Capturing Māori Lens to inform Work-based Food and Fibre Degree-Level Framework:

Te Ara Whakapakari "The Pathway to Strength and Development": DLF Te Ao Māori Engagement Framework

"Te Ara o Te Manu – The Pathway of the Birds"

This painting tells the story of growth through three manu — *Tūī*, *Kererū*, and *Kāhu* — each representing a stage in the journey of ako.

The Tūī is the beginning: curious, adaptive, and always listening. It thrives in spaces of learning and reminds us that growth starts by observing and finding our voice.

The Kererū brings stillness and weight. A nourisher of the ngāhere, it teaches patience, quiet strength, and the importance of carrying knowledge with care. Growth is not always loud — sometimes it's steady and unseen.

The Kāhu soars above with vision. It sees patterns, connects the dots, and holds responsibility. The Kāhu represents leadership — rising not just for oneself, but for the collective.

These journeys are bound by the flowing *kōwhaiwhai* — symbolising whakapapa, movement, and the rhythm of learning. The pattern reminds us that progress isn't straight; we loop, reflect, and return.

Te Ara o Te Manu is a reminder: learning is layered. We begin by listening, grow through connection, and rise with purpose — always returning to the kaupapa that grounds us.

Artist Credit: Toi and Design Limited

Acknowledgement of Contributors
E kore e mimiti te aroha me te ngākau nui mō ngā ringa raupā, ngā ngākau māhaki, me ngā reo kaha I kuhu mai ki Te Ara Whakapakari. To every learner, apprentice, employer, and hapū member who gave your time, whakaaro, and wairua — tēnei te mihi maioha.

Your contribution ensured this framework is not only meaningful but also enduring.

Mā te kotahitanga e pakari ai te ara — through unity, the path is strengthened.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

CONTENTS
_____

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
_____

The work-based Food and Fibre Degree-Level Framework (DLF[1]) was created by the Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence (Food and Fibre CoVE) to bridge the gap between formal education and real-world industry needs. While the initial focus was on improving technical skills and qualification pathways in the sector, it became clear that ensuring a strong Te Ao Māori perspective was essential for the framework to reflect the needs and aspirations of all learners.

Many Māori ākonga are navigating systems that weren't built for them. Too often, vocational programmes focus only on technical skills, leaving identity, tikanga, and whanaungatanga as afterthoughts. That's a gap we can't afford to ignore. Māori success isn't just about academic outcomes — it's about belonging, wellbeing, and purpose. And when those are in place, everyone benefits.

Te Ara Whakapakari was developed to answer this challenge. The name itself speaks to strengthening, maturing, and becoming grounded. It's not just about career progression — it's about growing people who are connected to who they are, where they come from, and where they're going.

This framework was developed over two phases. Phase 1 involved reviewing existing Māori education models — what was working, what values were embedded, and how those approaches aligned with learner needs. It showed us that there's a solid base of kaupapa Māori learning in Aotearoa, but these models often sit on the fringes of mainstream vocational education. We needed something more integrated and adaptable.

Phase 2 was co-design in action. We brought in voices from apprentices, hapū, and employers — not just to "consult" but to shape the framework with their lived experience. Together, we built a model grounded in four Pou: Pūtikitiki (pastoral care), Tohu (knowledge and qualification), Pīrere (learning through doing), and Ara (the future pathway). Each Pou represents a stage in the learner's journey, woven together by core values and cultural practices.

Te Ara Whakapakari is more than a model. It's a foundation for change. It gives providers, employers, and communities practical ways to create culturally grounded, inclusive environments where all learners — Māori and non-Māori — can thrive.

This report shares the kaupapa, the kōrero, and the framework that emerged. It's about lifting vocational education so that it works not just for the industry, but for the people in it.

_____

[1] The original name for this qualification was Food and Fibre Degree-level Apprenticeship – abbreviated as DLA. The intent was to indicate the delivery and assessment of learning to be like an apprenticeship as understood by the general public. However, 'apprenticeship' has a specific meaning with funding implications across the education system. Therefore the designation 'Degree-level Framework' (DLF) is used in this paper but the intent that delivery and assessment of learning is like an apprenticeship remains (just that the funding model will be different).

BACKGROUND
_____

Food and Fibre CoVE's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi was a key foundation for this mahi. Māori ākonga often navigate vocational education systems that weren't originally designed with their cultural realities in mind. While many providers are on a journey to strengthen their responses, there's growing recognition of the need for more culturally grounded tools and approaches to truly support Māori success.

Originally, the DLF was drafted to support one specific degree-level apprenticeship-like programme. But early conversations with HTK Group made it clear that this work had wider potential—to help shape the entire vocational education space, particularly where learning predominantly occurred in the workplace. In response, the Board expanded the vision to create an engagement framework that could be used across all Food and Fibre CoVE projects.

This framework honours mātauranga Māori, supports learner identity, and improves outcomes—not just academically, but also spiritually, socially, and culturally. It's not about token gestures or surface-level inclusion. It's about transforming the system, so that learners are truly supported from day one, right through to graduation—and beyond.

This work also connects to two other key projects: Māori Workforce Planning and Development, and A New Approach to Learner Pathways. Together, these pieces help shape a wider strategy for Māori engagement—one that's built on real partnership and accountability.

PHASE 1 FINDINGS
_____

Phase 1 was all about taking a closer look at the Māori education and vocational training models that were already out there. The goal was to understand which values and practices were already in use, how well they supported Māori learners, and where there was room to better integrate culture throughout the learning journey.

What We Found:
Many of the models already included strong cultural values like whanaungatanga, ako and manaakitanga. They were thoughtfully designed for the specific settings they served— especially in kaupapa Māori learning environments. These approaches provided a solid foundation for supporting Māori ākonga.

But when we looked at how these models would fit within a vocational, degree-level apprenticeship setting, it became clear there was an opportunity to go further—to create a framework that didn't just apply in pockets, but supported the whole learner journey, from classroom to workplace.

There was also a strong desire among stakeholders to see a framework that supported both Māori and non-Māori learners—while still staying true to mātauranga Māori and not diluting its meaning.

So, the clear next step was to design something new. A framework that would build on the strengths of what already exists, weave together the best elements, and ensure cultural integrity while lifting learner outcomes across the board.

DESIGN APPROACH
_____

The design of Te Ara Whakapakari was shaped by a simple truth: learning is relational. It doesn't happen in isolation — it's built through whakapapa, experience, and connection. That's why the framework isn't just a collection of values or outcomes. It's a woven system, guided by the principles of tāniko — a traditional Māori weaving style that symbolises intentionality, structure, and interconnection.

We knew from the beginning that if this model was going to work, it had to be built with the people it's meant to serve — not just on their behalf. That meant co-design, not consultation. The process was grounded in one-on-one kōrero with Māori ākonga, hapū, and employers. We listened closely — to what was working, what wasn't, and what people needed from a system that has historically left many behind.

The design doesn't just centre Te Ao Māori visually or symbolically — it's embedded structurally. The four Pou (Pūtikitiki, Tohu, Pīrere, and Ara) are more than categories; they represent real stages of growth, grounded in lived experiences and cultural meaning. Each Pou is linked to a traditional weaving pattern, reinforcing the idea that knowledge, wellbeing, and progression are connected — not separate tracks.

To support national consistency and alignment, we intentionally matched the framework's colour palette with the Food and Fibre Skills Framework- A New Approach to Learner Pathways. This helps learners, providers, and employers see how the DLF's values-based approach fits alongside existing competency models — not as a replacement, but as an enhancement that brings cultural depth and relevance.

Throughout the process, we also considered the experience of non-Māori learners. Their feedback reminded us that many are open and curious about Māori values — but unsure how to engage in a way that's respectful and confident. Therefore, the framework needed to speak to everyone, without watering anything down. That balance shaped our visual language, terminology, and implementation tools.

Ultimately, the design approach was guided by a commitment to integrity. The framework had to look, feel, and function like it belongs in Aotearoa. Not just in kaupapa Māori spaces, but in any learning environment that wants to uplift people — not just qualify them.

TE AO MĀORI INTERGRATION
_____

Te Ao Māori Integration was a critical design priority, shaping the core values and delivery approach of the Te Ara Whakapakari. These became the key points for inclusion, guiding how cultural elements were woven into the model:

- **Mātauranga Māori and Cultural Relevance**: Ensuring Māori knowledge systems are reflected in both curriculum and delivery, so learners feel connected to their identity and community.
- **Cultural and Academic Balance**: Valuing both formal qualifications and cultural ways of knowing, such as storytelling, collective learning, and tikanga Māori.
- **Immersive Learning and Wānanga**: Embedding experiential and place-based learning that strengthens understanding through cultural practices- including marae based learning, hapū led spaces and workplace settings.

The integration was not symbolic—it was structural. The design team sought to embed Te Ao Māori throughout the framework, while also ensuring that non-Māori educators, employers, and learners could interpret and apply it confidently and respectfully. This inclusive approach allows the framework to uphold tikanga and mātauranga Māori while remaining accessible and meaningful across diverse learning environments.

Te Ara Whakapakari weaves Te Ao Māori through every element of programme delivery:
- **Relationships**: Learners are not isolated units. They are part of whānau, hapū, iwi, and communities. Providers and employers must recognise and nurture these connections.
- **Engagement**: Begins before enrolment and continues beyond the classroom. Whānau involvement, cultural onboarding, and continuous support all matter.
- **Curriculum**: Education must reflect Māori realities. This includes Te Tiriti o Waitangi, kaupapa Māori principles, and learning experiences grounded in tikanga.
- **Learning**: Ako is reciprocal. Wānanga, peer learning, and oral history approaches are not optional extras—they are core methods.
- **Uplift**: Providers and employers must be culturally capable. Mentorship, pastoral care, and leadership development are part of the learning ecosystem.

This framework makes space for regional variation and iwi-specific tikanga. It encourages local adaptation while maintaining national consistency. It allows all learners to thrive without compromise.

METHODOLOGY
_____

The development of the DLF followed a mixed-methods approach combining literature review, cultural research, stakeholder engagement, and learner feedback.

Key steps included:
- **Desktop Research:** Phase 1 began with a comprehensive stocktake of existing Māori education and training models. These were analysed to identify common values, strengths, and their alignment with learner needs. The insights gathered were used

to create an initial model concept for the DLF, which was then distributed to stakeholders for feedback, testing, and further refinement.

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Interviews and hui were held with a diverse group of stakeholders, including Māori and non-Māori apprentices, employers from small, medium, and large businesses, and representatives from hapū, and Māori land organisations. Participants were engaged across regions such as Hawke's Bay, Taupō, and Christchurch, spanning industries including carpentry, civil construction, and agriculture.[2]
- **Survey of Non-Māori Learners:** A targeted survey captured the perspectives of non-Māori learners. The aim was to assess their awareness, comfort, and interest in engaging with Te Ao Māori values within vocational settings.
- **Iterative Design and Validation:** The framework was refined over several stages, with repeated feedback loops to validate relevance, accessibility, and cultural integrity. Visual and conceptual elements were tested with learners from diverse backgrounds.

This approach ensured the final model is rooted in mātauranga Māori, informed by real-world needs, and supported by voices across the education and industry landscapes.

ENGAGEMENT
_____

NON MĀORI LEARNERS
_____

One of the key parts of building Te Ara Whakapakari was understanding how non-Māori learners engage with Te Ao Māori — not just whether they're aware of it, but how they feel about it, and what support they need to interact meaningfully with it in their learning journey. We ran a targeted survey with non-Māori learners working across different parts of the food and fibre sector. This group included four international students, whose views were shaped by both interest in Aotearoa's cultural landscape and by their own cultural frames of reference. Their perspectives were valuable, though may carry biases that differ from those of domestic learners more familiar with Te Ao Māori perspectives.

What we heard was encouraging — and revealing.

