

# Whiria Te Ako explained

The integration of Whiria Te Pūkenga (Mātauranga Māori Framework) & Ako Framework The indigenising of Ako in Te Pūkenga.

## Tō tātou pūtake | Our purpose

The purpose of Te Pūkenga is to provide excellent quality educational opportunities that support ākonga, employers and communities to gain the skills, knowledge, and capabilities that Aotearoa New Zealand needs now and for the future. Ākonga and their whānau are at the centre of all that we do.

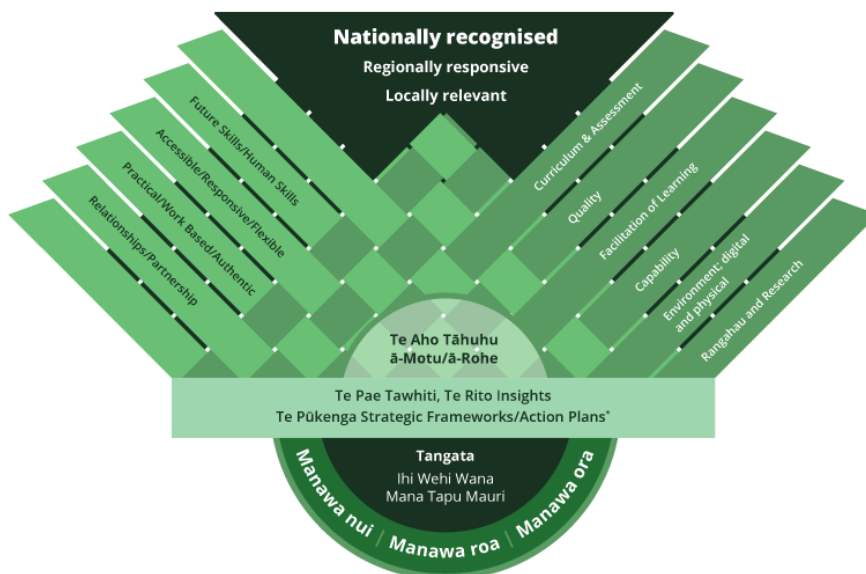
Whiria Te Ako is the proposed name for the Learning & Teaching Framework of Te Pūkenga. This denotes a transformative approach to [Ako](#), where [Mātauranga Māori](#) is privileged and informs and provides context to all parts of learning and teaching in accordance with the proverbial phrase:

Whiria te taura mātauranga o tēnā whare, o tēnā whaitua, hei kete whakairo.

He whakamaunga kanohi mō ngā iwi. Whiria te ako, nau mai te wānanga.

Weave together the strands of knowledge of the individual whare, of the individual regions into an intricately fashioned kete. A source of pride and inspiration, that is admired by all.

Weave together the learning and teaching, welcome the collaboration.



