

Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence

TE AO MĀORI SKILLS FRAMEWORK TOOLKIT: FOR EMPLOYERS AND MENTORS

2025

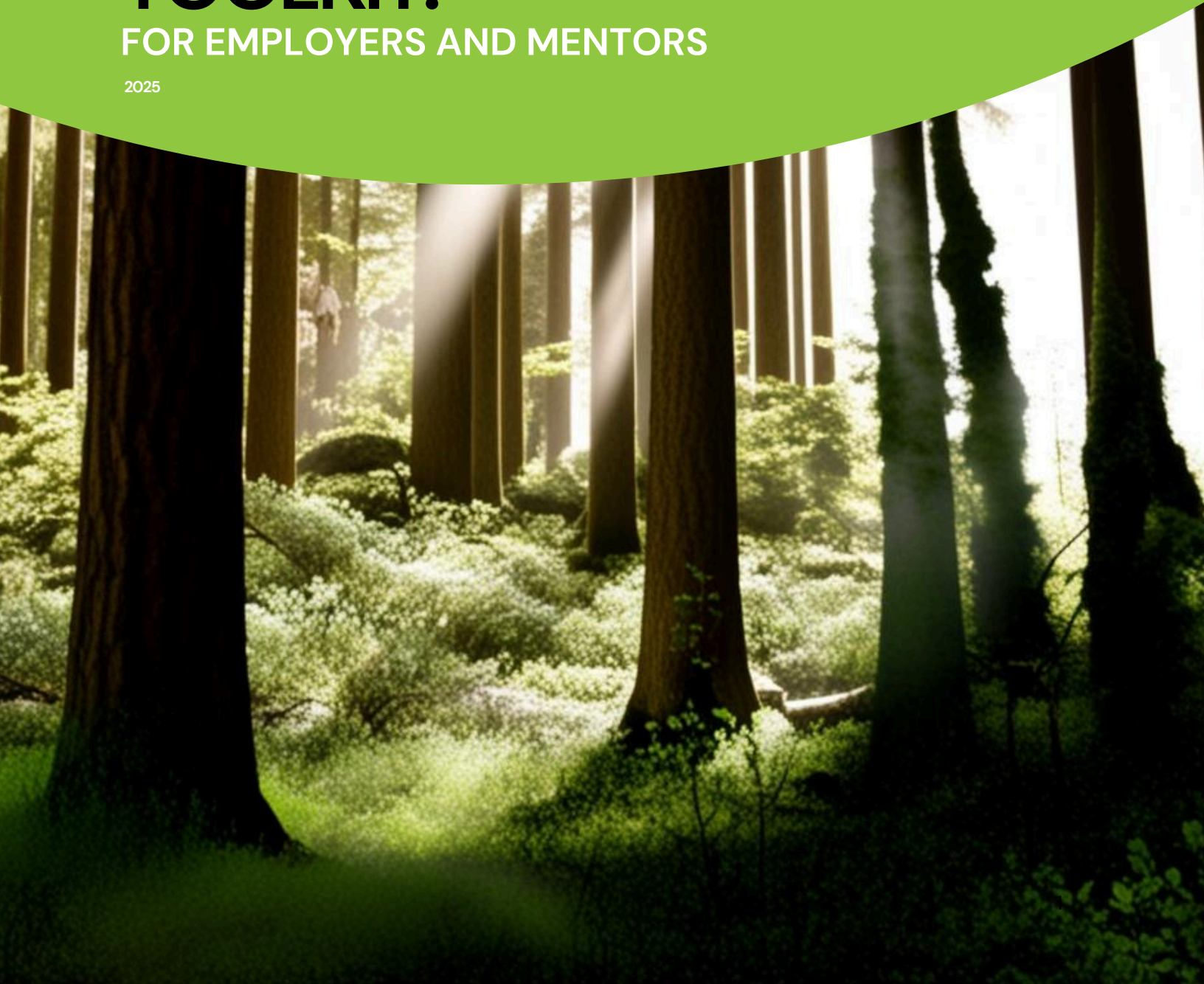


Table of Contents

Welcome to the Skills Toolkit	5
Key Information	
Who is This Toolkit For?	6
How to Use This Toolkit	6
Caveats	6
Documents	6
Aim	7
How to use this Skills Framework	7
Te Ao Māori Perspectives and Principles	8
Practical Application	
Framework	9
Supporting Framework Discussions	9
Develop Relationships	
The value of developing relationships	10
Guidance	10
Review key concepts	
The value of key concepts	11
Guidance	11
Reflect on values	
The value of reflecting on values	11
Guidance	11
Start small	
The value of starting small	12
Guidance	12
Encouraging discussion	
The value of encouraging discussion	13
Guidance	13

Extended skills framework	14
Core transferable skills	
Overview	15
Whakataukī/Whakatauākī	15
Elements	15
Examples and considerations	15
Goal Checklist	15
Sense of self	
The Value of Sense of Self	16
Element - Tūrangawaewae	16
Element - Whakapapa	16
Examples	
Encouraging a sense of self	17
Scenario	17
Consideration	17
Goal checklist	17
Learning to learn	
The Value of Learning to learn	18
Element - Ako	18
Examples	
Encouraging Ako	19
Scenario	19
Consideration	19
Goal checklist	19
Thinking Critically	
The Value of Thinking Critically	20
Element - Mātauranga	20
Examples	
Encouraging Critical Thinking	21
Scenario	21
Consideration	21
Goal checklist	21

Interacting with Others

The Value of Interacting with Others	21
Element - Whanaungatanga	21
Element - Manaakitanga	21

Examples

Encouraging a sense of self	22
Scenario	22
Consideration	22
Goal checklist	22

Participating and Contributing to Others

The Value of Participating and Contributing to Others	23
Element - Kōtahitanga	23

Examples

Encouraging Participation and Contribution to Others	24
Scenario	24
Consideration	24
Goal checklist	24

Iwi and Hapū Ecosystem

The Māori Ecosystem at a Glance	26
Navigating Relationships	26

Tips and Tricks

General Tips	27
--------------	----

Engaging with Iwi and hapū

Do's	28
Dont's	28

Glossary	29
----------	----

Welcome to the Skills Toolkit

“Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.”
“With your basket and my basket, the people will thrive.”

