

National Disability Action Plan 2024 Update

October 2023



Te Pūkenga

Pūtake Purpose	3
Overview of the Te Pūkenga National Disability Action Plan (NDAP).....	3
Brief overview of the Te Pūkenga NDAP objectives	4
Brief overview of the focus of work for 2023	6
NDAP objectives of focus for 2024	7
Objective 1: Creating a Strong Partnership with Disabled Ākonga across the Te Pūkenga Network.....	7
Objective 2: Building Disability Confidence across the Te Pūkenga Network	7
Objective 3: Ensure Disabled Ākonga receive the right learning support	7
Objective 4: Information and communication access that considers disabled ākonga who require this in alternate formats and use assistive technology	8
Objective 6: Provide effective support for ākonga who experience anxiety and mental distress	8
Management of the NDAP	8
Organisational structures.....	8
Measurement of Outcomes.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Indicative Investment for 2024	10
Appendix	10

Pūtake | Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an update on the actions taken by Te Pūkenga against the National Disability Action Plan in 2023. It also outlines the work planned to take place in 2024, giving a brief overview of actions, milestones and indicative costs.

The National Disability Action Plan and the Learner Success Plan (LSP) should be read as companion documents, as there are LSP initiatives that provide direct benefit for disabled ākonga. Please see Appendix 1 for an overview of relevant LSP initiatives.

Overview of the Te Pūkenga National Disability Action Plan (NDAP)

The Te Rito Report for Disabled Learners identified eight key barriers to achievement for disabled ākonga in vocational education. It shows that there are disabled ākonga who face significant barriers to participation, achievement and pathways into vocational education and employment. We must take action to resolve the barriers that disabled ākonga have identified and face.

- a. Disabled ākonga told us that receiving the correct impairment-related learning support greatly affects their academic achievement and life in general.
- b. Kaimahi (support staff) wanted disabled ākonga recognised as an equity group, with more focus on resolving the systemic barriers impacting disabled ākonga and more promotion of their abilities.
- c. We also heard that if the impairment-related learning support needs of disabled ākonga are not considered, and there is no infrastructure to support them and their Kaiako (teaching and support staff), disabled ākonga will face barriers to their learning.
- d. We must create an inclusive environment where kaiako (teaching and support staff) who support disabled ākonga feel 'disability confident'.
- e. People at all levels of the vocational education system must also take responsibility for supporting disabled ākonga, rather than just delegating this to disability support kaimahi (staff).

The eight key barriers in vocational education identified by the disabled ākonga and their support staff (kaimahi) were:

- a. Lack of disability confidence of some Kaiako (teaching and other staff).
- b. A range of issues impacting disabled ākonga receiving the appropriate learning support.
- c. Inaccessible Communication and Information about courses, academic requirements, available learning supports and digital platforms.
- d. Some disabled ākonga are reluctant to enrol with Disability Support Services (DSS) or provide impairment information because of their past experiences at secondary school.

- e. Some disabled ākonga are feeling overwhelmed and require additional support.
- f. Some face financial hardship and a lack of funding for impairment-related learning support, particularly for those with more complex needs.
- g. Lack of Academic & Employment Pathways for some disabled ākonga.
- h. Inaccessible physical environment for some disabled ākonga.

The National Disability Action Plan aims to address these barriers over 3-5 years. This will also assist Te Pūkenga to meet the requirements for disabled ākonga in the Pastoral Care Code.

Overview of the Te Pūkenga NDAP objectives

Objective 1: Creating a Strong Partnership with Disabled Ākonga across the Te Pūkenga Network

Outcomes:

As with Māori and Pacific ākonga, disabled ākonga have a strong voice and active partnership on the Learner Advisory Committee, the Strategic DAP Steering Group and Subsidiary DAP reference groups and student councils.

Disabled ākonga with different impairments have significant input in the design of buildings, course content, teaching practices, information, and communication processes and learning support.

Objective 2: Building Disability Confidence across the Te Pūkenga Network

Outcomes:

Develop Kaiako (teaching and support staff) understanding of the educational and other barriers disabled ākonga face.

Training and resources are developed to support Kaiako with inclusive teaching practices, learning support and assessment.

Course design, curriculum, delivery, and assessment include the Principles of Universal Design in Education for disabled ākonga.

Kaiako have the support required to ensure they have the appropriate attitude and behaviours to provide the right outcome (learning support) for disabled ākonga with different impairments to achieve.

Objective 3: Ensure disabled ākonga receive the right learning support

Outcomes:

Across the Te Pūkenga network and subsidiaries, the issues in the Te Rito report causing delays or preventing disabled ākonga from receiving the appropriate learning support are resolved. This includes culturally relevant and respectful support services and strategies.