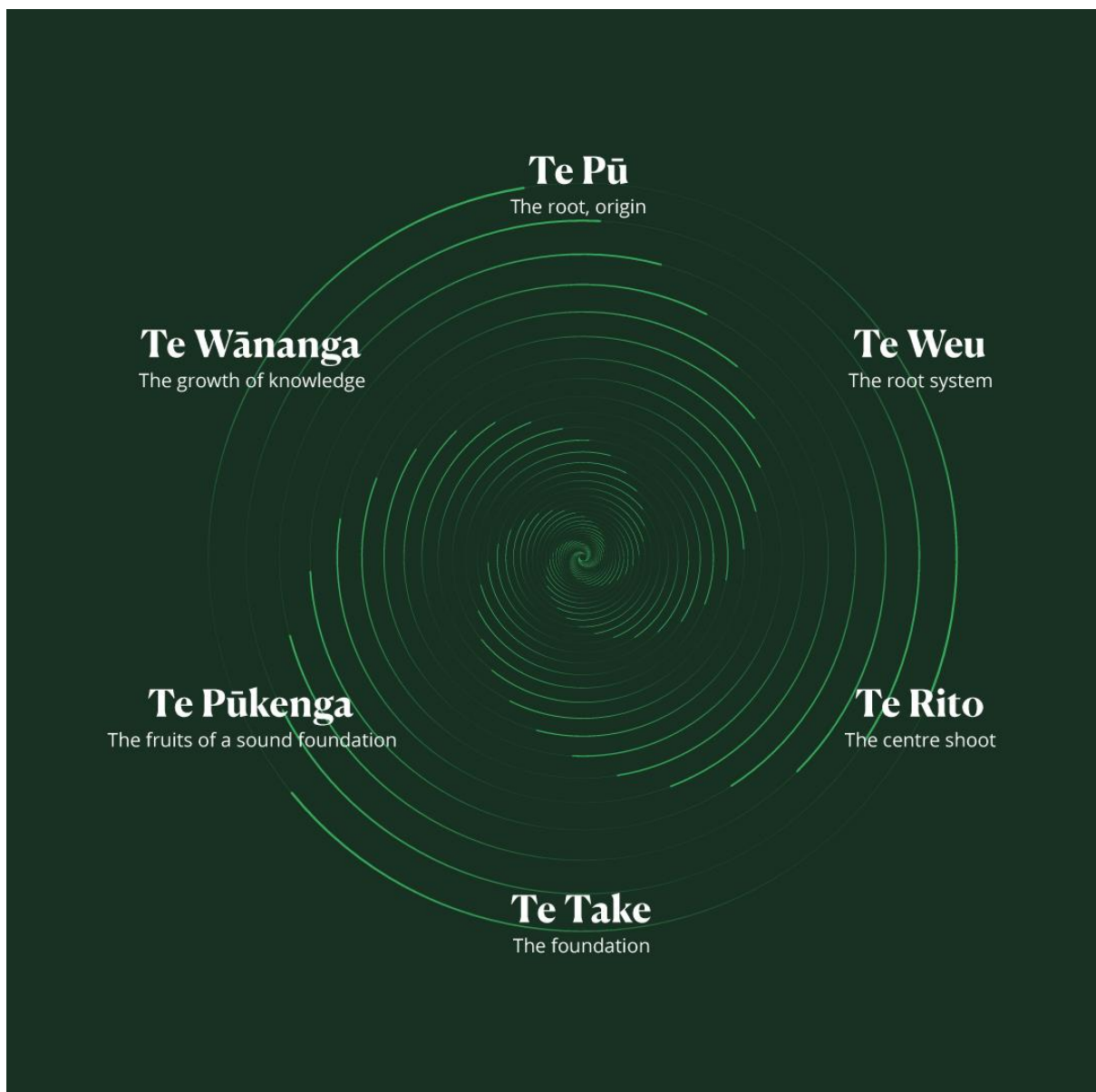
Whiria Te Ako is founded upon both traditional and contemporary understanding of the thematical genealogy of existence, the reciprocal relationships between Atua, Tūpuna and Taiao, the balance of Tapu and Noa and maintenance of Mana.

Whiria Te Ako considers 3 key tenets as embodiments of the above, in its approach to learning and teaching, that being:

- [Tangata centred](#)
- [Ngā Uara driven](#)
- Te Ao Māori worldview

The three tenets portray a fundamentally Māori understanding of existence, Te Aho Kura, a body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Te Ao Māori worldview, values, beliefs and perspectives, Māori creativity and cultural practices.

## Te Aho Kura | The thematical genealogy of our existence



Te Aho Kura is the genealogy of all that exists. Literally it speaks to the growth of a plant, metaphorically it speaks to the growth of knowledge, all of which begin at Te Pū, the intuition, Te Weu, the rootlets/the cognition, Te Rito, the center shoot/the illumination, Te Take, the base/the rationalisation, Te Pūkenga, the manifestation, the inspiration behind the name of our institution.

The idea of Te Aho Kura is built around the two words 'Aho' and 'Kura'. Aho in this context means a line of descent similar to whakapapa (genealogy). It is the notion of following a natural and logical pathway from one idea, event, or process to the next. Therefore, the framework is the Aho where one stage is followed sequentially by the next. Aho is often used as a structure or framework within Māori society, for example Te Aho Matua (education), Te Aho Tapu (weaving), Te Aho Taua (martial arts). The word Kura can be associated with knowledge, treasures, sacred law and even philosophy. The combination of these words can be loosely translated as a theoretical educational framework.

Te Aho Kura provides a Te Ao Māori Worldview that underpins a Tangata centred approach to Ako and informs the Ngā Uara driven protocol of behaviour.

## Te Aho Tāhuhu

*Te Aho Tāhuhu* describes the first weft and is the first line in weaving that sets the rest of the pattern. Te Aho Tāhuhu is an extension of Te Aho Kura in the application of Whiria Te Ako at national, regional, and local levels.