The Skills Toolkit is designed to support **Employers and Mentors** in fostering the essential transferable skills learners need to thrive in the dynamic Food and Fibre sector. It offers tools to guide individuals toward success across diverse roles, drive innovation, and contribute to a sustainable and resilient industry.

Guided by Te Ao Māori Values

Central to the Toolkit is its integration of Te Ao Māori principles, which Employers and Mentors can use these to foster individual and collective well-being, creating culturally rich and inclusive workplaces.

A Shared Language for Growth

This Toolkit provides a unified framework for recognising skills, whether gained through formal education or lived experience. This ensures all learning pathways—traditional or unconventional—are acknowledged and aligned with the evolving demands of the Food and Fibre sector.



Pathways to Thrive

By leveraging this resource, Employers and Mentors can guide individuals to develop:

- Adaptability to navigate industry challenges.
- Critical Thinking for problem-solving and innovation.
- Collaboration Skills to enhance teamwork and drive progress.

The whakataukī “Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi” (With your basket and my basket, the people will thrive) underscores the importance of shared effort and unity for collective success.

Empowered for the Future

This Toolkit is more than a guide—it’s a call to action for Employers and Mentors to lead with integrity, nurture talent, and build a workforce prepared for future challenges. By embracing this Toolkit, you can help individuals honour the past, succeed in the present, and shape a better future for themselves, their workplace, and the sector.

Start today and use the Skills Toolkit to cultivate a workforce ready to seize opportunities and make a lasting impact.

Key Information

Who is This Toolkit For?

Employers and Mentors: Supports embedding transferable skills in organisations to enhance adaptability, growth, and collective wellbeing.

How to Use This Toolkit

- **As a Reference for Skills Development:** Use this Toolkit as a foundational resource to guide skill-building and adaptability within the Food and Fibre sector.
- **To Design Workshops, Mentoring Sessions, and Training Programs:** Structure sessions that highlight core transferable skills while integrating Te Ao Māori principles such as rangatiratanga (autonomy), manaakitanga (care), kaitiakitanga (guardianship), and whanaungatanga (building connections) to support personal and professional growth.
- **As a Tool for Self-Reflection and Guidance:** Encourage individuals to reflect on their strengths and areas for development or use the Toolkit to guide others through their growth journey, aligning skill practices with Te Ao Māori values.
- **To Develop Culturally Relevant Training:** Apply this Toolkit to create training programs that are culturally appropriate, contextually relevant, and impactful, aligning with the principles of Te Ao Māori and the evolving needs of the Food and Fibre sector.

Caveats

Disclaimer: This Toolkit includes Māori kupu (words) whakataukī (proverbs) and whakatauākī (attributed proverbs) to reflect and honour Te Ao Māori principles within the Food and Fibre Skills Framework. Interpretations provided aim to support workplace understanding while upholding core Māori principles.

Recognising that interpretations of Te Reo Māori and cultural elements can vary among whānau (family), hapū (sub-tribe), and iwi (tribe), individuals are encouraged to consult local Māori leaders or cultural advisors to ensure culturally appropriate application and deeper understanding.

Documents

This Toolkit is designed to align with the Food and Fibre CoVE – Skills Framework and Core Transferable Skills descriptions. It is intended to be used in conjunction with these resources to ensure a comprehensive approach to skills development.



Key Information

Aim:

The Food and Fibre Skills Framework has been developed to:

- Develop a common language to describe skills and knowledge, which will support flexible qualifications and transferable skills.
- Help understand which skills are relevant across the Food and Fibre sector and workplaces, and which are more specialised.
- Help recognise skills that are gained outside of the formal qualification system.
- Enable the future proofing of Food and Fibre sector skills and capabilities, addressing new and emerging skills as well as current skills.
- Enable the simplification of qualifications.

How to use the Skills Framework

As an Employer or Mentor in an organisation, there is an additional interpretation that the Skills Framework can support. You should review your skills as an individual, but in addition think how the Skills Framework could be integrated into current processes to aid recruitment, induction, ongoing development of your team. The resources are indicative of the environment you could provide to develop these skills in your work-place.





Te Ao Māori Perspectives and Principles

Understanding and embracing Te Ao Māori (the Māori World View) is an ongoing journey that requires more than a single resource. This Toolkit offers a starting point for embedding these perspectives into your work place, but it's true value lies in fostering ongoing relationships with whānau, hapū, and iwi. Strengthening these connections enhances understanding and ensures meaningful application in your organisation's practices.



Understanding a Te Ao Māori Perspective:

A Te Ao Māori perspective represents a Māori worldview, where cultural values and beliefs influence how Māori perceive and interact with the world. Each whānau, hapū, and iwi brings unique interpretations, emphasising particular values or practices. Recognising this diversity is essential for authentic engagement.

Mason Durie's **Te Whare Tapa Wha** model offers an excellent introduction to Te Ao Māori. Originally developed as a model of well-being, it uses the four foundational sides of a marae (meeting house) as a metaphor. This framework provides valuable insights into how Māori perceive and connect with the world, making it a powerful starting point for understanding Te Ao Māori principles.

Mātauranga Māori:

Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) represents the body of knowledge originating from Māori tīpuna (ancestor), encompassing perspectives, creativity, and cultural practices. More recently, it has been used to describe the broader knowledge systems, values, and worldviews of Māori. Understanding Mātauranga Māori alongside Te Ao Māori provides a holistic foundation for integrating Te Ao Māori perspectives into organisational practices.

Practical Application

This framework (below) serves as a structured approach for incorporating cultural perspectives, specifically Te Ao Māori, into organisational practices and discussions around how to use the Skills Framework. By using this framework, organisations can ensure that their processes and discussions reflect not only technical or operational objectives but also cultural inclusivity and relevance. It supports a thoughtful, intentional approach to integrating key Māori principles into practical applications, fostering a deeper connection between organisational goals and the communities they serve.

By following these steps, organisations can create a foundation for embedding cultural understanding into their processes, such as the development and application of a skills framework. This approach not only improves the alignment between the framework and the diverse contexts in which it is used but also builds trust, authenticity, and engagement within teams and with external stakeholders.