Most learners showed genuine interest in learning about Māori culture. This wasn't about compliance or ticking a box. It came from a place of wanting to be better communicators, colleagues, and contributors in Aotearoa's diverse workplaces. In fact, 87% said they personally wanted to understand more about Te Ao Māori because they saw its relevance in their day-to-day lives and careers.

But alongside that openness was a clear message: "We want to engage, but we don't feel confident." Only 2 out of 15 learners said they felt ready to apply Māori values like

---

[2] A full list of participants organisations and Māori that were engaged in the development of Te Ara Whakapakari, is provided in Appendix 3.

manaakitanga or whanaungatanga in real-world contexts. For many, the framework felt abstract — rich in meaning, but hard to connect to their everyday work or study.

Common challenges included:
- **Conceptual overload**: Learners struggled with the meaning and application of concepts like Tohu or Ara without concrete examples.
- **Fear of getting it wrong**: Many worried about being disrespectful or accidentally misusing tikanga. This fear often stopped them from engaging at all.
- **Lack of onboarding**: Most had no clear introduction to the framework or to Māori concepts in their training — they were expected to "just pick it up."
- **Limited exposure**: While many had heard of values like manaakitanga or kaitiakitanga, few had experienced structured learning that unpacked those ideas in context.

Despite this, the will to learn was strong. Learners weren't dismissive — they were hesitant but hopeful. When asked what would help, their responses were practical and clear:
- **More visual resources** — diagrams, maps, and plain-language summaries to show how the Pou relate to their learning journey.
- **Cultural mentorship** — someone they could go to with questions, to learn in real-time without judgement.
- **Real-world examples** — stories from the workplace, case studies, and scenarios that connect Māori values to actual industry practice.
- **Safe spaces for learning** — environments where it's okay to ask questions, make mistakes, and grow at their own pace.

Many also said they appreciated how the framework was built around relationships. That emphasis on people, connection, and collective success made sense to them — even if they hadn't used the same language before.

What this tells us is that non-Māori learners aren't disengaged — they're just under-supported. With the right tools and guidance, they can — and want to — walk alongside Te Ao Māori in their learning. That's good not just for cultural literacy, but for creating workplaces and learning environments that reflect the true spirit of partnership.

MĀORI STAKEHOLDERS
_____

Throughout the development of Te Ara Whakapakari, we worked closely with Māori apprentices, hapū and marae representatives, and Māori employers. Their insights weren't treated as feedback — they were treated as direction. What they shared helped shape the heart of the framework, making sure it's not just culturally aligned on paper, but meaningful in practice.

Māori Apprentices
We engaged with 3 Māori apprentices across sectors including agriculture, construction, and trades. Their messages were powerful and consistent.

What made a difference to them was feeling culturally safe. When manaakitanga and whanaungatanga were present — in the classroom, the workplace, or a mentoring relationship — they felt more confident, more motivated, and more likely to succeed.

They also expressed a deep desire for more immersive cultural learning — not just references to Māori values, but real experiences: marae stays, wānanga, storytelling. These ways of learning didn't just teach skills; they grounded apprentices in identity. As one put it, "This isn't just about a job. It's about who I am, and who I can become for my whānau."

The four Pou — Pūtikitiki, Tohu, Pīrere, and Ara — all resonated, especially Ara, which spoke to their long-term goals: not just employment, but contribution, leadership, and legacy.

They also raised real concerns: Would employers and providers truly uphold these values, or would they remain surface-level? Would mentors have the cultural competency needed, or would learners be left carrying the burden alone? These questions were hopeful, not cynical, and came with suggestions: tuakana–teina support systems, staff training, and stronger employer accountability.

Hapū and Marae Representatives

Hapū and marae representatives from Hawke's Bay and Taupō shared their Mātauranga and cultural knowledge. Their focus was intergenerational. They saw Te Ara Whakapakari not just as a tool for learners, but as a vehicle for whakapapa and legacy.

They strongly supported the Ara pou, which reflects the idea of carving a path not just for oneself, but for those who follow. Many described it as a vessel for uplift — a way to build cultural and economic resilience in their communities.

But they also made it clear: if this model is going to work, it has to allow for local adaptation. Tikanga, reo, and environmental contexts vary across rohe. Hapū want to bring their own stories and ways of doing into the framework. That means mana motuhake must be upheld in delivery — not just in theory.

Their biggest concern was consistency. They've seen too many one-off, box-ticking engagements. They don't want another. What they called for instead were co-delivery models, real relationships, and long-term trust — not just consultation, but collaboration.

They also backed the idea of cultural infrastructure — kaiārahi, regional wānanga, and ongoing learning for employers and providers. These aren't extras; they're how tikanga gets upheld day to day.

Māori Employers

Māori employers brought a different but aligned perspective: how to make the framework real at the operational level. These Māori employers represented small, medium and large businesses operating across the agriculture and construction sectors.

They saw immediate alignment between the framework's values and the way they already run their businesses. Manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, collective responsibility — these weren't new ideas; they were already embedded in their workplaces.

Even so, formalising those values into systems — onboarding, mentoring, training — remains a challenge. They want support, tools, and templates to help embed these concepts without losing the human side.

They saw particular value in the Pūtikitiki and Ara Pou. Pūtikitiki speaks to pastoral care and connection — essential for any good team. Ara speaks to the kind of workforce they want to grow: not just skilled, but grounded, purpose-driven, and future-focused.

Employers suggested practical steps like Māori-led business workshops, digital resource libraries, and partnerships with local hapū to guide recruitment and mentoring. They weren't asking for help with the why — they were asking for support with the how.

Ongoing Engagement
All groups emphasised that this is just the beginning. Te Ara Whakapakari must continue to grow and evolve through ongoing kōrero, especially as it rolls out across different industries and regions.

The message was clear: if we want a framework that truly works for Māori, it has to stay connected to Māori — not just during design, but through delivery, review, and refinement.

TE ARA WHAKAPAKARI – DEGREE-LEVEL FRAMEWORK
_____

Te Ara Whakapakari means "the pathway of strengthening and development." In te reo Māori, "whakapakari" means to strengthen, mature, or grow. It refers to the process of developing capability, not just in skills, but in identity, purpose, and relationships. It's about helping people thrive, not only as workers, but as culturally grounded, confident individuals who contribute to their communities and workplaces.

This idea is at the heart of the framework. Te Ara Whakapakari supports learners through every stage of their journey – education, employment, and beyond. It does more than help them gain qualifications. It strengthens cultural identity and resilience, and supports lifelong learning.

The Weaving Patterns – Symbols of Strength and Unity
The framework is built around four Pou (pillars): Pūtikitiki (Pastoral Care), Tohu (Knowledge), Pīrere (Learning in Practice), and Ara (Future Pathways). Each Pou reflects a key part of the learner's journey and is represented by traditional tāniko weaving patterns. These patterns aren't decorative. They symbolise protection, progress, and connection – all essential for real growth.

Before we reach the centre of the framework, it's important to understand the visual language that holds it together. The weaving patterns used throughout the design are more than art — they carry deep meaning and represent the values that sit behind each Pou.

The Kaokao pattern, made up of outer triangles pointing inward, symbolises strength, protection, and unity. It reflects the idea that learning is never an individual journey. It

happens best when supported by whānau, mentors, employers, and community. It reminds us that achievement is shared, and strength comes from collective effort.

These patterns are not just visual elements — they reinforce the idea that cultural design and educational structure are connected.

Te Ara Whakapakari
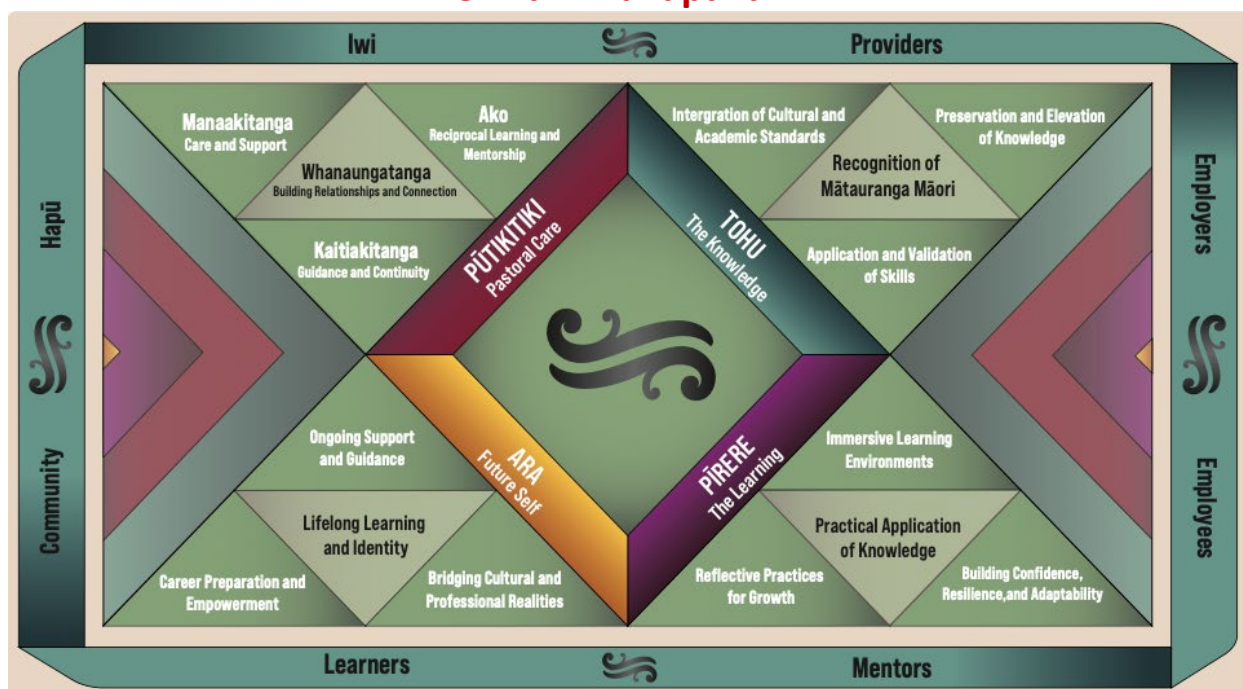
Relationships at the Centre – The Koru Model
At the centre of the framework sits the koru, a symbol of relationships. Like the flowing of the awa, it represents growth, nurture, and connection. It reminds us that success is never achieved alone. It's built through strong relationships with whānau, mentors, employers, providers, iwi, and hapū.

The koru appears both in the middle and around the edges of the framework. At the centre, it highlights the importance of respectful, long-term partnerships. Around the edges, the repeating koru patterns represent the support network that surrounds each learner.

The key partnerships are:
- **Providers and iwi:** Working together through shared outcomes, reciprocal relationships, and programmes that reflect local tikanga.
- **Mentors and learners:** A tuakana–teina relationship where learning goes both ways.
- **Employers and employees:** Creating workplaces that grow cultural confidence and capability.
- **Hapū and community:** Anchoring learning in place, identity, and intergenerational responsibility.

1. **PŪTIKITIKI – Pastoral Care**

Meaning: To knot or tie together.

Whakapapa: In traditional practice, *pūtikitiki* described the act of using harakeke to bind baskets and other items. It symbolises unity, strength, and the importance of woven connections.

Focus: Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, and Kaitiakitanga. This Pou is about building strong, supportive relationships that connect learners with whānau, hapū, iwi, communities, and workplaces. It ensures that learners are not navigating their journey alone, but are uplifted by a network of care.

In Practice:

Whanaungatanga – Building Relationships and Connection
- Begin every learning journey with culturally responsive practices—mihi whakatau, whakawhanaungatanga, and kai—to create a genuine sense of belonging.
- Honour learner milestones publicly and involve whānau, community, and employers in recognising achievements.
- Establish mutual accountability by encouraging two-way communication between learners and their support systems.

