I am now a trainer! I felt more confident after finishing this Diploma, so I took on additional responsibilities.” (Graduate)

The teaching team sees the Awanui kaimahi as active partners in the programme. Frequent feedback is sought through multiple sources and used for reflection. Akōnga comments have been heard by Ara and Awanui to enable positive change and the team at Ara continually evaluate the programme with Awanui and industry.

The Student Experience Survey has shown tremendous improvements with “satisfaction with the programme” rising from 72% to 98% from 2021 to 2022. These results are also borne out by student feedback.

For akōnga, the programme has allowed access to tertiary education where previously there was little opportunity due to family responsibilities, work, and past educational experiences. Akōnga have reported that this has opened opportunities for career advancement within and outside Awanui. The impact has been profound for akōnga.

“I feel it has opened other opportunities for me within Awanui. It gave me more of an understanding of other departments and also an interest in other departments.” (Graduate)

The Ara-Awanui team are excited about the impact the programme is having across New Zealand.

In 2021 the Medical Sciences Council endorsed the accreditation of Ara’s L5 Diploma in Applied Science (Pre-Analytical Technician Pathway), enabling graduates of the pathway to apply to the Council for registration as Pre-Analytical Technicians.

Awanui’s business has been substantively impacted with improved kaimahi retention and development of a critically reflective workforce, confident to take on leadership roles. As a result, Awanui have renewed their MOU with Ara for another five years.

Since 2020, 117 akōnga have graduated, with another 91 currently enrolled.

The team believes that the programme pathway is positioned to continue and thrive. For Awanui, it increases social and financial sustainability by creating a more stable, qualified workforce able to serve its communities. For Ara, the programme is financially sound and aligns with the Te Pūkenga Charter.

For akōnga the programme scaffolds and develops transferable skills leading to career development. Being work-based, the programme is socially sustainable allowing whānau to be financially supported while kaimahi study with support at work.

The collaborative team is proud of the development and delivery of this programme and excited about its impact on akōnga. They have reduced learning barriers, opened the door to further education for some, empowered others to seek challenging leadership roles within Awanui or the wider industry, put simply they are changing people's lives and creating a sustainable future for education.



Te Whatu Kairangi General Group Award

Category: Progressing seamless
ākonga transitions
between contexts

CELS191 Teaching Team

Led by Dr Lisa Russell,
with Andrea Brown,
Dr Kim Watson,
and Dr Keith King

Health Sciences
First-Year Programme
Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtākou
University of Otago

The largest paper at the University of Otago is CELS191 (Cell and Molecular Biology), boasting an enrolment of 1,800–2,000 students. As a component of the Health Science First-Year programme and prerequisite for various science degrees, CELS191 (referred to as ‘CELS’) plays a vital role in shaping the academic journey of approximately 45% of Otago first-year students. CELS is delivered by the core teaching team consisting of Dr Lisa Russell (Course Co-ordinator), Andrea Brown, Dr Kim Watson and Dr Keith King, supported by a broad range of staff whose huge contributions cannot be understated.

Departing from the traditional “sink or swim” approach of tertiary education, the CELS team supports every one of their students. They facilitate a smooth transition to university for the students and provide outstanding pastoral care, knowing that this can greatly influence student success, not only in the first year but also in future years. At the heart of the paper is a student-centric philosophy that prioritises creating safe and inclusive learning environments, where students thrive and learn with confidence. The CELS team’s individual passions for teaching, seamless collaboration and outstanding leadership were recognised with a University of Otago Teaching Excellence Award in 2023.

The students come from diverse backgrounds. Approximately 80% of CELS students enter through NCEA and most come to university immediately after finishing school. They are expected to transition successfully to life at university where teaching and learning techniques, assessment and responsibilities are very different from those in high school. In addition to navigating the uncharted waters of tertiary learning, they leave behind the familiar comforts of school, home and whānau, with many moving from another city or country. Student well-being and success are at the core of CELS as they embark on an experience that goes beyond education.

Students transitioning from CELS go on to a diverse range of subjects (CELS191 is a prerequisite for 23 Otago degrees). Many enter a health professional programme, such as Medicine or Dentistry, while others choose science degrees, such as Biochemistry, Microbiology or Zoology. CELS lays a solid foundation for these different paths.

“The CELS191 teaching team provided me with continuous exceptional teaching and went above

and beyond... I have now finished my third year... (in Medicine) and honestly believe that I owe my success in university to the wonderful care that [they] provided me in what is a difficult transition into tertiary education.” (2020 student)

The CELS team facilitates a smooth transition from high school to university. The quest for top marks to enter the health professional programmes creates immense pressure and anxiety among many students. The CELS team address this by fostering a sense of community and a warm, inclusive and supportive environment where students feel connected, providing assurance around assessment, and providing comprehensive resources to support all learners.