The Framework



2

Review Key Concepts:

Familiarise yourself with the resources key terms and Te Ao Māori perspectives.



3

Reflect on Values:

Consider how Te Ao Māori perspectives align with your organisation's values.



4

Start Small:

Apply one or two concepts at a time.



Encourage Discussion:

Create space for team discussions and feedback.



Develop Relationships:

Connect with local whānau, hapū and iwi to create meaningful relationships and mutual support.

Supporting Framework Discussions

How This Framework Supports Skills Framework Discussions:

- **Incorporates Diverse Perspectives:** Embedding Te Ao Māori principles ensures inclusivity and cultural relevance.
- **Encourages Iterative Implementation:** Starting small and encouraging discussions make the process adaptable and collaborative.
- **Strengthens Community and Relationships:** By engaging with local stakeholders, the framework aligns organisational goals with community needs.
- **Aligns Values and Practices:** Reflecting on organisational values ensures that the skills framework is not just technical but also culturally grounded.

#1 Develop Relationships

The Value of Developing Relationships

Building and maintaining relationships with whānau, hapū, iwi, and local communities is fundamental to authentically embedding Te Ao Māori principles. Positioned at the base of the framework above, this step serves as the foundation for all other elements. Strong, enduring relationships provide the groundwork for meaningful implementation and continuous improvement. These connections are not a one-off task but an ongoing process that ensures mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration.

Guidance:

01

Initiate Connections:

Reach out to whānau, hapū and iwi, and community leaders to establish relationships. Focus initial conversations on whanaungatanga (building connections). Avoid formal discussions or "desk talk" at this stage—seek common ground through shared experiences, people, or places.

02

Meet Face-to-Face:

Whenever possible, prioritise in-person meetings. Create a welcoming environment by inviting leaders for an informal gathering, such as a cup of tea and a biscuit.

03

Invest in Genuine, Long-Term Relationships:

Attend community events, engage in ongoing dialogue, and show a genuine willingness to listen and learn. Consistency over time builds trust and mutual respect.

04

Include, Don't Only Call Upon:

Invite whānau, hapū and iwi representatives to actively participate in your events and initiatives, rather than limiting their involvement to ceremonial roles or formalities. If you're unsure, ask them how they would prefer to engage. Some may wish to support formal roles, while others might prefer to attend as guests.

05

Embed Relationship-Building as a Priority:

Make relationship-building an integral and ongoing part of your organisation's practices, ensuring it is consistent and meaningful.

06

Respect Diversity:

Acknowledge the unique perspectives within Māori communities. Adapt your approach based on the preferences and guidance of each whānau, hapū or iwi.

#2 Review Key Concepts

The Value of Reviewing Key Concepts

Understanding the principles and terms in the Skills Framework is essential for creating culturally relevant and informed workplace practices. This includes familiarising yourself with the frameworks and concepts outlined in this Toolkit, as well as the related Food and Fibre CoVE Frameworks, to ensure practices and initiatives align with cultural values and industry needs.

By gaining a thorough understanding of key terms, principles, and the purpose of these materials, you can better appreciate their relevance to your organisation and the broader Food and Fibre sector. This knowledge ensures your programs are not only technically sound but also culturally grounded, aligning with both the needs of the industry and the values of the communities you serve.

Guidance:

01

Thoroughly Read the Toolkit:

Review the document in detail, noting any unfamiliar terms or concepts.

02

Understand Context:

Explore the origins, history, and deeper meanings behind each concept to connect them to your own experiences or organisational context.

03

Consult Local Perspectives:

Recognise that this Toolkit serves as an overview and offers one perspective, acknowledging that interpretations and meanings may vary across whānau, hapū and iwi. Engage local Māori leaders, cultural advisors, or experts for regionally relevant insights.

#3 Reflect on Values

The Value of Reflecting on Values

Reflection ensures alignment between Te Ao Māori principles and your personal and organisational values. This process highlights areas of alignment and opportunities for growth, enabling meaningful integration of these perspectives.

Guidance:

01

Encourage Personal Reflection:

Invite team members to reflect on how Te Ao Māori principles resonate with their personal beliefs and practices.

02

Review Organisational Values:

Examine your mission, vision, and values to identify where your organisation already aligns with Te Ao Māori principles and where there is room for growth.

03

Discuss as a Team:

Facilitate team discussions to create a shared understanding and collective engagement with the principles.

04

Identify Actionable Steps:

Pinpoint specific areas where Te Ao Māori principles can be integrated into organisational practices, ensuring practical, collaborative implementation.

#4 Start Small

“He pai ake te iti i te kore.”
“A little is better than none.”

The Value of Starting Small

Introducing new concepts can feel overwhelming, so it's important to start small by focusing on **one or two principles** at a time. This approach builds confidence, ensures consistency, and allows your team to adapt gradually.



Guidance:

01

Pilot key principles:

Select one or two principles (e.g., whanaungatanga or manaakitanga) to implement over 4–6 weeks.

02

Create a roadmap:

Develop clear, step-by-step actions to integrate these principles into daily program operations.

03

Celebrate progress:

Share small successes to reinforce team engagement and motivation.

#5 Encourage Discussion

The Value of Encouraging Discussion

Encouraging discussion and reflection fosters a collective process that integrates diverse perspectives and insights. For Employers and Mentors, this step facilitates both workplace and individual reflections, enabling team members to share how implementing Te Ao Māori concepts has influenced their professional and personal growth.

Sharing these findings within and beyond your organisation provides valuable external perspectives, helping to enrich and refine your approach. This collaborative process ensures your programs remain culturally responsive, relevant, and impactful.

Guidance:

01

Schedule regular feedback sessions:

Use team check-ins to reflect on progress and challenges.

02

Encourage individual reflections:

Create opportunities for team members to share personal insights on how these principles are shaping their practices.

03

Document and adapt:

Use feedback to refine your approach and share findings with Māori stakeholders to maintain authenticity and inclusivity.

04

Celebrate achievements:

Recognise collective efforts and use successes to inspire continued engagement.