Manaakitanga – Care and Support
- Provide pastoral care that acknowledges the full person—mental, emotional, cultural, and spiritual wellbeing.
- Offer access to diverse support: cultural mentors, tuakana–teina pairings, peer support groups, and advisory services.
- Train educators and employers in cultural competence, so learners feel safe, seen, and respected.

Kaitiakitanga – Guidance and Continuity
- Monitor learner engagement and wellbeing consistently, with proactive responses to issues.
- Establish long-term support mechanisms, including cultural navigation, ongoing mentoring, and access to wraparound services.
- Create culturally aligned transition pathways that help learners move from education into employment while staying connected to their identity.

2. **TOHU – The Knowledge**

Meaning: Tohu can mean a sign, a qualification, or a form of guidance.

Whakapapa: Derived from *Tohunga*—a person of skill, wisdom, and deep cultural understanding—Tohu carries the weight of recognised knowledge, both traditional and contemporary.

Focus: The validation and preservation of learning. This Pou bridges cultural and academic systems, ensuring that what learners know—both formally and informally—is recognised, respected, and applied in meaningful ways.

In Practice:

Recognition of Mātauranga Māori – Māori Knowledge Systems

- Design learning experiences that centre Mātauranga Māori, not as an addition, but as a core part of curriculum and delivery.
- Integrate pūrākau, maramataka, tikanga, and te reo into programme design and assessments.
- Enable all learners—not just Māori—to engage with and learn from Māori knowledge systems to deepen cultural literacy.

Integration of Cultural and Academic Standards
- Align assessments with both industry standards and cultural integrity.
- Use multiple modes of assessment: marae-based learning, oral storytelling, lived experience, and reflective practice alongside traditional testing.
- Ensure programme content honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and reflects cultural responsiveness.

Preservation and Elevation of Knowledge
- Embed cultural knowledge into the structure of qualifications, ensuring it is preserved through practice and shared intergenerationally.
- Capture learner knowledge through activity reports, reflective journals, and workplace-based projects that honour both technical and cultural expertise.

Real-World Application and Validation
- Connect learners to industry placements where they can apply knowledge in culturally relevant ways.
- Partner with Māori-led businesses and organisations to ensure learners experience values-based, ethical business practices.
- Recognise that skills don't just live in qualifications—they live in values, relationships, and lived experience.

3. **PĪRERE – Learning in Practice**

Meaning: A fledgling bird leaving the nest—a learner stepping into the world.

Whakapapa: This kīwaha symbolises the movement from guidance into independence. It captures the spirit of learners exploring new ground, taking risks, and growing through experience.

Focus: Applied, hands-on learning. This Pou centres on growth through doing—encouraging learners to develop confidence, competence, and resilience as they apply their skills in real-world settings.

In Practice:

Practical Application of Knowledge
- Design work-based projects that expose learners to a range of business models—including kaupapa Māori and community-led enterprises.
- Embed cultural values like *kaitiakitanga* and *manaakitanga* into leadership, customer service, and operational activities.
- Include real-life projects tied to community benefit—like environmental restoration or social impact initiatives—to align learning with purpose.

Immersive Learning Environments
- Create opportunities for learners to engage in wānanga, noho marae, seasonal activities, or workshops grounded in cultural practice.
- Use inclusive learning materials and case studies that reflect diverse worldviews.

- Allow learners to explore cultural identity while building technical capability, ensuring both are seen as equally important.

Reflective Practice for Growth
- Encourage regular reflection tied to cultural values, such as: How did I show manaaki? What tikanga guided this decision?
- Use mentoring relationships to explore cultural and professional responsibilities, helping learners integrate both spheres of their life.

Building Confidence and Adaptability
- Create opportunities for peer-led learning, group collaboration, and active discussion that mirrors communal learning styles.
- Use storytelling, demonstration, and lived example as valid ways for learners to showcase learning.

4. **ARA – Future Pathways**

Meaning: Ara means pathway, often spoken about in terms of long-term purpose and generational growth.

Whakapapa: In Te Ao Māori, "carving a path for the next generation" is a key concept—it reflects our responsibility to those who come after us.

Focus: Empowering learners to step into meaningful futures. Ara prepares learners for sustainable careers while helping them stay connected to their identity, values, and community purpose.

In Practice:

Lifelong Learning and Identity
- Encourage learners to see growth as ongoing. Help them reflect on how their identity and values shape their aspirations.
- Support participation in networks, development programmes, and leadership pathways that maintain cultural connection.

Career Preparation and Empowerment
- Balance practical skill-building with mentorship and career coaching.
- Help learners develop leadership capabilities and confidence to contribute meaningfully to workplaces and communities.
- Recognise success beyond job placement—how learners lead, serve, and stay grounded in who they are.

Bridging Cultural and Professional Realities
- Prepare learners to navigate diverse workplace cultures while staying connected to their own.
- Equip employers to support this journey by fostering inclusive, values-based environments.
- Encourage alignment between organisational goals and learners' cultural values.

Ongoing Support and Guidance
- Build long-term support networks that continue post-graduation.
- Involve whānau in career planning and celebrations to reinforce community connection.
- Provide culturally grounded transition plans so learners don't lose support as they move from learner to leader.

TE AO MĀORI INTERPRETATION GUIDE
_____

The Te Ao Māori Interpretation Guide (Appendix 1) is a practical tool that helps bring Te Ara Whakapakari to life. It's designed for people who may be less familiar with Māori concepts, and it breaks down the framework in a way that's easy to understand and use — no matter your background.

Each Pou is explained in plain language, with everyday examples of what it looks like in action. It's not theoretical — it's about how these values show up in real relationships, real workplaces, and real learning environments.

The guide also includes tailored advice for the four main groups involved in the apprenticeship journey:
- **Learners and Mentors**: How to build trust, support growth, and develop confidence together
- **Employers and Employees**: How to create inclusive, values-based workplaces and support learning on the job
- **Iwi and Providers**: How to work in genuine partnership and bring local knowledge into programme design and delivery
- **Hapū and Community**: How to stay involved and keep learning grounded in local tikanga and whānau support

What makes the guide useful is its focus on small, practical actions. It suggests things like:
- Involving whānau in learner milestones
- Recognising lived experience as part of a learner's skillset
- Creating safe spaces for questions and cultural learning

This isn't about becoming an expert in tikanga Māori. It's about building cultural confidence and shared responsibility across everyone involved in the learner's journey.

By making the framework clear, approachable, and easy to apply, the guide helps ensure that Te Ara Whakapakari is more than a document — it becomes something that people can actually use. And it does so without compromising the cultural depth and aspirations that sit at the heart of this mahi.

RUBRIC DEVELOPMENT
_____

The DLF Rubric (Appendix 2) puts Te Ara Whakapakari into action — translating its values and stages into clear, practical guidance for providers and employers to use in real-world settings. It's about showing what culturally grounded growth looks like in real life — not just in theory, but in practice.

The rubric is built around the four Pou — Pūtikitiki, Tohu, Pīrere, and Ara — and tracks development through three key stages:
1. **Te Pūtake** – the beginning, where guidance is offered and exploration begins
2. **Te Awa** – the middle, where knowledge deepens and is applied
3. **Te Pūaha** – the outcome, where confidence, contribution, and leadership emerge

There are three pathways in the rubric, tailored to different roles:
- **Learner Rubric**: focused on identity, confidence, knowledge application, and purpose
- **Employer and Employee Rubric**: focused on culturally safe mentoring, inclusive practice, leadership, and growth in the workplace
- **Provider and Iwi Rubric**: focused on aligning vocational learning with Māori values, embedding mātauranga Māori, and creating uplifting, inclusive environments

Why This Rubric Matters

This isn't a checklist — it's a guide for reflection and cultural integrity. It shows what growth looks like when identity, community, and purpose are part of the learning journey.

The rubric supports:
- **Learners:** to track their own growth in identity, knowledge, and connection
- **Employees and employers**: to build workplaces that reflect values and enable cultural contribution
- **Providers and Iwi:** to co-create learning that's grounded in Mātauranga Māori and meaningful to learners

Using the Rubric

The rubric is flexible. It's made to be adapted by different organisations and communities to fit their realities — while holding strong to its values.

To use it well:
- Get familiar with the values, Pou, and learner journey
- Use it to assess current practice and highlight what's working and what needs to grow
- Design learning experiences that reflect both industry and cultural goals
- Embed values across the whole experience — not just in one part
- Use feedback from learners and whānau to guide reflection and improve over time

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS
_____

The strength of Te Ara Whakapakari lies not just in its design, but in how well it's brought to life. The framework is flexible and can adapt across regions, providers, and industries — but it requires intention, cultural integrity, and real commitment to values.

This isn't something to "bolt on" to existing systems. It should shape how learning is designed, delivered, and supported from start to finish. The key is to make sure the values aren't just talked about — they're felt, seen, and experienced by learners every day.

What Successful Implementation Looks Like:
- Staff and employers are supported and trained to understand and apply Te Ao Māori values with confidence.
- The rubric and interpretation guide are used not just for planning, but for reflection and continuous improvement.
- Local voices shape how the framework is adapted — hapū and iwi are part of the process, not just observers.

- Feedback loops are built in from the start — so the delivery stays connected to both cultural values and learner needs.

Cultural Safety and Inclusion

For Māori ākonga especially, cultural safety is essential. That means feeling respected, seen, and supported — not just academically, but in their whole identity.

It's not about having one Māori module or a single pōwhiri. It's about how the entire system holds space for Māori ways of being.

That includes:
- Having cultural mentors, kaiārahi, or tuakana–teina relationships in place
- Ensuring educators understand unconscious bias and cultural responsiveness
- Embedding tikanga into the everyday rhythm of learning — not just at the start

Inclusion isn't about representation alone. It's about creating spaces where all learners feel they belong and can bring their full selves.

Supporting Transitions

The learner journey doesn't start at enrolment or end at graduation. Transitions are critical — and often overlooked.

Strong implementation means:
- Cultural onboarding that sets expectations and introduces values from day one
- Mentoring and pastoral care that continues throughout the learning journey
- Involving whānau, hapū, and iwi throughout — not just at events, but in planning and support
- Equipping employers to continue cultural support once learners enter the workforce

Learners should never feel like support ends once they leave the classroom. The aim is to build a system that follows them, lifts them, and stays with them.

Making it Real for Industry

For the framework to work long-term, it has to offer real value to workplaces. That means:
- Learning must be grounded in authentic, real-world experiences — not just theory
- Te Ao Māori values should show up in the way teams operate
- Employers need to be true partners, not passive receivers of trained staff
- Cultural values should be visible in how people are onboarded, mentored, and supported at work

Graduates should leave with more than technical skills — they should carry confidence, cultural awareness, and the ability to lead with integrity.

Supporting Non-Māori Learners

Some non-Māori learners may feel unsure — not because they don't care, but because they're afraid of getting it wrong. That hesitation is real, and it needs to be addressed with care.

Practical ways to support them:
- Introduce Māori values early, using clear, relatable language
- Provide real-life examples of what those values look like in action
- Reassure them that it's okay to learn, ask questions, and grow over time
- Make it clear that this framework is **inclusive** — grounded in Māori values, but meaningful for all

This isn't about expecting everyone to be fluent in tikanga. It's about creating a learning culture where curiosity, respect, and openness lead the way.

RISKS AND MITIGATION
_____

Rolling out Te Ara Whakapakari across different industries, providers, and communities comes with real potential — but also real challenges. For this framework to have lasting impact, we have to be upfront about what might go wrong and put strong, practical steps in place to prevent it.