Objective 4: Information and communication access that considers disabled ākonga who require this in alternate formats and use assistive technology

Outcomes:

Digital strategies and platforms across the Te Pūkenga network are accessible for all disabled ākonga and consider those using assistive technology and those involved with work-based learning.

Essential information and communication that disabled ākonga require are accessible to those with different impairments who require this in alternate formats and who use assistive technology, including those involved with work-based learning.

The barriers to online and other learning for those disabled ākonga with limited computer literacy skills, access to devices, Wi-Fi and data for online learning are resolved. This considers those with specific learning disabilities, the Deaf community, and those who are neuro-diverse or have other conditions.

Objective 5: Create safe environments to provide personal information about an impairment

Outcomes:

More disabled ākonga are comfortable to enrol with Disability Support Services and provide impairment-related information, so they can receive the appropriate learning support and overcome their fear of doing this.

All subsidiaries use a consistent set of enrolment questions to identify impairment-related learning support needs, including those in work-based learning environments.

Objective 6: Provide effective support for ākonga who experience anxiety and mental distress

Outcomes:

Effective support for ākonga, who experience anxiety and mental distress, through a range of channels and services.

Culturally relevant mental health support/service options are available.

Kaiako feel supported and are confident to recognise and appropriately respond to ākonga experiencing mental distress.

Peer support and mentoring are established for these ākonga.

Objective 7: Creating an accessible physical environment for disabled learners

Outcomes:

The physical environments that Te Pūkenga disabled ākonga study or train in are accessible.

Objective 8: Ensuring the funding model and other support removes barriers for disabled ākonga who face financial hardship and who have high supports needs

Outcomes:

Funding allows the learning support needs of Te Pūkenga disabled ākonga with high support needs to be met.

Consistent withdrawal policies exist across the Te Pūkenga network that allow withdrawal without academic or financial penalty if ākonga withdraw because of an impairment.

Objective 9: Disabled ākonga have equitable access to vocational learning pathways and employment

Outcomes:

All Te Pūkenga disabled ākonga have equitable access to vocational learning pathways and support that leads to employment.

Brief overview of the focus of work for 2023

Te Pūkenga Council decided that in 2023 the focus of the work on the NDAP should be on objectives 1, 2, & 5. The work underway is as follows:

Objective 1: Creating a Strong Partnership with Disabled Ākonga across the Te Pūkenga Network & Objective 5: Create safe environments to provide personal information about an impairment:

In July a wānanga was held with disabled ākonga from across Te Pūkenga. At this event information was shared with ākonga who then evaluated the content and provided feedback. The content shared included information on:

- the National Disability Action Plan (NDAP) of Te Pūkenga
- the Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice
- the National Disabled Students Association (NDSA)
- Disabled Learner Data of Te Pūkenga
- the formation of Learner Networks
- Learner Representation and Building Disability Leadership
- the Te Pūkenga Concern and Complaints Policy

The feedback received was positive around this form of engagement and the information shared. However, ākonga expressed the desire for more time to reflect, formulate, and feedback on the workings of Te Pūkenga. In response, another wānanga is being held in October 2023 where further feedback will be sort on barriers to disclosure and onboarding processes.

Building on the relationships formed through the wānanga, a reference group and a network of disabled ākonga will be established in 2023.

Te Pūkenga has partnered with the NDSA to help to develop and strengthen student voice and advocacy among disabled ākonga. This one-time wholly University-based organisation is now instituting a sub-committee formed with Te Pūkenga ākonga.

Objective 2: Building Disability Confidence across the Te Pūkenga Network

Recent work, touching base with all disabled ākonga support teams within Te Pūkenga, has demonstrated an immediate need for Neurodiversity training across all delivery modes. As a result, expressions of interest are being sought for participation.

There has been extensive use of the TECs' Disability Confidence 101 across the Te Pūkenga network which has led to a desire for further professional development in this area. Work has begun on developing a Disability Confidence Toolbox comprised of online learning objects, workshops and information. Existing artefacts and expertise will be drawn from across the network to provide the content for this toolbox. Once established gaps will be identified and new materials developed.

Another response to the information gathered from the disabled ākonga support teams has been to initiate some assistive technology pilot projects. This touches on part of Objective 4.

Objective 4: Information and communication access that considers disabled ākonga who require this in alternate formats and use assistive technology

There are inconsistencies in the way in which ākonga are supported across Te Pūkenga as a whole and across the modes of learning delivery. As a result, pilots using assistive technology are being undertaken to begin to address this issue.