Te Aho Tāhuhu provides a guide on the fundamentals of a Tangata centred, Ngā Uara driven Ako practice which is underpinned by Te Aho Kura. The following descriptors outline the purpose of Te Aho Tāhuhu:

- **Te Aho Tāhuhu ā-Motu (Nationally Recognised)**  
Te Aho Tāhuhu ā-Motu provides guidance as to the fundamental knowledge, skills, attributes, etiquettes, processes, and procedures that all of Ako at Te Pūkenga will demonstrate. These fundamentals are promises that all ākonga, their whānau, Te Tiriti partners, communities and employers can hold us accountable to.
- **Te Aho Tāhuhu ā-Rohe (Regionally Responsive/Locally Relevant)**  
Te Aho Tāhuhu ā-Rohe acknowledges the regional and local nuances to knowledge, skills, attributes, etiquettes, processes, and procedures that require specific responses. Te Aho Tāhuhu ā-Rohe provides exemplars and resources that can be adjusted to reflect this.

A thriving pā harakeke or network requires the practice of continually learning and improving. Our cycle of reflective practice ensures throughout our whole journey we are taking an approach to learn and achieve together, holding a mirror to ourselves to ensure we are striving to improve. The following structure is a derivative of Te Aho Kura karakia that speaks to the origins of knowledge and its wider benefits. Versions of this karakia are common throughout Aotearoa New Zealand and this structure could be described as universal Māori philosophy pertaining to knowledge, learning, teaching, academic achievement, and vocational attainment. It is important to note that this framework can be applied to many different situations and shaped to fit a variety of circumstances.

The following outlines how the 6 stages of growth within Te Aho Kura underpin Whiria Te Ako:

## **Te Pū (Preparation)**

Te Pū means the origin, source and even the centre. This is the beginning of any undertaking or belief system, and all other stages flow from this source. Te Pū can be likened to a spring from which a stream and eventually a river will flow. This stage involves soil preparation to promote and protect biodiversity that will boost ecosystem productivity. Using research and insights to drive outcomes and performance measures. **Te Pū in Whiria Te Ako is depicted by Ihi, Wehi, Wana, Mana, Tapu, Mauri.**

## **Te Weu (Planting)**

Te weu are the lateral roots or the small branches of roots that form the main root. These help the plant absorb water and minerals. Like these roots, Te weu spreads out beneath the soil growing larger and stronger as they take on more minerals. This stage is about foundation setting to ensure strong growth; ensuring every important element is in place to promote a healthy ecosystem. **Te Weu in Whiria Te Ako is depicted by Ngā Uara.**

## **Te Rito (Nurture)**

Te rito is the centre shoot of a plant. This stage is all about relationship building and collaboration; understanding the needs of the rito (learners) and their whānau to enable them to grow. Sets our strategy and direction so the whole network is clear. **Te Rito in Whiria Te Ako is depicted by Tangata.**

## **Te Take (Growth)**

This is the base, the stump, the plan, even the foundation. This is the phase where the plant becomes self-reliant and builds a foundation upon which it can stand on its own. This stage ensures we develop necessary support and systems to the rito and growth enablers to encourage the plants to thrive and flourish. Operational planning is developed from strategy. **Te Take in Whiria Te Ako is depicted by Te Pae Tawhiti, Te Rito, and Te Pūkenga Strategic Frameworks/Actions Plans.**

## **Te Pūkenga (Harvest)**

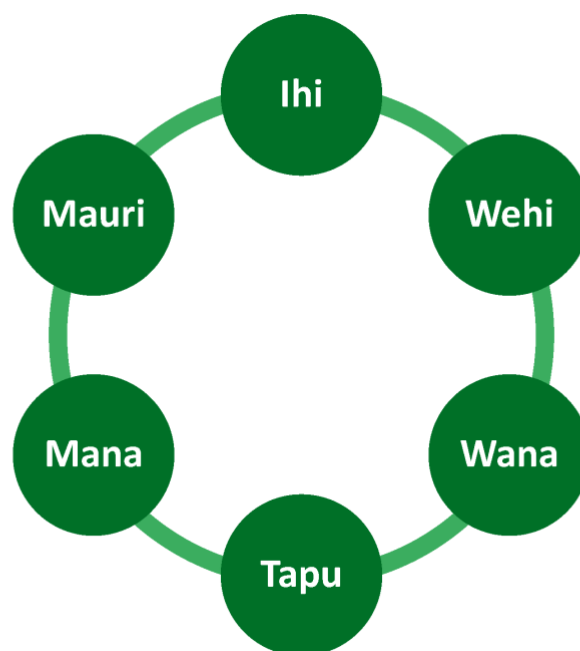
Te Pūkenga means skilled, expert and specialist. However, in the context of this framework it means the fruits of a sound foundation. All the elements of Te Pū, Te Weu, Te Rito and Te Take feed into the development of an individual who becomes a pūkenga. This stage is about ensuring robust systems are in place to sustain continuous growth and excellence throughout our network response, actioning the operational and learning and teaching plans. **Te Pūkenga in Whiria Te Ako is depicted by the Rau on the left and right sides of the diagram.**