Risks:
- **Inconsistent application across providers**
  Not all providers will deliver the framework the same way. Without shared understanding and commitment, there's a risk it gets applied unevenly — or not at all. This creates gaps in quality and weakens trust in the model.
- **Limited cultural capability among staff and employers**
  When those responsible for delivery aren't confident in Te Ao Māori, it can lead to values being misinterpreted, watered down, or missed entirely. This can damage the cultural integrity of the framework and the learner experience.
- **Non-Māori learners feeling unsure or excluded**
  Some non-Māori learners may assume the framework isn't "for them" or worry about engaging with tikanga in case they get it wrong. Without the right support, this can lead to hesitation or disengagement.
- **Weak engagement with iwi and hapū**
  If local Māori voices aren't at the table, the framework risks losing its connection to place, tikanga, and the communities it's meant to serve. Without these relationships, delivery can become generic and lose meaning.
- **Symbolic use without structural change**
  There's a risk that organisations will adopt the language of the framework — the visuals, the terms — without changing how they actually operate. When it's used for branding rather than action, the kaupapa is lost.

What We Can Do About It
- **Provide strong cultural training, not just once — but ongoing**
  Everyone using this framework, from educators to employers, needs practical training in Te Ao Māori. That includes not just what the values are, but how to bring them into everyday work. This training should be regular and responsive — not just a one-off workshop.
- **Use the tools consistently**
  The DLF Rubric and the Te Ao Māori Interpretation Guide are there for a reason.

They give structure to the values, help keep delivery consistent, and make sure cultural integrity is upheld across different settings.

- **Make it clear this framework is for everyone**
  This isn't a Māori-only framework. The values — care, connection, purpose — are human values. Framing it this way helps reduce uncertainty and invites everyone in.
- **Involve learners in shaping how it works**
  Whether Māori or non-Māori, learners know what works for them. Their voices should shape how the framework is rolled out, reviewed, and improved. That way, it stays responsive and grounded in real experience.
- **Model the values, don't just name them**
  Values like manaakitanga and whanaungatanga can't just live on posters. They need to show up in practice — in how people are treated, how support is delivered, and how decisions are made. That's how trust is built.
- **Build strong partnerships with iwi and Māori organisations**
  This framework only works when it stays anchored in community. That means building real, long-term relationships with iwi and hapū — not just for input, but for shared ownership and ongoing collaboration. Their leadership is essential.

SUMMARY

_____

Te Ara Whakapakari offers more than a new framework — it offers a new way forward. It responds to what Māori learners, whānau, providers, and employers have said for years: that learning needs to reflect identity, values, and lived reality.

At its core, this model isn't about ticking boxes or adding cultural content. It's about shifting the system — so that every learner is seen, supported, and uplifted, not just through qualifications, but through connection, purpose, and belonging.

This isn't a Māori-only model. It's a Māori-led approach that benefits everyone. It builds spaces where manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and kaitiakitanga are not just values on the wall, but practices in action. It honours Mātauranga Māori while creating practical, inclusive environments where all learners can thrive.

The framework is built on four Pou — Pūtikitiki, Tohu, Pīrere, and Ara. These aren't steps in a linear path; they're interwoven phases of growth that reflect the way people actually learn and develop. They guide learners through care, knowledge, experience, and future vision — always grounded in relationships.

Alongside the Pou, the Rubric and Te Ao Māori Interpretation Guide help providers, employers, mentors, and communities put the values into action. These tools are practical, flexible, and adaptable — not to dilute the kaupapa, but to uphold it across different settings.

As Te Ara Whakapakari moves from concept to delivery, the challenge is clear: to embed these values into everyday practice — not just for show, but for real change.

The foundations are in place. What comes next depends on how we show up — in learning, in workplaces, and in our relationships with one another.

DISCLAIMER
_____

Throughout this framework, a range of Māori kupu (terms), concepts, and Te Ao Māori principles have been woven into a vocational education context. We acknowledge that there are many valid interpretations of these kupu, shaped by iwi, hapū, whānau, and kaupapa-specific tikanga.

The meanings and applications shared here are not definitive or exclusive. Rather, they represent one interpretation intended to support learning and implementation within the education and employment sector. They have been selected and applied in a way that aligns with the kaupapa of this mahi — to uplift all learners, uphold cultural integrity, and embed mana-enhancing practices into real-world environments.

We respect and uphold the right of mana whenua, hapū, and iwi to maintain their own reo, tikanga, and mātauranga. This framework is not a replacement for local knowledge — it is an invitation for ongoing relationship, co-design, and adaptation.

GLOSSARY
_____

Māori Word	English Translation	Context / Explanation
Ako	Reciprocal learning/teaching	Fundamental learning principle in Māori pedagogy.
Ara	Pathway	Focuses on future self, career growth, and intergenerational contribution
Awa	River	Used visually in the model to represent growth, nurture and connection
Hapū	Sub-tribe	Engaged in shaping the framework; reflects local tikanga and cultural expression
Iwi	Tribe	Essential partners in framework delivery and cultural alignment
Kāhu	Hawk	Symbolises vision, leadership, and responsibility.
Kaiārahi	Guide or navigator	Used in the context of cultural mentoring or support roles.
Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship	Guiding learners and preserving cultural values
Kaokao	Pattern symbolising strength and protection	Used visually in the model to represent support and collective resilience
Kaupapa Māori	Māori-centred approach	Guides how learning and frameworks are structured and delivered
Kererū	Wood pigeon	Represents patience and the nurturing stage of learning.
Kīwaha	Colloquial expression	Used to describe symbolic expression of growth (e.g., Pīrere).
Koru	Spiral symbol	Represents relationships and the interconnected nature of learning
Kōwhaiwhai	Rafter patterns	Symbolise whakapapa, movement, and cyclical learning.
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, support	Pastoral care and culturally safe learning spaces
Mihi whakatau	Informal welcome ceremony	A practice used to establish cultural safety and connection early in the learner journey
Mātauranga Māori	Māori knowledge	Traditional Māori knowledge systems; integrated across learning and assessment
Māra kai	Food garden	Cultural knowledge area included in curriculum design.
Ngāhere	Forest	Used metaphorically in describing the Kererū's role as nourisher.
Noho marae	Overnight stay at a marae	Immersive cultural learning practice.
Pīrere	Fledgling bird	Represents applied learning and new beginnings Emphasises growth, independence, and applied learning

Pou	Pillar	Four key structural elements of the framework: Pūtikitiki, Tohu, Pīrere, Ara
Pūtikitiki	To tie/knot together	Represents pastoral care and connection across whānau, hapū, and community
Tāniko	Traditional weaving pattern	Symbolic design used in visual framework to reflect interconnected values
Te Ao Māori	The Māori world	Māori worldview; informs the foundation and values of the framework
Te Ara o Te Manu	The Pathway of the Birds	Symbolic narrative using birds to illustrate learning stages.
Te Ara Whakapakari	The Pathway to Strengthening	Name of the framework; about growth, identity, and contribution
Te Pūaha	River mouth	Represents proficiency and broader application of knowledge.
Te Pūtake	Origin or source	Refers to the beginning stage of learning, foundational understanding.
Tikanga	Cultural practices and protocols	Embedded in teaching, delivery, and learner support
Tohu	Sign, symbol, qualification	Symbolises knowledge, guidance, and recognition
Tohunga	Expert or priest	Root of the word Tohu; signifies skilled or knowledgeable person
Tuakana-Teina	Older-younger sibling dynamic	Used in mentoring relationships that support mutual growth and guidance
Tūī	Parson Bird	Symbolises curiosity and the beginning of the learning journey.
Whanaungatanga	Relationship building	Key value in learning environments and community connection
Whānau	Family	Central to learner identity and support structures
Whāriki	Woven mat	Used metaphorically to describe interconnected support systems.
Wānanga	Learning forum/discussion	Immersive learning experiences often in marae or community settings
Whenua	Land	Often refers to connection with place, identity, and learning.

APPENDIX 1: TE ARA WHAKAPAKARI INTERPRETATION GUIDE

How to Use This Guide:
This guide supports everyone involved in the **Food and Fibre Degree-Level Framework (DLF)**, where learners work and train at the same time. It explains how **Te Ara Whakapakari** helps learners thrive—not just as workers or students, but as confident, connected people.

Te Ara Whakapakari is based on the idea that learning is a shared journey. Each group—iwi, hapū, providers, employers, mentors, learners, and the wider community—has a distinct role, but they're all connected by shared values.

- **Iwi and Providers** co-design programmes that reflect local identity and cultural values. Iwi bring tikanga and vision; providers bring structure and delivery. Together, they ensure learning is relevant and grounded.
- **Mentors and Learners** grow together through a tuakana–teina relationship. Mentors guide and support, while learning from their ākonga. This two-way relationship builds trust and confidence.
- **Employers and Employees** turn the workplace into a learning space. Employers offer real experience and pathways; learners bring fresh perspectives and commitment. Growth becomes part of everyday work.
- **Hapū and Community** keep learning connected to whenua, whānau, and kaupapa. They bring cultural depth, local support, and pride. When they're involved, learners feel anchored and valued.

Each part of the model strengthens the others—like the woven strands of a whāriki. True impact comes when everyone is aligned and working together.

If you're new to Mātauranga Māori or this way of thinking:
- Start with understanding. Read through each value, and pick one to focus on first.
- Don't feel like you need to get it perfect. Start with small changes—like how you check in, how you celebrate, or who you involve.
- Ask questions. Be open. Partner with people who can guide you—especially Māori whānau, mentors, or organisations already doing this work.
- Think about how your own values (kindness, respect, inclusion) already align with this model—and build from there.

Te Ara Whakapakari – Understanding the Visual Design

The design of Te Ara Whakapakari isn't just decorative. It uses traditional Māori patterns to tell the story of the learning journey. These patterns are full of meaning and reflect the values that hold the framework together. Here's a simple way to understand them.

Tāniko – The Weave

Tāniko is a traditional Māori weaving style. It's often used on borders of cloaks or belts and is known for its strong, geometric patterns.
In this model, tāniko represents how all parts of learning are connected. Just like weaving, each part – the learner, the mentor, the workplace, the community – is a strand. When woven together with care and purpose, they create something strong, unified, and meaningful.
It reminds us: learning is not one-size-fits-all. It's layered, relational, and shaped by people and place.

Kaokao – The Pattern of Strength

Kaokao is the pattern that looks like inward-facing triangles. It stands for strength, protection, and unity.
In the model, Kaokao shows us that learners aren't on this journey alone. They're surrounded by whānau, mentors, employers, providers, hapū, and iwi who support them. These people create the strength that holds the learner up, especially during tough times.
This pattern says: we're strongest when we move forward together.
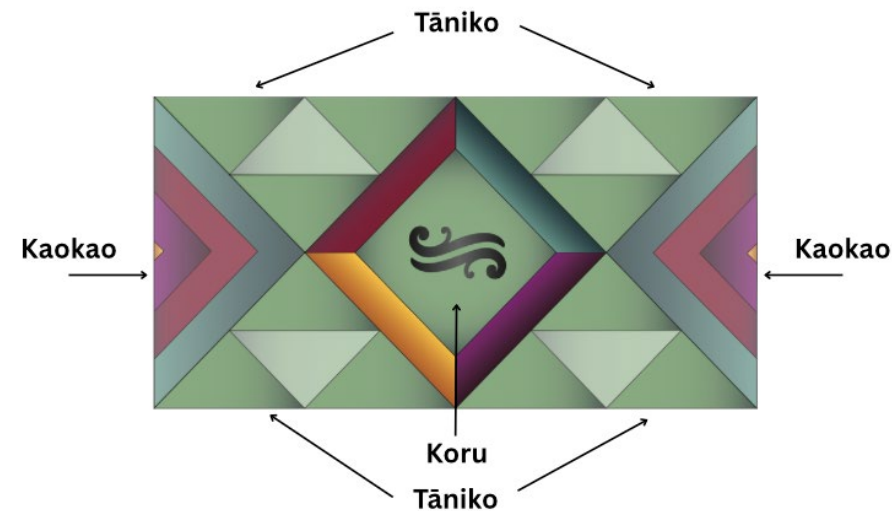
Te Ara Whakapakari – Understanding the Visual Design

Koru – The River of Relationships

The koru is the spiral shape you see in unfurling ferns. In this model, it also represents a river (awa) — flowing, nurturing, and always moving forward.