Extended Skills Framework

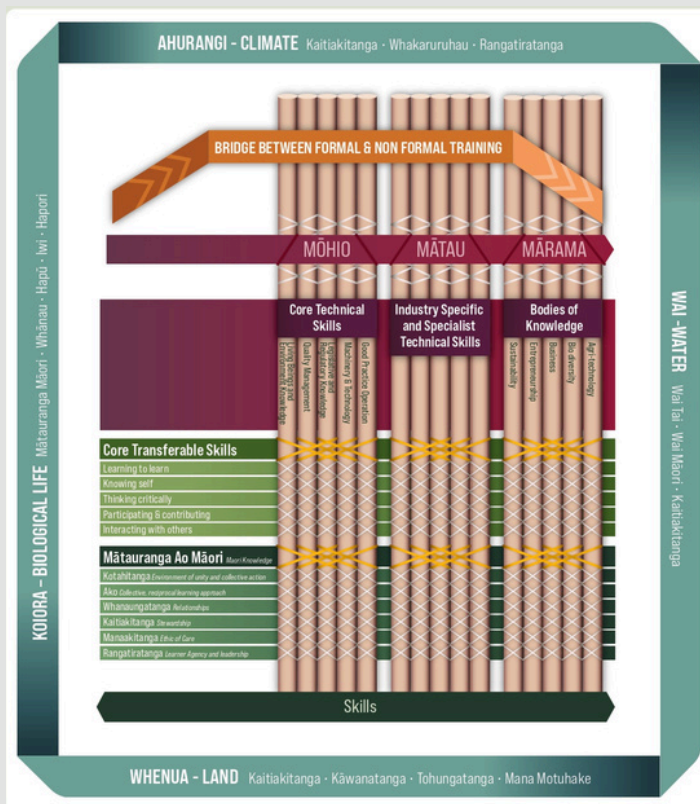
Core Purpose

The Extended Skills Framework, which incorporates Te Ao Māori principles and values, offers a culturally grounded approach to skills development. It supports Employers and Mentors in creating initiatives that help individuals and teams understand, apply, and strengthen transferable skills, fostering both personal growth and organisational success.

Empowering Learners

By aligning skills development with cultural values and practical applications, this Framework empowers individuals to:

- Adapt to challenges
- Thrive in diverse roles
- Contribute meaningfully to their communities and workplaces



Meeting Sector Needs

This resource supports the development of impactful, culturally relevant programmes that recognise and strengthen non-formal skills, providing pathways for these skills to contribute towards qualifications. By addressing the evolving needs of the Food and Fibre sector, it ensures a sustainable and future-focused approach.

Four Guiding Pou

The Framework is surrounded by four Pou (pillars) that reflect the Food and Fibre industry:

- Wai (Water)
- Whenua (Land)
- Ahuarangi (Climate)
- Koiora (Biological Life)

These Pou integrate principles like kaitiakitanga (stewardship) and manaakitanga to ensure sustainability and cultural alignment.

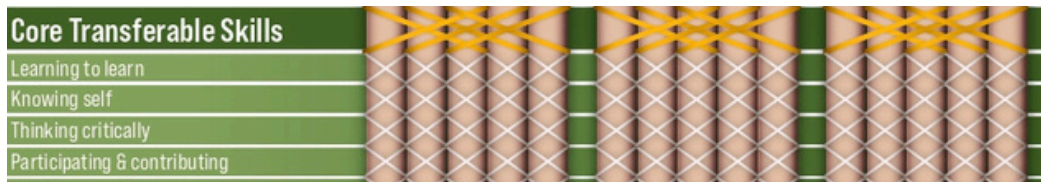
A Tukutuku Design

- The Framework is inspired by Tukutuku (ornamental latticework), traditionally found in whareni (meeting houses).
- Tukutuku panels tell stories of life, values, and cultural identity through intricate patterns.
- Similarly, this Framework weaves together skills, knowledge, and growth, emphasising their interconnectedness with values and community.

Core Transferable Skills

These are 'skills to build skills': learning to learn, learning for work, and learning for life. The term 'core transferable skills' has been deliberately chosen as these skill sets underpin the ability of individuals to gain, value, extend and transfer any skills or knowledge to different contexts. There are five skill sets that make up the Core Transferable Skills.

Reflecting Mason Durie's **Te Whare Tapa Whā** model, each Core Transferable Skill connects to one of the four sides of the whare, symbolising the strength and stability required for personal and collective success. This connection reinforces the importance of balance in building skills that contribute meaningfully to both individuals and their communities.



Overview

In this section, all five Core Transferable Skills are broken down to provide deeper meaning and understanding, offering Employers and Mentors the opportunity for meaningful and authentic application. This is achieved through the inclusion of whakataukī (proverbs) or whakatauākī (attributed sayings), key elements attached to each skill, scenario examples with considerations, and a goal checklist to guide implementation.

01

Whakataukī/Whakatauākī

Whakataukī and Whakatauākī encapsulate the wisdom, values, and teachings of tīpuna, offering insights into navigating challenges, building resilience, and fostering a strong sense of identity. For Employers and Mentors, exploring and applying these can provide guidance to support personal growth, enhance collective well-being, and strengthen meaningful connections within workplaces, creating culturally enriched and resilient environments.

03

Examples and Considerations

These practical scenarios and considerations demonstrate how Core Transferable Skills can be applied in real-world contexts, offering guidance to help Employers and Mentors implement these skills effectively in their work.

02

Elements

Each element connects its Core Transferable Skill through a Te Ao Māori perspective, featuring a whakataukī or whakatauākī, definition, explanation, and overview to provide cultural depth and clarity.

04

Goal Checklist

Each Core Transferable Skill includes a goal checklist designed as a starting point for Employers and Mentors. This checklist outlines practical steps to integrate these skills within workplaces and practices, ensuring meaningful and impactful outcomes.

Sense of Self

“Kia kaha ake te pakiaka,
ka kaha ake te tipu o te
rākau.”

“The stronger the roots,
the stronger the tree will
grow.”

The Value of Sense of Self

Knowing Self is about developing a strong sense of identity, which forms the foundation for growth, resilience, and success. From a Te Ao Māori perspective, this aligns with the concepts of Tūrangawaewae (a place to stand) and Whakapapa (genealogy), emphasising the importance of understanding who you are and your connections to whānau, the community, and the environment. This relational understanding strengthens your roots, enabling you to grow confidently and navigate challenges effectively.