## **Te Wānanga (Reflection)**

Wānanga has many meanings, including wise person, knowledge, discuss, debate and even institution. This can be interpreted as the height of the process, or the desired outcome, to get to a stage where it becomes a wānanga. Having individuals or groups come through a process where

they are experts in their field and feed back into the ongoing growth of knowledge and understanding. To ensure continuous growth, this same knowledge and understanding can also at times feed back into the beginning of another undertaking (Te Pū). **Te Wānanga in Whiria Te Ako is depicted by Te Aho Tāhuhu ā-Motu/ā-a Rohe.**

## Te Pū – Ngā Āhuratanga | Tangible & Intangible Characteristics of Tangata



Āhuratanga acknowledge an inherent connection to Qualities – Knowledge, Skills, Attributes, Values, Behaviours, Characteristics that are inherited through genealogical descent from Tūpuna (both human and divine). Hence, the origin of Āhuratanga is directly sourced from Te Orokohanga (the creation of the Universe) in accordance with Māori worldview.

These Āhuratanga are embedded and permeate within every aspect of Te Ao Māori – including Ngā Uara, Mātauranga, and Tangata:

### Tapu

Literal meaning is sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart, forbidden. The unique qualities that are inherent and/or developed individually or inherited.

### Ihi

Literal meaning is essential force, excitement, thrill, power, charm, personal magnetism. The Innate essential energy of a person that is sensory induced, ignited by what is seen, heard, felt.

## **Wehi**

Literal meaning is a response of awe in reaction to Ihi. The demonstration of Ihi externally; an emotional reaction that acknowledges Ihi.

## **Wana**

Literal meaning is to be excited, thrilled, inspired, stimulated, moved, roused. The impact of Wehi on people and/or the environment around us and their response to Wehi. The collection of energy that unites & connects people to each other, to the environment, and to kaupapa.

## **Mana**

Literal meaning is Integrity, prestige, respect, status. Mana can be inextricably connected with Tapu as one affects the other. An example of this is that attributes can be inherited (based on whakapapa) and the significance of Tapu within that inheritance (for example, the esteem given to those ancestors that a person or people descend from). However, the significance of the Mana of an Individual or Group (Whānau, Hapū, Iwi, Hāpori) may be impacted by the demonstration of Mana through Ihi and Wehi and the level of reciprocal response of others to this demonstration (Wana). Therefore, the impact on Mana can be positive or negative depending on the quality of reciprocation of Wana to the individual and/or group.

## **Mauri**

Literal meaning is life principle, life force, vital essence, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions - the essential quality and vitality of a living being, organism or entity. Also used for a physical object, individual, ecosystem or social group in which this essence is located. Ihi, Wehi, Wana, Tapu & Mana can all be encapsulated within Mauri, and each of these characteristics can also have their own Mauri.

## **Te Weu – Ngā Uara**

### **Ō Mātou Uaratanga | Our Values**

Our values are a continuum of the analogy described in Te Aho Kura. Te Aho Kura is vertical in a sense, as things grow upwards and that process of knowledge transmission is passed downwards, laterally however to Pūkenga, is its counterpart, Pūmanawa. The Late Dr. Te Wharehuia Milroy has described the difference between the two, as Pūkenga being skills attained and Pūmanawa the development of one's natural talents, our institutional values stem from that philosophy.

### **Manawa nui | Respect**

Manawa nui describes how a person or group embodies manaakitanga, humility, patience, respect, tolerance, and compassion.

### **Manawa roa | Resilience**

Manawa roa describes how a person or group embodies resilience, fortitude, grit and doing what needs to be done to achieve the collective goal.

## **Manawa ora | Vitality**

Manawa ora describes how a person or group embodies wellbeing, livelihood, and how they breathe life into all aspects of another life form.