The koru sits at the centre of the design because relationships are at the centre of learning. Whether it's a provider working with iwi, a mentor guiding a learner, or an employer supporting growth — these relationships are what make the journey possible.

The koru reminds us that support must surround the learner at every stage. Like a river, it nourishes growth and carries people forward.
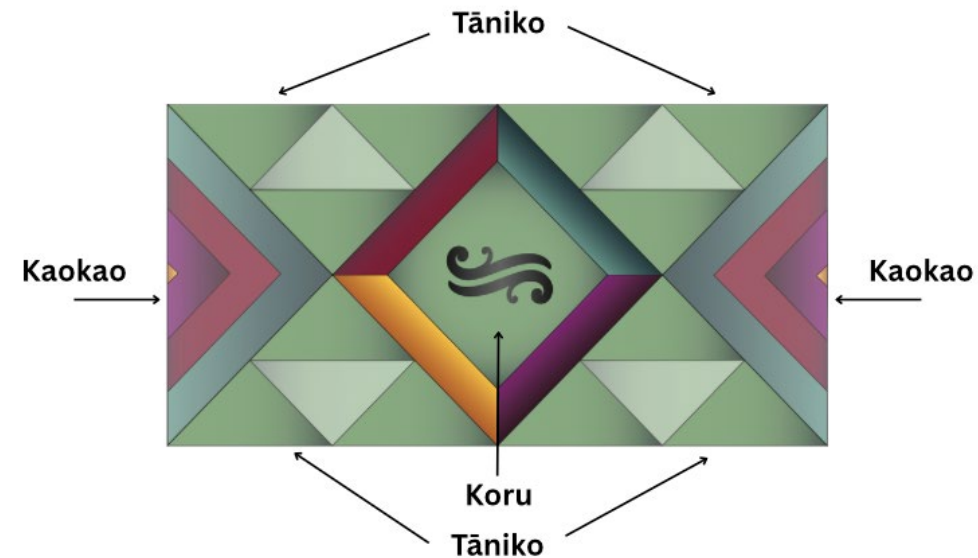
In Short:

- **Tāniko** is the weave — everything connected.
- **Kaokao** is the strength — people coming together.
- **Koru** is the river — relationships that support growth.

These patterns aren't just visual — they help shape learning environments that are strong, supportive, and connected.

_____

GUIDE 1: For Learners and Mentors

Who This Guide Is For:

This guide helps learners and mentors understand how Māori values shape the learning journey. It's about supporting growth, relationships, confidence, and success—together.

1. **PŪTIKITIKI – Support and Belonging**

What it means: Everyone learns better when they feel part of something. Pūtikitiki is about being looked after and supported—not just at the start, but all the way through.

For Learners:
- Talk to your mentor if you're struggling. You don't have to do it alone.
- Stay connected with your whānau—your success is theirs too.
- Show manaaki by supporting your peers.

For Mentors:
- Don't wait for problems—check in regularly, ask open questions.
- Set clear routines that learners can rely on.
- Involve whānau where possible—keep communication open.

2. **TOHU – Valuing What You Know**

What it means: You bring knowledge with you—whether from school, home, work, or culture. Tohu means that knowledge should be seen and valued.

For Learners:
- Share your lived experience—it matters.
- Be proud of what you know, even if it's not from a textbook.

For Mentors:
- Use different ways of learning—wānanga, drawing, hands-on tasks.
- Validate cultural knowledge and link it to the job.
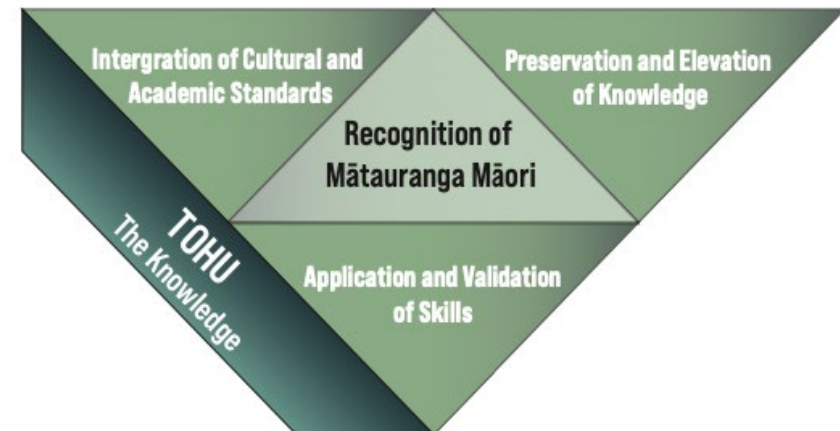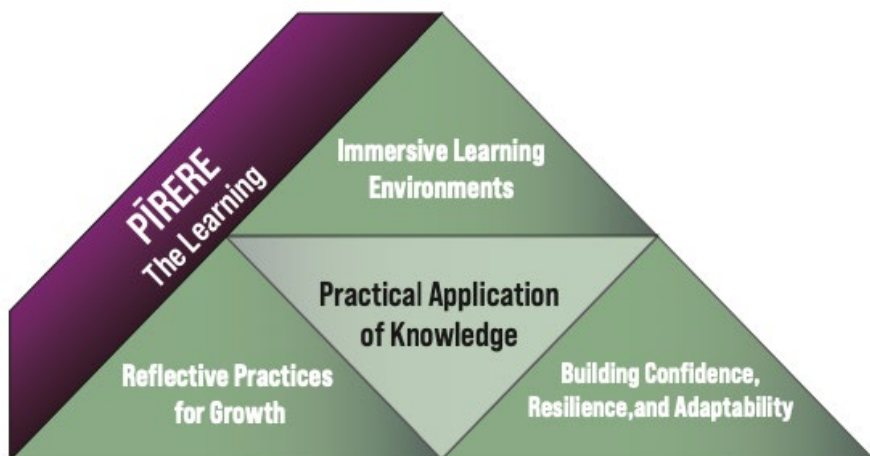
3. PĪRERE – Learning by Doing
What it means: The best way to learn is to try things out. Mistakes are part of growth.

For Learners:
- Ask for real tasks—not just observing, but doing.
- Reflect after each job: What did I learn? What would I do differently?

For Mentors:
- Let learners take the lead when they're ready.
- Use real examples from the worksite to explain concepts.

4. ARA – Planning for the Future
What it means: Learners need help seeing their role in the community and industry, now and into the future.
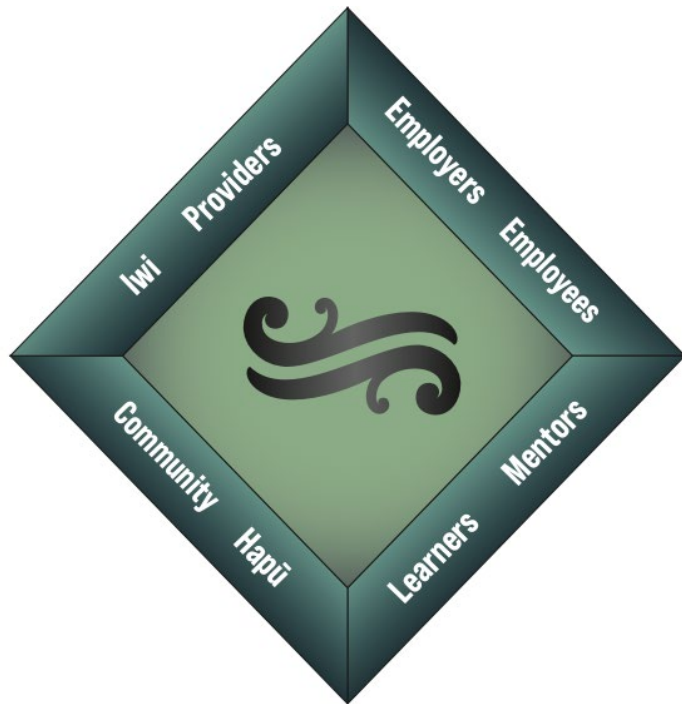**For Iwi:**
- Celebrate past learners and create mentoring roles for them.
- Link training to whānau and hapū development plans.

For Providers:
- Show learners what comes after graduation—employment, whānau, leadership.
- Track alumni and maintain relationships.

5. KORU – Relationships Matter Most

What it means: Success comes from long-term, honest relationships—not just consultation.

For Iwi:
- Be part of programme design, delivery, and review.
- Help providers stay connected to the kaupapa and local priorities.

For Providers:
- Build relationships with Iwi before designing programmes.
- Share power and decision-making in a genuine partnership.
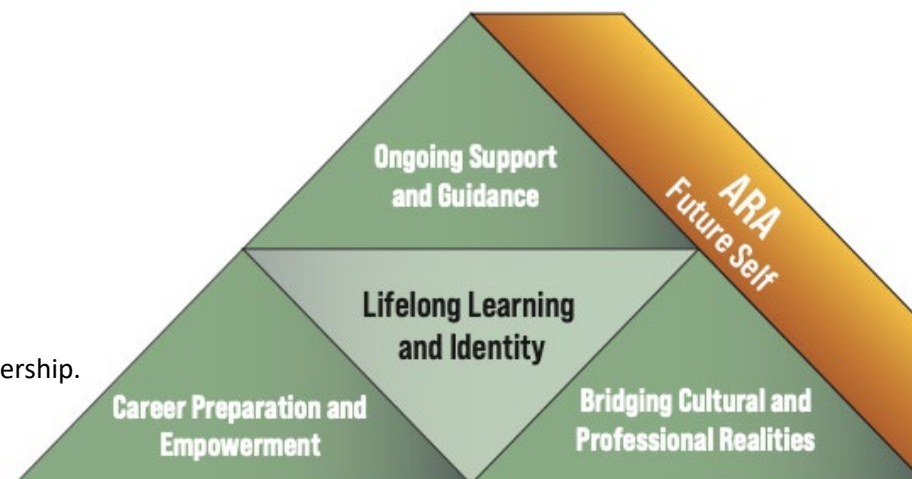
Quick Tips
- Use real stories, not just theory.
- Be flexible in how progress is shown.
- Celebrate effort as much as outcomes.

_____

GUIDE 2: For Iwi and Providers

What This Guide Is For:

This guide supports iwi and providers to embed Te Ao Māori values in the design, delivery, and review of vocational education—especially in food and fibre industries.

1.   PŪTIKITIKI – Support and Belonging

What it means: When learners feel supported from all sides—whānau, provider, hapū—they thrive.

For Iwi:

- Provide local networks to wrap around the learner.
- Help with cultural support at noho and events.

For Providers:

- Embed Mātauranga Māori in your course design.
- Keep whānau and iwi involved in key decisions.

2.   TOHU – Valuing What You Know

What it means: Mātauranga Māori has value. It must be seen, respected, and included in every learning journey.

For Iwi:

- Work with providers to include maramataka, Mātauranga and local pūrākau in course design.
- Co-deliver learning sessions or wānanga.