Past CELS academic convenor, Professor Bruce Russell, states:

“Over the past 20 years, I have taught a range of undergrad courses in three international universities and without a doubt, CELS provides the most comprehensive pastoral care of any paper.”

They have implemented initiatives to address poor academic performance in CELS191 through targeted early interventions. Their own research has shown that engagement during the initial weeks of semester is a predictor of future performance. Therefore, they closely monitor the progress of non-engaged students at critical points throughout the semester and they provide timely and tailored messages to help students get back on track. Pastoral and practical advice around engagement and preparing for assessments is also provided.

The CELS team uses their experience to train excellent demonstrators (senior students employed to help in labs). Students demand a lot from demonstrators and feedback shows that CELS191 students are highly satisfied with the level of support the demonstrators provide (94% of students surveyed in 2022 considered the demonstrators to be very well prepared).

To ensure demonstrator success, the team provide targeted training. Professional development of demonstrators is unique among undergraduate papers at Otago. The demonstrator training programme covers not only content, but also topics such as asking questions that require students to explore concepts (“tell me what you know about this”), real-world examples and analogies (e.g., likening the plant central vacuole to a balloon within a box), and facilitating small-group discussions. This programme scaffolds the demonstrators into successful teachers, improving the experience for both student and demonstrator.

They place paramount importance on nurturing student hauora, their holistic wellbeing. They equip their demonstrators with a comprehensive knowledge of avenues for students to tap into the University’s extensive support networks for course-related, skills-based and health-related issues (such as support provided by the CELS team, the mental health team, or peer-assisted study sessions facilitated by ‘Student Learning Development’). The CELS team urge their demonstrators to promptly escalate any concerns to the team.

As one demonstrator affirms:

“We are instructed to look out for students’ wellbeing... and report... if we have any reasons to be concerned for students’ progress through the paper, their university life or health in general.”

As a dynamic team, the CELS team work to implement new initiatives, acknowledging that their students are like a fast-moving current, with ever-changing needs. These initiatives are not limited to just CELS, with the team regularly driving initiatives that influence other papers and programmes. This year the CELS team, in collaboration with other paper coordinators, developed a series of Health Science First-Year-wide 'study skills' workshops that targeted common challenges students face in their first semester of university. These workshops taught students time-management skills and effective note-taking – challenging them to try new approaches and preparing them for high-stakes assessment. While voluntary, some 1,200 students (67% of the class) attended, or streamed, the initial workshop.

Much how throwing a stone into a river creates ripples, the team's initiatives have ripple effects. Each new initiative has been purposefully developed to address a new challenge faced by their students and, ultimately, reduce barriers to learning. They constantly seek opportunities to improve and expand their initiatives to effect larger scale changes. Driven by their passion for educating, they are committed to elevating the CELS experience for future students and staff.



Te Whatu Kairangi Award

Category:

Advancing approaches to, and the outcomes of, work-based learning

Craig Goodhue

Lecturer

School of Trades and Services
Unitec | Te Pūkenga

“Advancing approaches to work-based learning and achieving excellent outcomes for apprentices and employers is the driver of my practice.”

Craig’s primary responsibility as a teacher of Trades and Services, Unitec Te Pūkenga, is the delivery, assessment and care of apprentices who study the New Zealand Certificate in Plumbing Level Four. This programme is a managed apprenticeship with mixed-mode learning, both on the job and on campus. Apprentices are employed in the plumbing industry.

Craig says he feels tremendous pride watching apprentices mature and become trades professionals. Feedback from employers is also rewarding, frequently acknowledging the significant value that Craig has brought to their businesses. The development of the next generation of industry leaders and future business owners is a key driver of Craig’s values and approaches to the delivery of vocational education and training.

Craig acknowledges that his apprentices’ experiences reflect his own trades journey. When he introduces himself to the learners, he shares his own learning and comprehension difficulties and how he has taught himself to learn, listen to, and accept advice. He discusses the fear he had of asking questions and looking stupid and how this set him back on his learning journey.

Unlike full-time study, the time Craig spends with the apprentices is fleeting, so he endeavours to continue to build the relationship throughout their time as an apprentice and well beyond. Staying in contact with apprentices, graduates and employers helps Craig to deliver education and training which is grounded in current practice and legislation. He has maintained strong industry ties and spends part of his professional development on job sites observing the apprentices and updating his knowledge about current industry practices.

He fosters a positive, inclusive learning environment that values everyone’s voice. This dramatically impacts learners that feel undervalued or isolated in their work environment – marginalisation in the workplace due to cultural background is a risk for apprentices. Craig promotes an open forum where apprentices are encouraged to ask questions, present ideas and not be fearful of making mistakes.