Element

Tūrangawaewae:

01

Te Reo Māori:

“Ko taku rekereke, ko taku
Tūrangawaewae.”

02

English:

“Where I dig my heels is where I
make my stand.”

03

Explanation:

This whakataukī refers to the fact that it doesn't matter where you were born or raised, your Tūrangawaewae (place of belonging) is anywhere you feel strong and at home.

Overview:

Tūrangawaewae represents a sense of belonging and grounding, often tied to ancestral lands or spaces where one feels connected and secure. It is both a physical and spiritual foundation that provides stability and purpose.

Element

Whakapapa:

01

Te Reo Māori:

“He rau rengarenga nā roto i te
raukura.”

02

English:

“Listen to the whisperings.”

03

Explanation:

Traditionally this whakataukī speaks about healing but it also refers to the importance of listening to your intuition for these are the things of the spirit and our ancestors.

Overview:

Whakapapa refers to genealogy and the interconnectedness of all things. It links individuals to their ancestors, whānau, and the Taiao (the natural world), offering a sense of identity and continuity through generations.

Examples

Encouraging a Sense of Self

Employers and Mentors are encouraged to embed a **strong sense of self** within their employees and teams by incorporating Te Ao Māori principles into their workplace practices. This approach fosters inclusive environments that empower employees to explore, embrace, and express their identity within the organisation.

Scenario

A mentoring programme is introduced where mentors encourage employees to reflect on their whakapapa and the values passed down through generations. These reflections are linked to how individuals contribute to their roles and the organisation's goals.

Considerations

- Provide tools or prompts to help employees connect their personal stories and values with their professional roles, fostering purpose-driven growth.
- Ensure mentors approach discussions around whakapapa with care and understanding, respecting cultural protocols and individual comfort levels.

Scenario

The organisation hosts a team-building day at a local marae, where employees learn about the cultural and historical significance of the area. This activity encourages employees to reflect on and connect with their own tūrangawaewae while strengthening their understanding of the whenua (land).

Considerations

- Partner with local iwi or marae leaders to ensure cultural authenticity and provide meaningful insights into the area's significance.
- Create opportunities for employees to reflect on their own place of belonging and how this influences their work and connection to the team.

Goal Checklist: Develop a strong sense of identity, grounded in Tūrangawaewae and Whakapapa, to build confidence, resilience, and a foundation for personal and professional growth.

- Facilitate team-building activities that explore connections to the workplace environment.
- Create opportunities for employees to learn about and share their whakapapa.
- Encourage identity-focused discussions in mentorship programmes.
- Share stories of resilience and adaptability to inspire individuals.

Learning to Learn

“Ko te manu e kai ana ī te miro, nōna te ngahere. Ko te manu e kai ana ī te mātauranga, nōna te ao.”

“The bird that partakes of the miro berry owns the forest. The bird that partakes of knowledge owns the world.”

The Value of learning to learn :

Learning to Learn is about cultivating curiosity, adaptability, and a lifelong approach to acquiring knowledge. From a Te Ao Māori perspective, this aligns with the concept of Ako, which emphasises reciprocal learning—drawing on knowledge from others, knowledge given and received, knowledge shared, and knowledge passed down. Ako reflects a relational process, integrating Mātauranga with contemporary practices to ensure knowledge remains relevant and applicable.

Element

Ako:

01

Te Reo Māori:

“Kia hōhonu ai te puna kupu.”

02

English:

“Let the pool of words fall deep.”

03

Explanation:

This whakataukī suggests that one should strive for depth in understanding and knowledge, valuing profound insights over superficial ones. strong and at home.

Overview:

Ako represents reciprocal learning, where the roles of the teacher and learner are fluid and context-dependent. It highlights the relational aspect of knowledge—knowledge gained, shared, and applied in a way that strengthens both individuals and the collective.

Examples

Encouraging Ako

Employers and Mentors are encouraged to **cultivate holistic workplace environments** that seamlessly integrate Mātauranga Māori with contemporary practices, fostering reciprocal learning and adaptability. Building strong connections with hapū, iwi, and industry stakeholders ensures that workplace initiatives are grounded in both cultural and practical relevance. Additionally, empowering employees with tools and strategies for lifelong learning equips them to navigate evolving challenges and opportunities within the Food and Fibre sector.

Scenario

A large organisation introduces a structured mentorship programme where senior staff members are paired with new employees. The focus is on fostering reciprocal learning (Ako) by encouraging both parties to share their knowledge.

Considerations

- Ensure the programme promotes two-way learning, where senior staff share industry expertise while new employees offer fresh perspectives or technological insights.
- Incorporate Te Ao Māori principles into mentoring relationships, fostering respect and deeper understanding of diverse viewpoints and experiences.

Scenario

A workplace organises regular knowledge-sharing workshops where employees take turns presenting on topics relevant to their roles, experiences, or cultural insights. These workshops encourage learning across teams and foster a collaborative, inclusive environment.

Considerations

- Ensure workshops allow employees of all levels to share their expertise and perspectives, highlighting that everyone has valuable knowledge to contribute.
- Include sessions that incorporate Te Ao Māori principles, such as storytelling or discussions around whakataukī, to deepen understanding and strengthen cultural competency in the workplace.

Goal Checklist: Nurture curiosity, adaptability, and Ako learning, drawing on ancestral wisdom and contemporary practices to navigate challenges and opportunities.

- Foster a workplace culture of reciprocal learning (Ako).
- Provide professional development opportunities, including cultural training.
- Encourage employees to share best practices and innovative solutions.
- Recognise team and individual contributions to foster a growth mindset.

Thinking Critically

“I orea te tuatara ka patu ki waho.”

“A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions.”

The Value of Thinking Critically:

Thinking Critical involves evaluating information, perspectives, and actions to make informed decisions. A Te Ao Māori approach incorporates values such as manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga, ensuring decisions are made with respect for people and the environment.

Element Mātauranga:

01

Te Reo Māori:

“I orea te tuatara ka patu ki waho.”