For Providers:

- Involve kaupapa Māori experts in curriculum and assessment design.
- Offer assessments that allow oral storytelling, marae-based learning, and real-world practice.
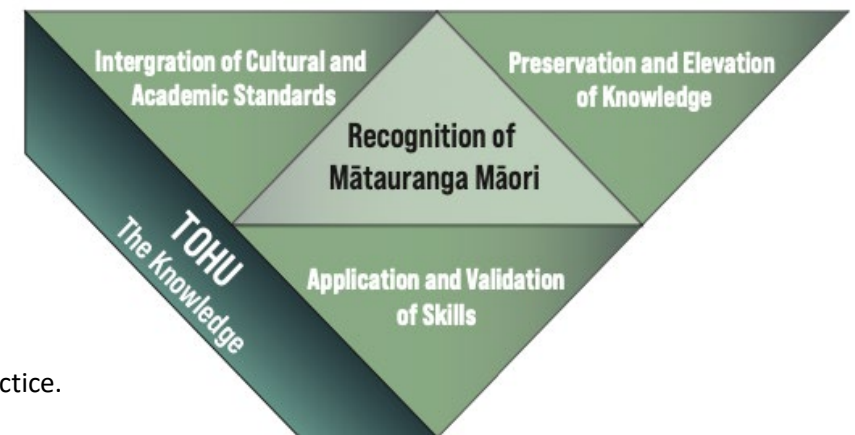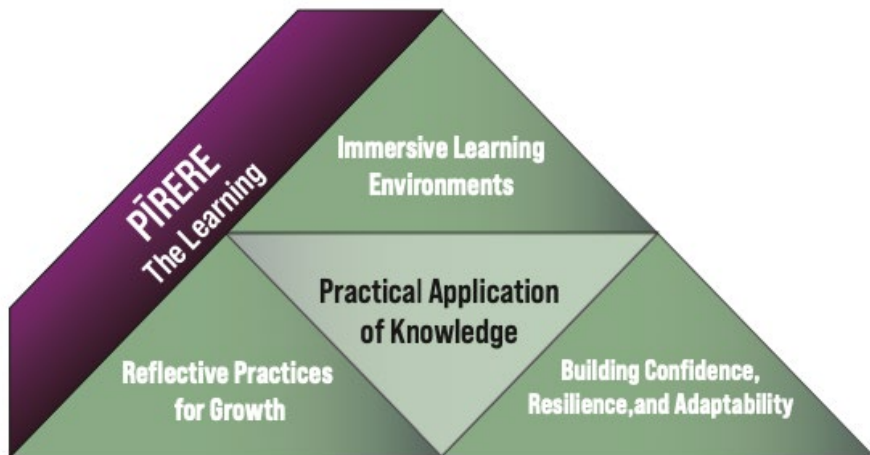
3. PĪRERE – Learning by Doing

What it means: Learners need real, hands-on experience. That experience should reflect Māori values and communities.

For Iwi:
- Offer placements or projects on whenua Māori.
- Support learning through seasonal or environmental activities.

For Providers:
- Partner with Māori-owned businesses or trusts.
- Allow learners to choose community-based projects that matter to them.

4. ARA – Planning for the Future

What it means: Learners need help seeing their role in the community and industry, now and into the future.

For Iwi:
- Celebrate past learners and create mentoring roles for them.
- Link training to whānau and hapū development plans.

For Providers:
- Show learners what comes after graduation—employment, whānau, leadership.
- Track alumni and maintain relationships.

5. KORU – Relationships Matter Most
What it means: Good learning is built on trust and connection.
For Learners:
- Be open and respectful. Ask questions.
- Help others when you can—learning goes both ways.

For Mentors:
- Get to know the learner's background and strengths.
- Model honesty, patience, and consistency.

Quick Implementation Tips
- Co-design, don't just consult.
- Use visual tools and wānanga formats.
- Support shared cultural milestones and moments.

_____

GUIDE 3: For Employers and Employees

What This Guide Is For:

This guide helps workplaces understand how to support Māori learners and employees using Te Ao Māori values—without needing to be experts in tikanga.

1. PŪTIKITIKI – Support and Belonging

What it means: Learners do better when they feel like part of the team—not just a temp or trainee.

For Employers:

- Introduce them to the crew properly (have a mihi whakatau)—take time for names and stories.
- Check in regularly. Ask how they're doing, not just what they've done.

For Employees/Learners:

- Don't be afraid to ask for help. You're not expected to know everything.
- Offer support to others when you can—it builds team culture.

2. TOHU – Valuing What You Know

What it means: Recognise what people bring to the job—especially experience from home, previous work, or cultural practice.

For Employers:

- Ask about what they've done before—not just what's on paper.
- Let them demonstrate skills in different ways (e.g., hands-on, video, photos).

For Employees:

- Share what you know—you might have more to offer than you think.
- If the way something's taught doesn't work for you, say so.
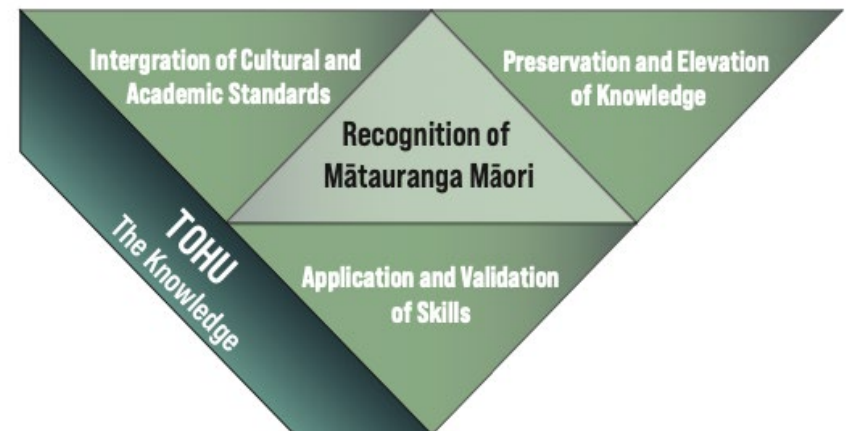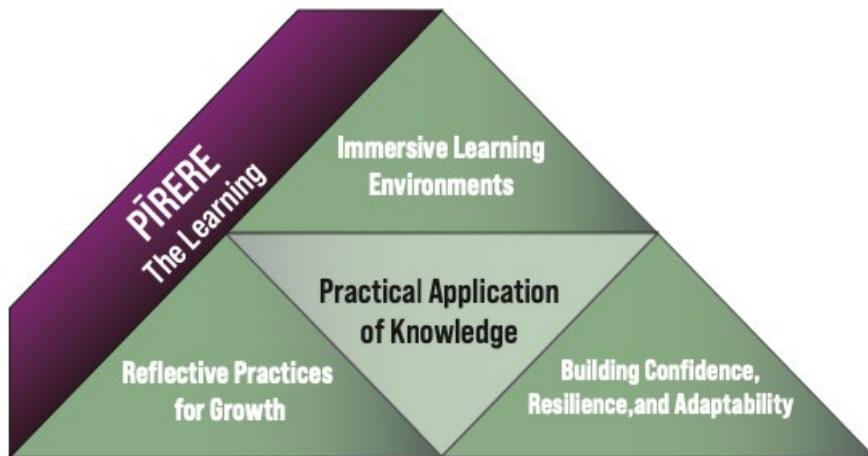
3. PĪRERE – Learning by Doing
What it means: Confidence comes from action. Give people real jobs to do and room to grow.
For Employers:
- Let learners take the lead on small tasks once they're ready.
- Explain *why* something is done—not just *how*.

For Employees:
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes. That's part of learning.
- Reflect on what went well and what could be better.

4. ARA – Planning for the Future
What it means: Help learners see where this job can take them—whether it's leadership, entrepreneurship, or community contribution.
For Employers:
- Talk openly about advancement pathways.
- Encourage further training or industry events.

For Employees:
- Set small goals for yourself—and ask for help reaching them.
- Think about what kind of future you want, not just the next job.

5. KORU – Relationships Matter Most

What it means: The best teams are built on trust, honesty, and care.

For Employers:
- Create a workplace where everyone feels respected.
- Be open to learning about different cultural values.

For Employees:
- Show up, speak up, and contribute positively.
- Build strong relationships with those around you.

Quick Wins for the Workplace
- Use mentoring systems or buddy setups.
- Involve whānau where appropriate (e.g., at key events).
- Celebrate wins together—not just in performance reviews.

_____

GUIDE 4: For Hapū and Community

What This Guide Is For:

This guide supports hapū and communities to play an active role in shaping and supporting local apprenticeship journeys. When hapū voices and values are part of the system, learning becomes more meaningful, more rooted, and more sustainable.

1. PŪTIKITIKI – Support and Belonging

What it means: Strong learning journeys are made possible when hapū, whānau, and community are involved in support.

For Hapū and Community:

- Host wānanga, hui or marae-based gatherings to welcome, connect, and encourage learners.
- Offer local manaaki—kai, karakia, korero, or cultural leadership for learners in your rohe.
- Keep in contact with providers and employers about learner wellbeing.

2. TOHU – Valuing What You Know

What it means: Learning doesn't only happen at school or on the job. Community knowledge, lived experience, and cultural teachings also count.

For Hapū and Community:

- Provide local stories, practices, or experts that enrich learning (e.g., planting by maramataka, waterway histories, māra kai customs).
- Partner with providers to embed local knowledge in lessons or field trips.
- Help learners connect what they're learning with their whānau's own skills and traditions.
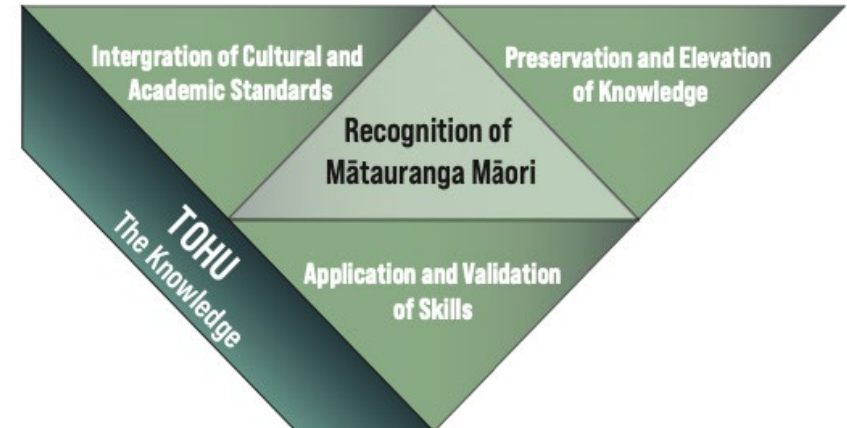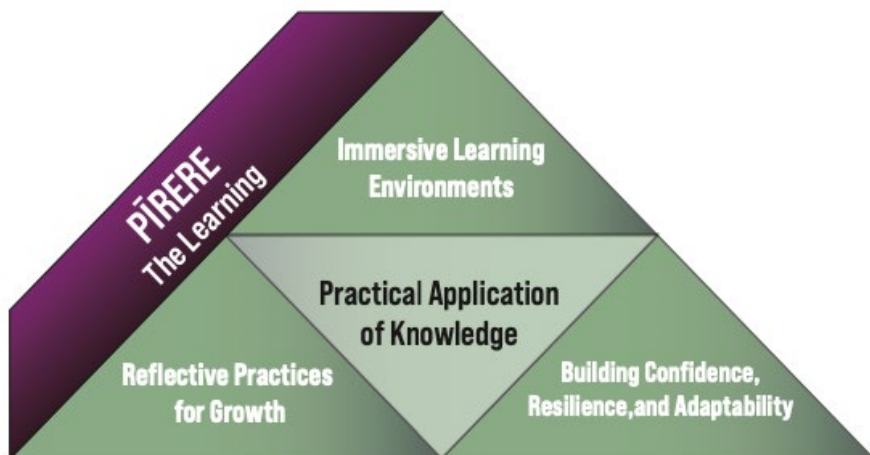
3. PĪRERE – Learning by Doing

What it means: Real learning happens when people are active in real-life mahi—especially when that mahi is meaningful to their people or whenua.

For Hapū and Community:

- Offer opportunities to get involved in local projects—like stream restoration, maara development, pest control, or native planting.
- Link cultural values like kaitiakitanga, whanaungatanga, and manaakitanga to practical skills.
- Encourage learners to reflect on their learning in ways that include their cultural and community identities.

4. ARA – Planning for the Future

What it means: Hapū and communities have a role in helping young people see themselves as future leaders, kaitiaki, and contributors.

For Hapū and Community:

- Help learners see how their learning connects to hapū goals or whenua development.
- Create spaces where young people can talk to community leaders about careers and kaupapa.
- Recognise and celebrate learner milestones, culturally and publicly.