Feedback from students in Unitec surveys consistently shows that they rate Craig’s courses highly (e.g., overall course rating for Sanitary Plumbing was 9.8 out of 10) and

they appreciate his efforts to present complex technical subjects in manageable chunks of learning:

“Well-presented, informative class which was easy to understand.”

“Excellent. Well designed for us to follow, walked away with a good, strong knowledge of foul water systems.”

Craig knows that his approach makes a positive impact. Knowledge and new skills are taken back into the industry where apprentices demonstrate better understanding to their employers and work colleagues and share better-informed ideas, which builds their confidence and sense of ownership.

“I feel the lecturers have a massive impact on the students learning & you have some of the best teaching, this course in particular.” (Apprentice feedback)

Providing assistance outside of Unitec has an ongoing positive impact through developing peer relationships with graduates. When requested, Craig makes a point of visiting the graduates’ sites to offer technical advice and support to both them and the employer. It is impressive to see the progress graduates have made in the work environment.

“I want to say thank you very much for teaching us (Kembla group). I started the plumbing course from level 3, and I have met a few teachers. You were the best teacher I have ever met. You were really professional, and I felt your passion to teach. Finally, I was a little worried at the start of the class because I was the only Korean. But you made a good atmosphere in the class to balance the cultural differences.” (Email from a recent graduate)

Craig moved into the education sector because he wanted to give something back to his community and industry. He possesses skills developed through his life experiences, in work and sports coaching, many of which he realised were transferable to his new career as a teacher.

In sport, his coaching philosophy has always focused on bringing out the best in people and playing to each other’s strengths; if you want to win, maximising the potential of those in the team is essential.

Since becoming a teacher in 2019, Craig has built upon his coaching techniques and adapted his philosophies to his current team. When tasked with mentoring new work colleagues, he starts by highlighting their strengths to build confidence. He then demonstrates leadership by modelling best teaching and facilitation practice, signposting the path to success. He frequently encourages his peers to observe his teaching, building a culture of reflective practice.

Craig says that coaching sport at a high level requires consistent upskilling to remain successful – in the education sector, it is just as critical although the stakes and impact are far higher.

Craig targets his professional development to ensure he continues to build his teaching skills. His last badge (internal professional development award) demonstrates how he applies Unitec’s bi-cultural (Māori) values to his teaching pedagogies. Craig recently completed the New Zealand Certificate in Adult and Tertiary Teaching (level 5) remotely at Southern Institute of Technology and has now progressed to level 6.

“I have had the pleasure of working with Craig in several papers in his adult education papers at the Southern Institute of Technology. During this time, he has always worked hard to engage with the often complex and demanding topics, submitting quality work which has continued to improve over time. Craig has real passion for his practice – this has consistently come across in all of his work that I have seen. His dedication to his work is impressive!” (Professor, Southern Institute of Technology)

Craig feels it has been invaluable to be able to articulate his pedagogies and better understand the ‘why’. Undertaking these teaching qualifications has taken him on a journey from a trades professional to an academic practitioner, and he is embracing this dual identity.

It was a highlight of his career when he won the Unitec Excellence in Teaching Award in 2022.

“I want to take the opportunity to congratulate you on your performance. Your leadership in learning and teaching is exemplary. I have had the privilege to observe your practice first-hand. How you engage in professional discussion with peers and learners is objective and focused on improving learning, quality of education and training and your capacity to look for self- improvement while supporting your team to move forward to deliver excellent outcomes. I’m so impressed with all of this within the first three years of your teaching career! ... I see you as a jewel in the school’s crown. To have such a committed academic professional, highly skilled tradesperson and empathic human being in this school is a privilege. Thank you for all your efforts!” (Unitec Head of School)



Te Whatu Kairangi Award

Category:

Initiatives for progressing hauora
and wellbeing in education

Dr Anna High

Associate Professor
Faculty of Law

Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtākou
University of Otago

“My role as an educator is to see my students, in all of their complexity, with all of the worries and concerns and hang-ups they bring to class, and to encourage them: you are capable, you belong here, this space is for you also.”

However, back in 2012, Anna found herself preparing to teach her first law class for graduate students at a prestigious American university. She had never set foot in an American classroom before. She worried about whether she was equipped, whether she would be seen as an imposter, whether she would belong. So, she turned to her personal mindfulness/meditation practice, taking 5 to 10 minutes before each class to settle and clear her mind, relax her body, focus on her breathing, and to intentionally turn her care and attention to her students’ concerns rather than her own.