02

English:

“A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions.”

03

Explanation:

This whakataukī refers to the need for creative thinking, critical thinking, adaptability and perseverance. To effectively solve a problem, all of these qualities are essential.

Overview:

Refers to the accumulation and application of knowledge, combining traditional wisdom and contemporary understanding. It highlights the importance of critical thinking, creativity, and perseverance in solving problems and making informed decisions that benefit both individuals and the wider collective.

Examples

Encouraging Critical Thinking

Employers and Mentors are encouraged to **equip employees with tools that foster critical thinking** aligned with Te Ao Māori principles. Workplace development programs and initiatives should integrate environmental sustainability, cultural values, and innovative production methods, while demonstrating how Mātauranga Māori can inform modern solutions. By embedding these principles into workplace learning and mentorship, employees can develop holistic problem-solving skills that reflect both cultural and environmental responsibility.

Scenario

A company in the Food and Fibre sector wants to improve its sustainability practices by incorporating Mātauranga Māori into resource management strategies.

Scenario

An organisation aims to foster innovation by drawing on mātauranga Māori to solve complex challenges and inspire creativity among employees.

Scenario

A workplace seeks to improve its decision-making processes by incorporating mātauranga Māori, ensuring that cultural perspectives, long-term impacts, and collective well-being are prioritised.

Considerations

- Partner with local iwi and hapū to learn traditional resource management techniques, such as maramataka (Māori lunar calendar) for planting, harvesting, and conservation.
- Combine Mātauranga Māori with contemporary sustainability methods to create innovative, culturally aligned environmental initiatives that benefit both the organisation and community.

Considerations

- Facilitate regular hui (meetings) where Māori knowledge experts share insights on traditional approaches to problem-solving, design, and innovation.
- Encourage teams to integrate Mātauranga Māori into product development or services, balancing cultural values with modern techniques.

Considerations

- Encourage teams to use mātauranga Māori frameworks, such as kaitiakitanga and whanaungatanga, to evaluate decisions for social, environmental, and cultural impacts.
- Provide tools like pūrākau (storytelling) or whakataukī to help employees critically reflect on challenges and adapt solutions grounded in Māori values.

Goal Checklist: Strengthen critical thinking by integrating Mātauranga Māori and values like Manaakitanga and Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) into decision-making processes.

- Encourage team discussions on aligning workplace practices with sustainability goals.
- Actively seek diverse perspectives during decision-making.
- Provide tools for employees to critically assess feedback and outcomes.
- Mentor employees to creatively apply traditional and contemporary knowledge.

Interacting with Others

“Whīria te tangata, toitū te mātauranga”
 “A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions”

The Value of Interacting with others:

Interacting with Others is about building strong relationships and navigating different social and cultural dynamics. It involves actively listening, recognising diverse points of view, and working collaboratively to share ideas and achieve goals. From a Te Ao Māori perspective, this aligns with the concepts of Whanaungatanga and Manaakitanga, emphasising the importance of connection, mutual respect, and collective knowledge.

Element

Whanaungatanga:

02

Te Reo Māori:

“He hono tangata e kore e motu; ka pa he taura waka e motu.”

English:

Unlike a canoe rope, a human bond cannot be severed.”

03

Explanation:

This whakataukī emphasises the enduring strength of human relationships. It contrasts the unbreakable nature of human bonds with the fragility of physical objects, like a canoe rope. The whakataukī highlights the core value of whanaungatanga. It serves as a powerful reminder to nurture and prioritise relationships within families, communities and experiences to share.

Overview:

Whanaungatanga represents the value of relationships and interconnectedness. It highlights the importance of establishing and maintaining meaningful connections with others, fostering trust, and working collaboratively toward shared goals.

Element

Manaakitanga:

02

Te Reo Māori:

“He aroha whakatō, he aroha puta mai.”

English:

If kindness is sown, then kindness is what you shall receive.”

03

Explanation:

This whakataukī emphasises the reciprocal nature of kindness, suggesting that acts of love and kindness will lead to receiving the same in return. It highlights the importance of generosity and the positive outcomes that arise from nurturing relationships with care and compassion.

Overview:

Manaakitanga reflects the practice of care, respect, and hospitality. It involves creating an inclusive and supportive environment where people feel valued and empowered to contribute.

Examples

Interacting with Others

Employees and Mentors are encouraged to **create culturally responsive and inclusive workplace environments** grounded in Whanaungatanga and Manaakitanga. This involves building strong, meaningful relationships, incorporating diverse perspectives, and designing collaborative initiatives based on mutual respect. Ongoing consultation and engagement are essential to ensure diverse voices are included in decision-making and workplace development. By fostering trust, respect, and cultural understanding, Employers and Mentors can create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and a sense of belonging thrives.

Scenario

An employer implements a wellness programme that provides mental health resources tailored to diverse cultural backgrounds. This includes access to support services and culturally responsive practices such as acknowledging tikanga Māori.

Considerations

- Ensure the wellness programme includes resources that respect cultural values, such as access to Māori healing practices or cultural counselors.
- Foster a workplace environment where employees feel safe seeking support without stigma.

Scenario

The workplace hosts a Matariki celebration to honour Māori culture. The event includes storytelling, shared kai (food), and reflections on the significance of Matariki in fostering renewal and connection.

Considerations

- Involve employees in planning the event to ensure it reflects cultural authenticity and inclusivity.
- Use the event as an opportunity to educate and build respect for Māori traditions while encouraging participation from all staff.

Scenario

A team-building workshop is organised to strengthen relationships among employees. Activities focus on collective problem-solving, sharing experiences, and recognising individual strengths.

Considerations

- Integrate cultural elements, such as whakataukī or storytelling, to highlight the importance of interconnectedness.
- Ensure activities encourage open communication and create an inclusive environment where everyone feels comfortable participating.

Goal Checklist: Build meaningful relationships through Whanaungatanga and Manaakitanga, promoting collaboration and mutual respect.

- Build meaningful connections with employees and community organisations.
- Actively listen to employees' perspectives and seek their feedback.
- Promote team-building activities that encourage collaboration.
- Provide resources for cultural competency training and awareness.