5. KORU – Relationships Matter Most

What it means: Relationships with hapū, whānau and wider community give learners identity, encouragement, and accountability.

For Hapū and Community:
- Stay connected throughout the apprenticeship—don't just show up at the start.
- Partner with providers and employers regularly to check in on learner progress and support.
- Create safe spaces for feedback, reflection, and celebration.

Implementation Tips:
- Invite learners to represent the hapū in public, ceremonial, or kaupapa events.
- Keep relationships with providers and employers warm and open.
- Make space for learners to bring their learning back to the hapū.

Example of Te Ara Whakapakari in Action

Pou	What it means	Iwi/Provider	Hapū/Community	Learner/Mentor	Employer/Employee
Pūtikitiki *Support and Belonging*	Learners do better when they feel supported and connected to people, place, and kaupapa.	Provider works with iwi to embed a cultural pastoral care model in the apprenticeship programme.	Hapū co-host a marae-based induction for learners and mentors to build connection from the start.	Mentor checks in weekly with the learner and invites whānau to learning milestones.	Employer introduces apprentice to the team through a mihi whakatau.
Tohu *Valuing What You Know*	Cultural, lived, and practical knowledge matters just as much as formal learning.	Provider works with iwi to include māra kai practices and seasonal indicators in the horticulture curriculum.	A former apprentice now employed on-farm shares her upbringing in māra kai during a peer learning session.	Learner shares whānau-based pest control knowledge in a block course presentation, supported by mentor encouragement.	Employer recognises the apprentice's prior hands-on experience from growing up on a whānau farm and adjusts training accordingly.
Pīrere *Learning by Doing*	Real learning happens through real mahi—hands-on, practical, and meaningful.	Provider partners with iwi to create on-site learning at a native nursery operated on iwi land.	A community group invites apprentices to help run a local pest trapping project that links to their training.	A learner is given a task to identify and fix a problem. The mentor guides them but lets the learner take the lead in diagnosing the issue, helping only when asked.	The employer includes the apprentice in delivering part of the morning toolbox talk—asking them to explain a health and safety tip based on something they learned the previous day.
Ara *Planning for the Future*	Learning is about preparing for a future role—at work, in whānau, or as a leader.	Iwi supports graduates into Māori agribusiness pathways and co-develops progression plans with providers.	Hapū runs a careers wānanga where learners meet local growers, leaders, and entrepreneurs.	Mentor helps learner map a 3-year pathway into orchard management, including micro-credentials.	Employer supports employee to attend a regional industry hui with transport and time off covered.
Koru *Relationships Matter Most*	Strong relationships are the foundation of successful learning journeys.	Provider and iwi hold quarterly hui to review cultural responsiveness and learner wellbeing.	Hapū stays in contact with providers and whānau during the programme, offering support and presence at events or on site learning.	Mentor and learner build trust by sharing lived experiences and having open kōrero.	Employer invites whānau to end-of-year celebrations and keeps in touch with providers about the learner's progress.

APPENDIX 2: TE ARA WHAKAPAKARI RUBRIC DEVELOPMENT

Meaning and descriptions

Te Pūtake – Origin or source. The beginning- relating to the origin of the river
Like the source of a river, this is where the journey begins—where learning takes shape through exploration, trial and error, and small steps forward. Understanding is developing, skills are emerging, and mistakes are part of the process. Growth is guided by others, with learning still requiring context and explanation. This is the point where momentum builds, shaping the path ahead.

Te Awa – The river. Developing- relating to the flowing river
Like a river finding its course, the journey is underway—moving steadily, navigating twists and turns, finding other pathways to avoid obstacles, and gaining momentum. Learning becomes more confident, skills take shape, and understanding deepens. At this stage, knowledge is applied with growing independence, and success is more frequent than failure. Learners adapt to challenges, refining their approach as they continue to shape their path forward.

Te Pūaha – The river mouth. Proficient-relating to where knowledge is applied to wider and bigger concepts.
Like a river merging with the ocean, this stage represents connection, integration, and shared knowledge. Learning flows beyond the individual, combining with the experiences and understanding of others. Knowledge is applied with confidence, skills become more refined, and learning is naturally woven into different contexts. This creates opportunities for knowledge to be shared, strengthening collective growth. As the river meets the ocean, learning expands, connects, and contributes to a broader journey of discovery.

Te Ao Māori Degree-levelFramework: Learners

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
TOHU – The Knowledge *Recognition of skills both old and new, and their purposeful application.*	**Engaging with Knowledge and Perspectives**	The Learner approaches knowledge with an open mind, valuing the importance of sharing and understanding perspectives, viewpoints, knowledge, and experiences. Their engagement with Te Ao Māori concepts is emerging.	The Learner confidently identifies and shares their own understanding, perspectives, viewpoints, knowledge, and experiences in ways that enhance others. Their engagement with Te Ao Māori concepts is deepening.	The Learner can connect their perspectives, knowledge, viewpoints, and experiences to the origins of learning, articulating them in ways that enrich and enhance the learning of others. Their understanding of Te Ao Māori concepts is interwoven into their thinking and practice.
	Connecting and Applying Knowledge	The Learner understands that new and old knowledge has the ability to connect to a variety of different elements and concepts of Mātauranga Māori. They begin to identify these connections and see how they relate to their everyday world and practices.	The Learner understands how new and old knowledge interconnect with different elements and concepts of Mātauranga Māori. They confidently identify these connections and begin applying them in meaningful ways within their thinking and practices.	The Learner actively applies their understanding of how new and old knowledge interconnect within Mātauranga Māori. They embed this in their thinking and practices and use their knowledge to support and guide others in their learning.
	Navigating Knowledge Pathways	The Learner begins to explore different learning pathways, recognising that both academic	The Learner understands how to navigate educational and vocational pathways while recognising the role of	The Learner actively contributes to knowledge pathways, ensuring that education— whether in a formal or

		and Mātauranga Māori hold integrity.	whānau, hapū, and iwi in shaping knowledge.	Mātauranga Māori setting— remains connected to whakapapa and collective growth.
	Knowledge in Action	The Learner acquires foundational knowledge and skills, understanding that knowledge is strengthened through kōrero (discussion), mahi (work), and shared experiences.	The Learner applies and adapts knowledge, seeing how Mātauranga Māori and professional expertise can work together.	The Learner actively contributes to their community, industry, and learning spaces, ensuring knowledge is upheld, passed on, and expanded.

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
PĪRERE – The Advancement *The journey from learner to proficiency, strengthening skills through practice, reflection, and application*	**Applying Knowledge with Purpose**	The Learner begins to recognise that knowledge is not static and can be shared, adapted, and applied in different contexts. Under guidance, they start applying what they have learned in familiar situations.	The Learner confidently applies their knowledge in new situations and contexts, making connections between different ideas and experiences. They begin to see how learning is shaped, understanding where knowledge comes from and how it can be used effectively.	The Learner actively shares knowledge, contributing to a collective learning environment. They ensure knowledge is brought together with others to support shared growth and learning, strengthening connections and mutual support in their teaching and guidance.

	Collaboration and Shared Growth	The Learner begins to recognise the value of collective learning, engaging in group work and understanding that relationships are central to growth. They contribute to shared efforts with support and guidance.	The Learner actively collaborates, strengthening their ability to work effectively with others. They demonstrate support for others, contributing meaningfully to shared goals.	The Learner leads collaborative efforts, creating an environment where knowledge is shared and valued. They demonstrate leadership by ensuring that teamwork is inclusive, respectful, and aligned with the abilities of each individual, using the strengths of individuals to offset the weaknesses of others.
	Reflection for Continuous Improvement	The Learner begins to recognise the importance of self-evaluation in their growth. They reflect on their experiences with guidance, identifying what has worked well and where improvements can be made. They are beginning to see learning as an ongoing process that evolves over time.	The Learner actively engages in self-evaluation, using reflection to refine their approach and improve their skills. They consider different perspectives and experiences to shape their learning, recognising how their actions and decisions influence their growth and that of others.	The Learner integrates self-evaluation into their daily practice, using it to guide their learning and decision-making. They contribute to a culture of shared learning by supporting others in their reflective practices, encouraging collective growth and continuous improvement.

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
PŪTIKITIKI – Pastoral **Care** *Connections between people, whānau, hapū, iwi, and communities.*	**Building Relationships and Trust**	The Learner engages with others when prompted and begins to recognise the importance of relationships in learning. They participate in group activities but may still rely on guidance to interact effectively.	The Learner actively builds and maintains relationships, showing consistency in how they connect with others. They contribute to discussions and interactions in a way that strengthens trust and understanding.	The Learner takes initiative in strengthening relationships and ensuring others feel included. They play an active role in creating an environment where trust and mutual respect are evident.
	Engaging with the Wider Community	The Learner is aware that learning extends beyond their immediate environment. They begin to recognise the value of connecting with people outside their usual circles, such as local communities, hapū, or iwi, but require support to engage meaningfully.	The Learner actively seeks opportunities to engage with people beyond their immediate environment. They contribute to discussions or activities involving communities, hapū, or iwi and show respect for different perspectives.	The Learner confidently builds and maintains connections with external groups. They engage meaningfully with communities, hapū, or iwi, ensuring that interactions are reciprocal, collaborative, and contribute to shared learning and growth.
	Contributing to Collective Well-Being	The Learner recognises that well-being is influenced by their actions and environment. They begin to consider how	The Learner takes responsibility for their own well-being and that of those around them. They make	The Learner actively contributes to collective well-being, recognising when others need support and responding

		their behaviour affects themselves and others but may still need reminders or support to act on it.	intentional choices that contribute to a positive and balanced environment, showing awareness of how their presence impacts group dynamics.	appropriately. They take initiative in ensuring their learning environment remains positive and supportive for others.
	Demonstrating Active Participation and Contribution	The Learner engages in group activities with encouragement. They begin to recognise the value of participation in building relationships and learning.	The Learner actively participates in discussions, group work, and shared experiences, contributing their thoughts and perspectives. They engage with others in a way that strengthens collective learning.	The Learner takes a leading role in shared learning experiences, ensuring others feel encouraged to participate. They contribute meaningfully to discussions and group settings, supporting the engagement and development of those around them.

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
ARA – Future Pathways *Navigating opportunities for growth, employment, and lifelong learning with confidence and purpose.*	**Strengthening Connections with Whānau, Hapū, Iwi, and Communities**	The Learner understands that whānau, hapū, iwi, and communities can play a role in their future opportunities. They begin to see the value of these connections but may not yet actively engage with them.	The Learner recognises specific people, groups, and networks—both locally and beyond—that can support their growth. They start to understand how these relationships contribute to their personal and professional development and make efforts toward	The Learner actively builds relationships with whānau, hapū, iwi, and communities. They engage in meaningful interactions and take steps to develop connections that can support their journey.

		establishing and maintaining relationships.	
Aspirations and Purposeful Pathways	The Learner explores their aspirations and begins to see how their goals can benefit both themselves and their whānau. They are open to guidance in shaping their direction.	The Learner sets clear goals and takes purposeful steps toward them, recognising how their journey contributes to those around them. They show growing confidence in making informed decisions.	The Learner actively pursues their aspirations with clarity and adaptability, while also encouraging and supporting others in achieving their goals, strengthening collective success.
Resilience and Adaptability in Decision-Making	The Learner begins to make decisions with support and guidance. They are learning to adapt when things don't go as expected and are developing awareness of how their choices shape future opportunities.	The Learner makes informed decisions with greater independence and adjusts their approach when faced with challenges or unexpected changes. They show resilience by learning from setbacks and continuing to move forward.	The Learner confidently navigates opportunities and challenges, making decisions that reflect adaptability and a strong sense of purpose. They support others in facing challenges, helping them to see obstacles as opportunities for growth.
Applying Knowledge and Skills in Real-World Contexts	The Learner understands that their knowledge and skills are valuable beyond the classroom. They are beginning to explore how these learnings can apply in spaces that may not yet reflect what they have been taught.	The Learner applies their knowledge in different settings, adapting as needed while staying connected to the values and perspectives they carry. They are learning to navigate environments where their experiences	The Learner confidently brings their knowledge into real-world settings, ensuring that what they have learned is applied in a way that is meaningful and impactful. They create space for others to learn and engage with different perspectives,

		and learning may be new to others.	helping to bridge gaps in understanding.