In her decade of teaching law students since then – both in America and Aotearoa – she has found it is very often the case that students share these same concerns about entering the classroom. Whether academically inclined or not, fifth-generation students or first-in-family, first-years or finalists. Students have opened up to her about their feelings that remind her of her first day as a lecturer. They too worry about whether they are capable, whether they are imposters, whether they belong. They bring this stress and anxiety to class, and it can seriously impede their ability to learn and thrive.

Anna teaches Aotearoa’s future lawyers at the University of Otago. Her largest papers, Evidence and Jurisprudence (with about 200–300 students per class) are crucial for future lawyers. They are also notoriously challenging papers, with a reputation for being boring, difficult to pass, and opaque. Her students often arrive with a good deal of anxiety about their ability to succeed, or feeling dispirited by their previous semester’s results.

Despite these challenges, she finds it immensely satisfying to guide her students through complex legal doctrine and philosophy, and to inspire in them a deep and lasting appreciation of legal complexity and intricacies.

Anna is an empathetic, rigorous, and student-focused lecturer, a research-led teacher, and a national expert in her areas of law. She supports her students in grasping extremely challenging material by being an ‘impressively clear and organised’ teacher, striving to bring all students along with her as they dive into very technical material. Both inside

and outside the classroom, she recognises that health and wellbeing are the essential foundation for effective, lifelong learning.

Law is a uniquely challenging profession. Students need to learn not only the intricacies of complex doctrinal points but also the processes of legal analysis, critical thinking, and different writing styles. Furthermore, students must understand the philosophical context of law – not just what it is, but why, and how it can be questioned. No wonder the subject can leave them feeling on edge and anxious.

Anna's students say she has an exceptional ability to make complex material accessible. Law students often get overwhelmed by the large amount of technical information they have to grasp. She finds ways to help them understand more easily. For example, using a series of flowcharts to break down the legal reasoning into a step-by-step process.

“I can't stress enough how beneficial it is to my learning, how clear, organised, and deliberate she is. She ensures we learn to our full potential in her class. She doesn't just throw information at us, but considers how we will receive it and be able to apply it.” (Student evaluation 2021)

Anna dedicates time in the curriculum to addressing the monocultural nature of New Zealand law, and how the topics students study have been influenced by certain Western cultural assumptions (for example – the rule against hearsay shows a very Western distrust of oral tradition, which is at odds with te ao Māori). She supports her students to understand law as biased and cultural. Law is not neutral and objective, and she gets students thinking about how areas of law might be 'decolonised' towards biculturalism.

Anna has a sustained record of truly outstanding, 'exceptionally good' student evaluations. Over her six years at Otago, across all her papers (including those she was teaching for the first time), 99% of responding students have agreed or strongly agreed that her teaching is effective; and 99% have rated her ability to communicate ideas as excellent or very good. Her evaluations frequently yield comments that she is 'the best' or 'favourite' in the Faculty/University.

Anna believes it is in part her mindful pedagogy that makes her teaching so learner-centred and impactful. Students regularly report the positive impact in-class mindfulness techniques have had, not only on their learning, but on their wellbeing more generally, and in practice. While she ensures the exercises are optional, the uptake among students is very high. Some students have reported adopting meditation as a life-changing habit, not just in the classroom.

“The mindfulness sessions ... were incredibly helpful and kept me focused, so much so that I've started doing them outside class as well.” (Student feedback, 2018)

The work Anna has done encouraging her students to explore the benefits of mindfulness has led her to advocate for 'mindfulness in law' nationally. She does this primarily as founder and co-chair of the Aotearoa Mindfulness in Law Society, which aims to enhance well-being in the legal profession by educating practitioners, academics, and students on mindfulness benefits.

She has published two academic articles advocating for mindfulness in law (both in the *New Zealand Law Journal*), and she is cited in the leading textbook in the field, *The Mindful*

Law Student (2022), a key resource for students and educators wishing to learn about mindful pedagogy. She has presented on mindfulness to the Division of Humanities at Otago and to District/High Court Judges at their annual judicial wellbeing seminar (2022, Christchurch). She has also supported the teaching of her colleagues generally by leading two mini-symposia on teaching methods (2019 and 2023).

Anna is passionate about the benefits of mindfulness as a pedagogical tool for enhancing student hauora, wellbeing, and academic achievement. An award-winning teaching colleague commented on Anna's 'values' meditation break between challenging topics;

“It began in a rather thoughtful way, by you empathising with the upcoming exam anxiety among your students. You then led them through a practice of focusing on the breath, labelling their thoughts, feeling and acknowledging emotions and dispositions and then at the end recommitting to their values as individuals and why they were studying law in the first place. It felt profound. You could hear a pin drop during the exercise. “

As the leading voice of mindfulness in law in Aotearoa, she will continue to advocate for mindfulness in law schools, and provide support and guidance for any other educators interested in exploring contemplative learning techniques. She envisions a growing and self-sustainable community developing as she continues in this advocacy.