Participating and Contributing to Others:

“Taakiri tū te kōtahitanga,
taakiri tū te mana
Motuhake.”

“Independence is strong,
unity is stronger.”

The Value of Participating and Contributing to others:

Participating and Contributing is about being an active member of your community, building connections, and creating opportunities for others to succeed. It involves understanding the balance between rights, roles, and responsibilities to ensure a quality environment for everyone. From a Te Ao Māori perspective, this aligns with the concepts of Kotahitanga (unity) and Kaitiakitanga, emphasising collaboration, collective well-being, and shared responsibility.

Element Kōtahitanga:

01

Te Reo Māori:

“Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.”

02

English:

“With your food basket and my food basket, the people will thrive.”

03

Explanation:

This whakataukī highlights the power of unity and collective effort. It's a powerful statement about the importance of community, reciprocity, and working together.

Overview:

Kaitiakitanga reflects the responsibility of guardianship and care. It involves protecting and nurturing people, places, and environments to ensure they thrive for current and future generations.

Examples

Participation and contribution to others

Employers and Mentors **can foster inclusive and sustainable workplaces** by embedding Te Ao Māori principles such as Kotahitanga and Kaitiakitanga. This includes collaborating with hapū and iwi to integrate Mātauranga Māori into training and workplace practices, while supporting initiatives like cultural competency and environmental projects. By promoting collective purpose and sustainability, Employees and Mentors empower employees to contribute meaningfully to a culturally aligned and resilient future.

Scenario

A workplace team collaborates on a sustainability initiative, combining skills and perspectives to reduce waste across operations.

Scenario

Two companies collaborate with local iwi to host a sector-wide training day to upskill workers and address industry challenges.

Scenario

Senior employees mentor new staff on integrating sustainability principles into daily tasks and decision-making.

Considerations

- Ensure everyone's contributions are acknowledged and valued to foster a sense of ownership.
- Regularly communicate progress and challenges to maintain alignment and shared accountability.

Considerations

- Build trust and respect by involving iwi from the start and incorporating Mātauranga Māori into the programme.
- Clearly define shared goals and responsibilities to ensure collective success.

Considerations

- Align mentorship with organisational sustainability goals and values.
- Recognise and reward employees for innovative approaches to resource protection.

Goal Checklist: Actively engage in building connections, creating opportunities for others, and balancing rights, roles, and responsibilities to support collective success.

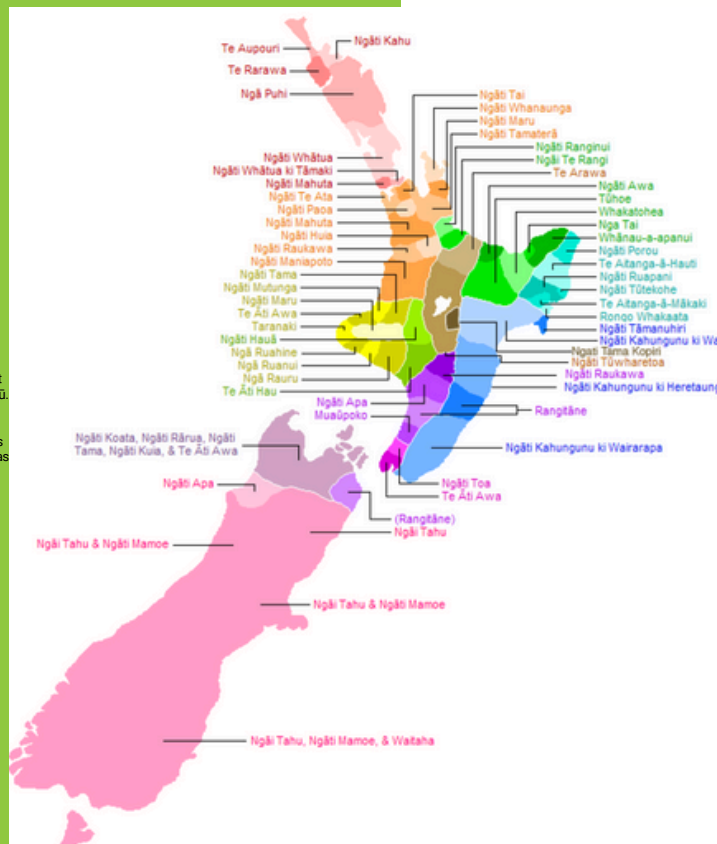
- Actively contribute to community initiatives, such as environmental projects.
- Share your skills and knowledge to support collective goals.
- Respect roles and responsibilities while collaborating with others.
- Celebrate achievements and reflect on how your contributions support long-term well-being.

Iwi and Hapū Ecosystem

The Māori Ecosystem at a glance

The Māori ecosystem is made up of hapū and iwi across Aotearoa (New Zealand). Each hapū and iwi carries its own unique whakapapa, tikanga, and connection to their whenua (land). While each iwi and hapū has its own guiding values, principles, goals, and aspirations, a common thread often found is the commitment to the care and well-being of their people, with a strong focus on creating a thriving future for generations to come.

The map below illustrates the geographic distribution of hapū and iwi across Aotearoa, showcasing the diversity and strength of Māori communities and their vital role within the Māori ecosystem.



Navigating Relationships

Navigating engagement with mana whenua can be challenging, particularly when determining who to approach. With many iwi and hapū, each holding the mana to speak for themselves, the process may feel complex. Additionally, the establishment of Post-Settlement Governance Entities (PSGEs) has added layers to the ecosystem, which can create uncertainty for those unfamiliar with it.

To ensure meaningful and effective engagement, we recommend seeking guidance from a cultural advisor. These professionals can help identify the appropriate hapū or iwi to engage with, ensuring your approach is respectful and aligns with tikanga Māori.

Tips and Tricks



These tips and tricks are designed to help you begin integrating Te Ao Māori principles into your workplace. Start small, build meaningful connections, and allow space for learning and growth. This journey is about progress, reflection, and creating an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive.

Start Small: Begin with one or two principles or actions to build confidence and consistency.

Be Patient: Cultural integration and meaningful engagement take time—allow space for learning and adaptation.

Build Relationships First: Focus on forming genuine connections with whānau, hapū, iwi, and communities before diving into formal processes.