Te Ao Māori Degree-level Apprenticeship: Employer and Employee

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
TOHU – The Knowledge *Recognition of skills both old and new, and their purposeful application.*	**Appropriately Positioning Te Ao Māori Perspectives**	The Employer acknowledges the significance of Te Ao Māori values and perspectives in the wider work environment and is beginning to explore how to appropriately reflect these in workplace discussions. They recognise the value of diverse cultural viewpoints in shaping inclusive industry practices.	The Employer incorporates Te Ao Māori perspectives into workplace discussions and practices. Employees are encouraged to share cultural values and perspectives, contributing to a more inclusive and respectful environment.	The Employer fully embeds Te Ao Māori perspectives across workplace practices. They create structured and ongoing opportunities for employees to share and apply these perspectives, supporting culturally grounded decision-making and inclusive workplace culture.
	Facilitating Uptake and Application of Te Ao Māori and Mātauranga Māori	The Employer begins to provide opportunities for employees to engage with Te Ao Māori perspectives and Mātauranga Māori knowledge in the workplace. They acknowledge both traditional and contemporary knowledge systems, supporting staff to connect these to their daily work.	The Employer encourages deeper application of Te Ao Māori values and Mātauranga Māori practices in daily operations. They actively support staff to grow in confidence, share knowledge, and apply these perspectives to enhance workplace learning and performance.	The Employer embeds a culture of continuous learning, where Te Ao Māori and Mātauranga Māori are integrated across workplace practices. They foster collaboration, professional development, and innovation that draws on both cultural perspectives and Māori knowledge systems to benefit the

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
			organisation and wider community.

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
PĪRERE – The Advancement *The learner'sjourney from novice to proficiency, strengthening skills through practice, reflection, and application*	Applying Knowledge with Purpose	The Employer provides structured tasks that allow employees to apply industry skills in practical settings. They encourage employees to build confidence in their abilities and explore ways to refine their skills through experience.	The Employer actively supports employees in strengthening their skills through hands-on experience, problem-solving, and practical learning. They provide opportunities for employees to take initiative and apply their expertise in meaningful ways.	The Employer empowers employees to take ownership of their skills, contribute to projects, and develop innovative solutions. They create an environment where employees feel confident in applying their expertise to support workplace and industry growth.
	Applying Knowledge with Purpose	The Employer provides structured tasks that allow employees to apply industry skills in practical settings. They encourage employees to build confidence in their abilities and explore ways to refine their skills through experience, including appropriate cultural knowledge.	The Employer actively supports employees in strengthening their skills through hands-on experience, problem-solving, and practical learning. This includes drawing on Mātauranga Māori to inform practice and ensure relevance to diverse contexts.	The Employer empowers employees to take ownership of their skills, including culturally grounded knowledge, and to develop innovative solutions. They create an environment where Te Ao Māori values and Mātauranga Māori approaches can be actively applied to support both organisational and industry advancement.

	Collaboration and Shared Growth	The Employer encourages teamwork and collaboration, creating initial opportunities for employees to engage with others and contribute to shared projects. This includes building respect for diverse ways of working, including Māori worldviews.	The Employer creates a collaborative workplace where employees actively contribute to shared goals, strengthen relationships, and engage with external stakeholders. This includes learning from iwi, hapū, and community partners where appropriate.	The Employer champions a culture of shared growth, where employees lead collaborative efforts grounded in tikanga, contribute their expertise, and support broader sector development by applying both Western and Māori knowledge systems.

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
PŪTIKITIKI – Pastoral Care *Connections between people, whānau, hapū, iwi, and communities.*	Building Relationships and Trust	The Employer recognises the importance of trust and relationships in the industry and is beginning to create opportunities to strengthen internal and external connections, encouraging meaningful engagement and collaboration.	The Employer actively supports relationship-building through mentorship, networking, and structured engagement, creating a workplace culture grounded in trust.	The Employer embeds strong relationships at the centre of workplace culture. Trust, mentorship, and cultural safety are integral to business practices and industry partnerships.
	Engaging with the Wider Community	The Employer recognises the value of connecting with whānau, hapū, iwi, and wider community networks and is beginning to build those relationships to support collaboration.	The Employer actively builds reciprocal relationships with whānau, hapū, iwi, and community networks, recognising their vital role in industry and employee success.	The Employer establishes and maintains enduring partnerships with whānau, hapū, iwi, and community. These relationships are central to business practice, enabling shared decision-making,

		cultural alignment, and sector-wide benefit.

Contributing to Collective Well-Being	The Employer acknowledges the importance of well-being and is beginning to explore ways to integrate initiatives that support employees, staff, and teams, creating a healthier and more balanced work environment.	The Employer actively integrates well-being initiatives, creating a workplace where employees, staff, and teams feel valued, respected, and supported in their professional and personal growth.	The Employer champions a balanced approach to well-being, embedding initiatives that create a supportive, inclusive, and thriving work environment for employees, staff, and teams, ensuring long-term professional and personal growth.

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
ARA – Future Pathways *Navigating opportunities for growth, employment, and lifelong learning with confidence and purpose.*	**Strengthening Connections with Whānau, Hapū, Iwi, and Communities**	The Employer recognises the role of whānau, hapū, iwi, and community networks and is actively exploring structured ways to engage, strengthen relationships, and create opportunities for mutual growth.	The Employer actively supports employees in maintaining and strengthening connections with whānau, hapū, iwi, and communities, recognising their importance in professional and personal growth.	The Employer integrates whānau, hapū, iwi, and community relationships into business and professional development, ensuring employees' growth is supported by collective knowledge.
	Aspirations and Purposeful Pathways	The Employer creates opportunities within their organisational structures and wider connections and	The Employer creates pathways within their organisation and wider communities, supporting	The Employer creates a number of clear pathways within their organisation and wider communities, ensuring

		communities to support employees in identifying career aspirations and development pathways.	employees in setting career goals and taking active steps toward their aspirations while recognising shared success.	employees have the support and opportunities needed for long-term career success that aligns with personal, professional, and community aspirations.
	Resilience and Adaptability in Decision-Making	The Employer supports employees in developing decision-making skills, providing opportunities for guided experience and confidence-building in workplace responsibilities.	The Employer encourages employees to make informed decisions, embrace change with confidence, and take responsibility for their contributions in the workplace.	The Employer creates an environment where employees confidently navigate industry challenges, actively contribute to solutions, and support others in professional decision-making.
	Applying Knowledge and Skills in Real-World Contexts	The Employer provides foundational work-based learning opportunities, creating space for employees to engage and integrate different perspectives into their work	The Employer creates opportunities for employees to apply knowledge in meaningful ways, connecting their skills and perspectives to real-world contexts beyond the workplace, strengthening industry and community impact.	The Employer actively supports employees in applying their skills and knowledge to real-world contexts, both within the organisation and across the broader food and fibre sector, ensuring their contributions create lasting value and opportunities for growth.

Te Ao Māori Degree-level Apprenticeship: Providers and Iwi

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
TOHU – The Knowledge *Recognition of skills both old and new, and their purposeful application.*	**Engaging with Te Ao Māori Perspectives**	The Provider acknowledges the value of Te Ao Māori in vocational education and is beginning to establish meaningful connections with iwi to ensure cultural values are reflected in teaching and learning.	The Provider actively incorporates Te Ao Māori perspectives into programmes, embedding them in learning content, and learning delivery and assessment methods, in consultation with iwi. The Provider strengthens connections with iwi, ensuring their perspectives and needs are reflected in programme development and delivery.	The Provider, in partnership with iwi, embeds Te Ao Māori perspectives across all aspects of programme design, delivery, and assessment, ensuring culturally responsive learning environments that reflect iwi aspirations and priorities.
	Connecting and Applying Knowledge	The Provider recognises the importance of integrating Mātauranga Māori vocational training and is beginning to develop structured approaches that will strengthen learning and industry practices.	The provider actively incorporates Mātauranga Māori into vocational training, ensuring learners engage with Māori knowledge and industry practices in meaningful ways. Structured approaches are being developed to strengthen the connection between	The provider embeds Mātauranga Māori across vocational training, ensuring it is seamlessly integrated into industry practices and workforce development. These approaches create opportunities for continuous learning and innovation,

			traditional and contemporary learning.	strengthening industry alignment with Māori perspectives.
	Ako in Action	The Provider and student(s) share observations about how Māori and industry knowledge might be improved in learning delivery and assessment.	The Provider and student(s) collaborate on integrating discrete aspects of Mātauranga Māori into learning delivery and assessment.	The integration of Mātauranga Māori into learning delivery and assessment is the shared role of Provider and student(s) in an equal partnership that ensures traditional and contemporary learning are upheld and continually improved.

Pillar	Navigation	Te Pūtake	Te Awa	Te Pūaha
PŪTIKITIKI – Pastoral Care *The provider cultivates a positive environment for the learner to thrive.*	**Building Individual Relationships of Trust**	The Provider is starting to recognise that trust must be built through authentic and culturally appropriate relationships with each learner.	The Provider engages personally with each learner, acknowledging their whakapapa and cultural context, and ensuring support is tailored to their identity, needs, and goals.	The Provider embeds culturally grounded individual pastoral care throughout their practice. Each learner is recognised as a whole person, with their own mauri, and is supported through consistent, trusted relationships grounded in tikanga and manaakitanga.
	Whānau-Centred Support	The Provider is beginning to involve whānau in pastoral care,	The Provider works in partnership with whānau,	Whānau are active participants in learner support. Pastoral care

		recognising their role in learner success.	ensuring they are part of the learner's support system, and that care strategies reflect the learner's cultural, social, and emotional world.	plans are co-designed where appropriate, drawing on Māori models of care (e.g., Te Whare Tapa Whā, Te Wheke), strengthening identity, belonging, and resilience.
	Mauri Ora – Sustaining Individual Wellbeing	The Provider is exploring how to address learners' holistic wellbeing within their learning environment.	The Provider supports each learner to understand and nurture their own mauri, building awareness of their mental, spiritual, physical, and social wellbeing.	The Provider champions learner wellbeing by weaving tikanga, mātauranga Māori, and culturally safe practices into everyday learning and support. Every learner's wellbeing is seen as central to success and actively monitored and supported.

APPENDIX 3: NGĀ MIHI WHAKAMUTUNGA

Tēnei te mihi nunui ki ngā ringa raupā, ngā reo kōrero, me ngā ngākau aroha i whakawhānui i tēnei kaupapa nui — Te Ara Whakapakari.

To every Māori and non-Māori apprentice, mentor, employer, educator, hapū representative, and stakeholder who generously shared your experiences, whakaaro, and aspirations — ka nui te aroha me te mihi.

We'd also like to give a special acknowledgement to the mana whenua who whakapapa to the following marae, whose contributions helped shape and strengthen this kaupapa:

- Omahu Parata Ltd
- Heb Ltd
- Ngāti Hinemanu, Ngāi Te Upokoiri me one Piringa Hapū Authority Trust
- Te Wānanga o Aotearoa
- Omahu Marae
- Te Awhina Marae
- Rūnanga Marae
- Wharerangi Trust

This framework exists because of you — your willingness to kōrero openly, to challenge, to contribute, and to shape a future where vocational learning is culturally grounded and accessible to all.

Mā te kotahitanga e pakari ai te ara. Through unity and shared purpose, the path ahead becomes stronger.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.