Te Whatu Kairangi Award

Category:

Progressing seamless ākonga transitions between contexts

Professor
Philippa Martin

Electrical and Computer
Engineering
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha

“Engineers cannot solve problems they cannot see and therefore having a diverse engineering workforce is important to achieve more equitable outcomes for all.”

Eight years ago, one of Philippa’s students in the Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) department at the University of Canterbury (UC) revealed that she had experienced harassment from some of her male peers. Listening to her speak, Philippa was taken back to the early 90s when she had been an ECE student at UC. She remembered the shock of coming from an all-girls’ high school to an (almost) all-male environment where she too was harassed by the male students.

She reached out to the Women in Engineering ProActive Network (WEPAN) and the University of Colorado Boulder researchers working on improving the climate for under-represented engineering students. This started her research into diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), which led to her spearheading a series of initiatives at UC aimed at transforming the Engineering culture so all students could belong and succeed.

Over 80% of UC’s Engineering students were male, predominantly Pākehā school-leavers from high-decile schools. The Engineering Student Society reinforced the ubiquitous stereotype of the Engineering student as a beer-drinking, sausage-eating alpha male, thereby marginalising Māori students, Rainbow students, international students, neurodiverse students, non-school leavers, and women. She felt that a more diverse community of belonging needed to be created.

Philippa could see that to affect change, the culture of first-year Engineering needed to change. Her vision was that first-year students would go on to become mentors, tutors and professional engineers who would radiate a different set of values around inclusion. This vision aligns with the Tertiary Education Strategy’s (TES) call for education systems to adapt to the needs of varied learners and to empower them to achieve their goals.

“[Philippa] has been an inspiring role model and mentor for female engineering students to the extent of leading massive culture change, and has actively advocated for inclusion and under-represented groups in engineering.” (ECE Head of Department and Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor, 2018-2022)

Holding the role of First-Year Dean of Engineering (2018–2021) enabled Philippa to focus on the transition of first-year students into Engineering. She formulated a strategy called “More than Numbers” aimed at improving the experience of all first-year Engineering students. The strategy aimed to bring humanity into the technical world by creating a culture of connection, belonging, and respect.

She worked in conjunction with colleagues from within Engineering and across campus to establish and lead a set of initiatives that upskilled staff on DEI and provided students with academic, pastoral, and peer support as they made their transition into university and their specialist discipline. She created a change community and empowered people to lead their own initiatives to advance DEI and improve first-year engineering student experience and success. Re-establishing a First-Year Engineering Board of Studies was crucial to address the lack of oversight and coordination across the Faculties of Science and Engineering.

She invented, co-designed, and implemented the ENG ME! peer mentoring programme, a student-led, faculty-enabled peer mentoring programme for all first-year Engineering students. Co-designing ENG ME! with student leaders, Māori, Pasifika, academic developers, and other experts across campus was crucial to making it NZ-relevant.

The goals of ENG ME! are to provide a space for whakawhanaungatanga, creating a sense of belonging and connection to UC Engineering, and to extend manaakitanga, providing direction, encouragement, motivation, friendship, and study support as students get established at university. Such is the success and merit of the programme that 200+ students applied to be mentors in 2022.

“ENG ME! has extended me as a person in ways I never thought possible. Mentoring a group of my peers was one of the most daunting things I have ever done and now [is] one of the things I am most proud of.” (Graduate ENG ME! mentor and mentor leader)

Philippa also knew that the culture change would only “stick” if it continued through the transition to the specialist years. An Ako grant enabled her to work with UC experts to create an orientation program for ECE which encouraged inclusive cohort formation.

Students beyond Engineering have also been impacted by this work. Engineering had the worst equity reputation on campus, but is now consulted by other faculties on DEI initiatives. They helped Law establish their Law ME! peer-mentoring programme, and advised Education, Arts and Business about developing similar programmes.

“Research conducted in the Faculty of Law identified that many of our first-year students struggled with transitioning from high school to university and making connections with their peers. We saw the ENG ME! programme as a proven way to address both identified issues.” (Law ME! academic lead, UC)

The culture change also needed to occur in how UC supported first year students through failure and academic warning processes. Working with staff in Engineering and Health Sciences, Philippa reimagined academic warning processes to focus on strengths and solutions, rather than deficits and problems. She role modelled a different way for engineers and leaders to communicate. This mahi (work) has led to a more supportive and mana enhancing approach to handling academic failure. Working with academic support staff she also led an overhaul of academic writing assessments to increase support of first-year students.