Celebrate Progress: Acknowledge and share even small successes to inspire and motivate ongoing efforts.

Respect Diversity: Understand that interpretations and practices may vary among Māori communities—adapt and learn accordingly.

Listen Actively: Prioritise understanding over quick fixes—respect the voices and perspectives of all involved.

Reflect Regularly: Make time for individual and collective reflection on the process and outcomes.

Support Reciprocal Learning: Encourage a culture where everyone can be both a teacher and a learner.

Promote Cultural Competency: Provide opportunities for staff to learn about Te Ao Māori principles and practices.

Encourage Reflection: Facilitate discussions and check-ins to assess how principles are being applied in the workplace.

Lead by Example: Model respect for Māori values and integrate them into your organisational practices.







Recognise Contributions: Highlight and celebrate achievements to foster a sense of collective pride and motivation.

Engaging with Hapū and Iwi

Do's

-  **Build Relationships First:**
 - Prioritise relationship-building (whanaungatanga) over immediate outcomes or formal agreements.
 - Attend local events and hui (meetings) to show respect and genuine interest in the community.
-  **Engage Early and Often:**
 - Consult with whānau, hapū or iwi early in your planning or decision-making processes to incorporate their perspectives meaningfully.
-  **Respect Tikanga:**
 - Follow local protocols for hui, including pōwhiri (welcoming ceremonies) or mihi (acknowledgments), as guided by the host.
-  **Show Gratitude:**
 - Acknowledge the contributions of Māori participants through formal thanks, koha (gifts), or other appropriate gestures.
-  **Listen Actively:**
 - Give space for Māori voices and perspectives. Practice active listening to understand their priorities and values fully.
-  **Involve Cultural Advisors:**
 - Engage with cultural advisors, Māori leaders or kaumātua to guide culturally sensitive practices.
-  **Be Transparent:**
 - Clearly communicate intentions, goals, and limitations of the engagement process. Honesty builds trust.

Don'ts

-  **Don't Make Assumptions:**
 - Avoid assuming that all Māori communities share the same tikanga, kawa (protocols) or values. Each hapū and iwi are unique.
-  **Don't Rush the Process:**
 - Building relationships and consensus takes time. Avoid imposing tight deadlines that could undermine the engagement.
-  **Don't Tokenise or Exploit:**
 - Do not involve Māori communities solely for symbolic purposes. Ensure their input genuinely shapes outcomes.
-  **Don't Overlook Protocols:**
 - Ignoring or dismissing tikanga can be seen as disrespectful.
-  **Don't Assume Prior Knowledge:**
 - Do not assume that everyone in the community is familiar with the same practices, roles, or cultural protocols.
-  **Don't Use Māori Symbols Inappropriately:**
 - Avoid using Māori cultural symbols, language, or stories without permission or understanding their significance.

Glossary

Kupu Māori | English Translation

Ako	Learning and teaching; often refers to a reciprocal learning process.
Ahuarangi	Climate
Awa	River, symbolising flow and connection between people and the land.
Iwi	Extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.
Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship, stewardship; often used in relation to the care and protection of the environment.
Kete	Basket, often used metaphorically to represent knowledge or skills.
Koiora	Biological Life
Kōrero	Speech, discussion, conversation.
Kōtahitanga	Collective unity or togetherness, highlighting the power of working together.
Marama	Moon, to be clear, light, easy to understand, lucid, bright, transparent.
Manu	Bird, often used metaphorically to symbolise learning or individuals in the context of proverbs.
Mana	Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma - mana is a supernatural force in a person, place or object.
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, kindness, generosity, and support; the process of showing respect and care for others.
Mana Mōtuhake	Separate identity, autonomy, self-government, self-determination, independence, sovereignty, authority - mana through self-determination and control over one's own destiny.
Māori	Indigenous people of New Zealand.
Mārama	Enlightenment, understanding.
Mātau	Expertise, competent, clever, knowledgeable, or to understand.
Mātauranga	Knowledge, education, or wisdom.
Mātauranga Māori	Māori knowledge - the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori world view and perspectives, Māori creativity and cultural practices.
Miro	A type of berry, often used in proverbs to symbolise sustenance or knowledge.
Mōhio	To know, understand, realise, comprehend, recognise.
Ngahere	Forest, symbolising the natural environment or a community of knowledge.
Pakiaka	Roots, referring metaphorically to one's foundation or origin.
Pakiwaitara	Stories or narratives, often passed down through generations.
Poi	A lightweight ball swung rhythmically, used in metaphor to symbolise preparation or focus.
Rākau	Tree, often symbolising growth or development.
Rangatira	Chiefly, to be of high rank, become of high rank, enobled, rich, well off, noble, esteemed, revered.
Reo	Language or voice.
Rourou	Basket, used in a metaphorical sense to symbolise contributions or resources brought together for the good of the community.
Taiaha	A traditional Māori weapon, used metaphorically to refer to preparedness and focus.
Tangata	To be a person, human being, individual.
Te Ao Māori	The Māori worldview, encompassing their beliefs, values, and way of understanding the world.
Toi Māori	Traditional and contemporary Māori art forms, including visual arts, carving (whakairo), weaving (raranga), painting, and tattooing (tā moko).
Tukutuku	Lattice panels, typically found on the walls of whareni (meeting houses), often used for storytelling through patterns.
Tūrangawaewae	A place to stand; a place of belonging or connection, often referring to one's home or ancestral land.
Wai	Water
Wairua	spirit, soul - spirit of a person which exists beyond death.
Whakatauāki	Proverb or saying attributed to a known person, often a leader or someone of significance, expressing personal views or philosophies.
Whakatauāki	Proverb or saying that expresses wisdom or advice with no known author.
Whakapapa	Genealogy or lineage; the understanding of one's background and family history.
Whānau	Family or extended family.
Whanaungatanga	Relationship, kinship, sense of connection and belonging within a group, community or collective.

**"NĀU TE ROUROU, NĀKU TE ROUROU, KA ORA
AI TE IWI."**

**"WITH YOUR BASKET AND MY BASKET, THE
PEOPLE WILL THRIVE."**

NGĀ MIHI