Reflecting on the deeply personal origins of her mahi, Philippa is grateful not only to have had the opportunity to lead the initiatives outlined above, but also to have played a role creating a culture where staff and students empower others. This mahi has changed how she sees the future of engineering culture and how she operates within it.

Philippa is no longer Dean, but the initiatives she implemented continue to function and evolve. ENG ME!, in particular, being student-led, changes each year, depending on the needs and strengths of each cohort. ENG ME! is thriving and has more fully evolved as a student-led entity, with mentor leaders now running the mentor training (rather than staff).

The fact the ENG ME! model has been replicated in other contexts proves its adaptability and relevance. More profoundly, the empowerment of student leaders through ENG ME! is sustained through to the professional context. The initiative is producing graduates who enter the workforce ready to replicate a culture in which they have a voice, in which they respect others and are respected, and in which they empower others to succeed because they themselves are empowered.

“I am trying to empower [mentors] to be the best leader and Mentors to their group. I’m not just mentoring students, but I am empowering students to do their job well.” (ENG ME! mentor leader)

In the same way that other Departments at UC have been inspired by this approach in tackling issues of equity, other academic institutions in New Zealand will, in becoming aware of this story, be invited to create their own ways of addressing these issues in their unique contexts.



Te Whatu Kairangi Award

Category:

Achieving diversity and inclusion for improving outcomes for: Māori learners; Pacific learners; neurodiverse learners; and/or learners with disabilities

Associate Professor Kate Schick

Political Science and
International Relations
Te Herenga Waka
Victoria University of Wellington

“A cornerstone of my teaching is inclusivity: I am intentional about ensuring that the diverse range of ākonga who take my classes feel welcomed.”

Kate Schick is Associate Professor of International Relations at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington. She has been permanently employed in the Political Science and International Relations Programme since February 2009.

Kate’s relational pedagogy developed in response to her desire to preserve communal small-group deep learning in the context of large upper undergraduate and postgraduate classes. She creates relational learning environments that exemplify the TES’s core objectives of centring learners and reducing barriers to education for all ākonga, facilitating caring and inclusive pedagogical communities that foster deep learning. Rather than including students into a fundamentally unchanged mainstream classroom environment, Kate has transformed the way that she teaches, centring relationships, community and care.

Her relational pedagogy centres ako, the idea that we all learn from and teach one another, and whanaungatanga, the sense of community that we build by being together. As a result, ākonga come to better understand themselves and their world(s) through relational engagement as they embark on learning journeys with their peers.

Over the past eight years, Kate has formalised her relational approach to teaching via the use of ‘micro-communities of learning’. Ākonga are pre-assigned to groups of approximately eight ākonga and their learning happens primarily in these small groups. Ākonga reflect, write, discuss, and present in their groups. To enable ākonga to come to know and trust one another requires a lot of work – organising and adjusting groups, being clear about the kaupapa of the course, and giving space for community building. Through that trust, ākonga become increasingly willing to be vulnerable with one another, ask questions on a deeper level, and engage with intellectually and politically challenging material. In community, they uncover their own critical capabilities and experience transformative learning.

A cornerstone of her teaching is inclusivity. She is intentional about ensuring that the diverse range of ākonga who take her classes feel welcomed. She draws on years of professional development to integrate Mātauranga Māori into her teaching philosophy and practice. She starts classes with karakia, integrates te reo Māori and Māori and Pasifika content, and

encourages ākongā to bring their own identities and culture in conversation with the course content via research and creative projects.

Kate works to ensure all ākongā can succeed in her classes, with a particular focus on those whom mainstream education often fails. As the parent of a dyslexic child, she is particularly attuned to the need to support neurodiverse learners and learners with disabilities. She seeks to provide alternative modalities of content, assessment and class design that are better suited for neurodiverse learners than traditional models of education.

Examples of practices that are inclusive of neurodiverse learners include offering course content via pre-recorded short video lectures and ensuring that all required readings are available as audio texts. Kate also provides creative project options and self-reflection essays as alternatives to traditional assessment formats. Her classroom design incorporates periods of reflection prior to discussion as well as ensuring student presentations take place in small groups with people they know and trust.

Micro-communities have been central to Kate's relational pedagogical practice for many years. After every trimester, ākongā tell her the opportunity to learn in the context of micro-communities has made them feel part of a meaningful community and has transformed their thinking. Ākongā highlight this 'superb,' 'fantastic,' 'passionate' and 'engaging' approach, saying that it proactively welcomes diverse students and perspectives, is inclusive of different learning styles and ākongā with disabilities, and facilitates learning via community.

"The structure of the course reaffirmed what it was teaching: we learn from each other, we learn from dialogue, we learn from being vulnerable enough to express how something made us feel. I am so grateful for the opportunity to sit with a group of people (whether in person or online) and just discuss these big ideas, all of us changing and growing simply through discussing them." (Student feedback 2021)

Kate's adoption of micro-communities of learning is particularly valuable for Māori and Pasifika ākongā. This relational pedagogy includes whanaungatanga (relation and belonging) and manaakitanga (care), which are important for enhancing Māori learner success, as well as Pacific learner success.

From 2020, Kate has offered a 'creative option' for assessment in lieu of a final essay for her Critical Global Politics paper. Students can engage with course thinkers and themes via creative media and accompanying critical reflection. In 2021, for instance, students created mōteatea (traditional chant), triptych of painted kōwhaiwhai, creative dialogue, poetry, visual media, and a Pacific textbook that incorporated tapa cloth and weaving. This option allows students to more explicitly bring their own identities and cultures into dialogue with the course themes and means Indigenous students can express their learning using modalities specific to their cultures. By extending their learning beyond the essay form, students engage thoughtfully not only with the course content but also with peers, families and mentors, who they often ended up discussing their projects with and learning from during the process.

"This project was deeply personal for myself as it was about my iwi and my tupuna...[it] extended my own personal understanding of my hapu, whakapapa and whenua." (Student feedback 2021)

In recognition of Kate's sustained contribution to the teaching and learning of International Relations, she was jointly awarded the British International Studies Association Award for Distinguished Excellence in Teaching International Studies (2022). She was also awarded the Victoria University Teaching Excellence Award (2022) and Most Popular Lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences award (2011).

Kate is committed to the dissemination of her relational pedagogical practice beyond the classroom. She exercises leadership/hautūtanga in teaching by actively sharing her innovative practice and research on critical and creative pedagogies within and beyond Aotearoa. Her teaching practice has garnered international and national recognition via international conferences and workshops and pedagogical publications with international presses.

“Kate exemplifies the phrase ‘servant leadership’ in the way that she supports her colleagues’ teaching development (colleagues both within and beyond the university).” (Peer feedback 2022)

Kate's relational teaching practices are sustainable and increasingly widely adopted – she has been using and refining micro-communities since 2016 and the practice is replicable across teaching modalities (in person, online and blended learning) and disciplines (peers in the arts and sciences have adopted the model with great success). She actively shares her teaching approach and practice locally, nationally and internationally. Winning this national award will enable her to further widen her community of practice, giving her the opportunity to learn from other exceptional teachers and to share her relational practice more widely across Aotearoa and beyond.



Te Whatu Kairangi Award

Category:
Innovation in learning, teaching,
and curriculum

Melanie Wall

Senior Tutor
Te Kura Mātai Taiao
School of Environment
Waipapa Taumata Rau
The University of Auckland

Melanie is a tertiary educator with over 20 years of experience, lecturing at the Universities of Edinburgh and Hull, and then the University of Auckland from 2005. She was born in Taupō and has Ngāti Tūwharetoa whakapapa and Pākehā ancestry.

Melanie's geography subject expertise empowers students to think critically and challenge the status quo, often engaging with controversial issues. She draws on the *critical pedagogy* of bell hooks to inform her approach to relational learning, which seeks to teach to transgress. In commenting about her teaching, Melanie noted:

“In teaching geopolitics, contested histories, and geographies of exclusion, issues such as nationalism, race, gender and class can enter the classroom. But the good thing about controversial topics is that students have skin in the game in terms of their experiences, identities, and cultures, so they tend to be much more engaged in their learning.”

Many of the techniques encouraging student interaction can be risky when teaching controversial issues. Safety is a key challenge. One of the TES priorities is “ensuring that places of learning are safe and inclusive and free from racism”. The problem is that when the teaching is about racism, the classroom cannot be free from it. hooks' approach instead proposes that safety is not the absence of conflict but rather overcoming the barrier of knowing how to cope in situations of risk.

In 2010, when active learning techniques in Melanie's lectures led to a back-row student altercation (albeit quickly diffused), she shied away from these, fearing a reoccurrence. Five years later, after significant critical reflection and research, Melanie re-engaged with active learning techniques to teach controversial topics. The physical altercation outlined earlier emphasises the critical importance of the relational component of active learning, especially when engaging with controversial topics. Not only was there no pre-existing relationship between the two students which could have enabled a different outcome, the large class setting made it impossible for the lecturer to be aware of potential issues.

In 2017, Melanie transformed her teaching approach to create a learning community through team-based learning (TBL), where learners enact controversial topics. She recognised that relational active techniques which are business-as-

usual in the tertiary learning environment, are challenging in large classes. Her revised approach contends that the nature of the relationship is critical for the success of active learning when engaging with controversial topics. Embedded in her revised approach to relational learning are the indigenous “Four R’s”: respecting students for who they are, being relevant to their world views, ensuring reciprocity in relationships, and helping students exercise responsibility for their learning.

Relational active learning in two third year courses was confined to small group teaching settings, mediating the risk. Tutorial streams are capped at 25 to enhance the relationship between staff and students, with 4–6 students working in the same team all semester. Each week’s tutorials have structured activities designed to enhance relationality, cumulatively building to the submission of a shared script; performance of their roleplay; peer review of their team members; and an individual critical reflection on the process.

Role-playing privilege in racialised contexts or enacting racialised discourses in a simulated newscast was the culmination of five weeks’ work in each course. Narrative pedagogies are employed through ‘storying’, where students are encouraged to draw on their own experiences and identities. A layer of protection is added though, with students encouraged to perform a role which is different from what they would ordinarily inhabit. A staff peer review of TBL on the Cronulla riots newscast noted:

“What was most revealing as an observer was the depth of the students’ learning. By embedding themselves in the aftermath of the riots, students were able to clearly link their experience to the theory.” (Lecturer, Colleague)

One of the ongoing obstacles to the success of her approach has been overcoming student resistance based on previous TBL experiences. Key changes emerging from the TBL co-design included: addressing the perceived negative grade effect, additional workload, regular peer review to address “freeloading”, assigning team membership, creating clear guidelines if any team issues arose, and providing timetabled space to complete out-of-class teamwork.

In terms of scale, Melanie has taught over 90 courses since 2005, reaching over 12,000 students. A key *summative* impact indicator are her SET results which have remained consistently high at an average of 97.6% agreeing that she is an effective teacher. Whilst she shares academic scepticism about SET results as a measure of success, she is pleased to maintain this average despite the shift to TBL.

The impact of TBL was also measured through formative feedback. Averaged results from anonymous surveys carried out between 2017–2019 reveal that when students initially receive the roleplay details, 86% are anxious about performing the roleplay. As evidence of impact, students are also surveyed five weeks later, after their roleplays, with 94.3% agreeing the roleplay was helpful for their learning and 95% declaring they would like to do further roleplays.

“This type of pedagogy necessitates students to reflect on their own values and beliefs, which can make them vulnerable. The success of the exercise was the result of Mel’s careful planning to establish a safe space for the students.”
(Associate Professor)

Leadership in innovating learning, teaching and curriculum at the school, faculty and university level were also recognised by this award. Melanie has sought to foster a culture of teaching excellence within her School. In 2018, she created the Ako Innovation

Committee (AIC) which promotes, enhances and supports research-informed teaching and learning excellence, collaboration and innovation. The AIC encourages innovative research-informed ako through improving existing practices or engaging in different or new pedagogical approaches, technologies, curricular enhancement, course design and organisation, and assessments.

Melanie has also led transformational initiatives to decolonise and indigenise ako. She is deeply involved in projects partnering with other Māori staff to enhance teaching of Te Ao Māori and indigenous knowledge. She is also a committed member of Te Taura Here Pūtaiao, a Māori leadership rōpū in the Faculty of Science. She is the co-lead of Te Ako Pūtaiao pou, which seeks to enrich curricula and pedagogies to enhance Māori learner success and staff experience.

“For a Māori student, the University of Auckland can be an alienating space... What helped to change this for me was Mel, through *what* she taught and *how* she taught.” (Student)

At a university level, she is currently co-leading the creation of a compulsory first year course from 2025, as part of the university’s Curriculum Framework Transformation (CFT). The course is an ambitious endeavour to make Te Tiriti o Waitangi and knowledge of place foundational for all students. Her co-leadership has provided a unique opportunity to draw on her expertise in teaching controversial topics and creating meaningful change for learners at scale, with relational learning core to the learning design. In commenting about Melanie’s co-leadership of the course, the Pro Vice Chancellor Māori noted:

“I cannot overstate how crucial Mel’s institutional, pedagogical and curriculum expertise has been for the University.”

In recognition of her impact and practice both within and beyond the classroom, she was awarded the 2019 Faculty of Science Dean’s Award for Teaching Excellence, the 2022 University of Auckland Sustained Excellence in Teaching Award, and she became a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy in 2020.

The story behind the korowai – Rauaroha



The name Rauaroha was chosen for the korowai that is worn by each recipient of the annual Prime Minister's Educator of the Year Award. The korowai is a chiefly garment that recognises the mana of the Educator of the Year award and the person who receives it. It will be passed on each year to the Educator of the Year 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 were, 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 Te Whatu Kairangi Awards.



Te Whatu Kairangi Awards administered by



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