NDAP objectives of focus for 2024

For 2024 priority is being given to continuing parts of the work initiated in 2023, and focusing on new areas of development as follows:

Regional Disability Action Plans

1. In 2023 a review and gap analysis of Te Pūkenga business division Disability Action Plans was completed. In Quarter 1 and 2 of 2024, these plans will be consolidated and revised into new Regional Disability Action Plans to reflect the new organisational structure and roles in the operating model. The Regional Plans will also build on 'practice with potential' opportunities outlined in the review and look to bridge gaps identified.

Objective 1: Creating a Strong Partnership with Disabled Ākonga across the Te Pūkenga Network

Initiatives:

1. Continue the partnership with NDSA to strengthen student voice and advocacy among disabled ākonga. Develop events in collaboration with the NDSA at a regional level across all modes of delivery. (Quarters 1-4)
2. Strengthen the disabled ākonga network through extensive promotion and events. (Quarters 1&2)
3. Establish student reference group as a partner in the development of harmonisation of disability services within modes of learning delivery i.e., Campus, Work Based Learning and Online/Distance. (Quarters 1-4)

Objective 2: Building Disability Confidence across the Te Pūkenga Network

Initiatives:

1. Increasing kaimahi disability confidence through training & resources across the network. (Quarters 1-4)
2. Continuing the development of Disability Confidence learning objects including online learning, resources and workshops. (Quarters 1-4)

Objective 3: Ensure Disabled Ākonga receive the right learning support

Initiatives:

1. Harmonisation of onboarding processes for disabled ākonga within learning delivery modes. (Quarters 3&4)
2. Implement a regional Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) assessment pilot. This will give ākonga timely access to assessment that otherwise they would not have, therefore enabling the support they require to be appropriately provided. (Quarters 1&2)
3. Develop greater equity of access through the use of Tuākana / Teina and pre-start Whakawhanaungatanga initiatives. (Quarters 3&4)

4. Develop and implement nationally consistent policies relating to disabled ākongā and their learning. (Quarters 3&4)

Objective 4: Information and communication access that considers disabled ākongā who require this in alternate formats and use assistive technology

Initiatives:

1. Implement the Accessibility Charter. Work with Te Pūkenga Digital to survey the existing content ecosystem print/digital/wayfinding and signage. (Quarters 3&4)
2. Ensure that new content goes through an accessibility compliance process. (Quarters 3&4)
3. Investigate the timely production of alternate formats. (Quarters 3&4)

Objective 6: Provide effective support for ākongā who experience anxiety and mental distress

Initiative:

1. Enhanced mental health services; work with the Regional Clinical Coordinators to ensure that all Disability Services are networked with appropriate local mental health services. (Quarter 2)

Management of the NDAP

Recently Te Pūkenga embarked upon the **Tāraia te anamata** | Creating our futures', consultation process. It is a significant milestone in the establishment of the new education and training organisation. These proposals will bring the business divisions closer to becoming a unified organisation committed to being agile, equitable, and responsive at regional and local levels, meeting the evolving needs of ākongā, employers and our communities across Aotearoa New Zealand.

The feedback has been gathered and in a matter of weeks the new structure will be outlined, and positions will be advertised. A known element of the new structure is the establishment of four regions and the necessary positions to manage them. It will be necessary to account for this development in the planning and resourcing of the NDAP.

Organisational structures

When the organisation is structured regionally, it will be necessary for the Disability Services of each business division to work together within their given region to construct a Disability Action Plan (DAP) in support of the NDAP. This is necessary because each region has larger and smaller business divisions with discrepancies in staffing, resources and business processes. These variations cause inequities in the provision of support for disabled ākongā and will be highlighted by the establishment of the disabled ākongā network. Working together, the regions can begin harmonising the services, business processes and resources available through the DAP development process.

These regional DAPs and the NDAP will be entered into Protecht to facilitate the reporting of progress against the targets contained. In this way, evidence uploaded supporting regional activity

can be used in the NDAP and reported to TEC. This will also facilitate the use of evidence to be mapped to the code of practice for the pastoral care of ākonga which is also reported through the use of Protecht.

The establishment of several nationally provisioned groups and networks will support the ongoing work against the NDAP. These are shown in the diagram below.



Disabled Ākonga Reference Group:

The Reference Group will be drawn from all 25 Business Divisions of Te Pūkenga and will exist to undertake co-design and provide information to develop more responsive services and support.

Disabled Ākonga Network:

This Network will be open to all disabled ākonga in all 25 Business Divisions of Te Pūkenga. It will facilitate communication between disabled ākonga, helping to build whanaungatanga and hence increase student voice.

Te Pūkenga Disability Services Reference Group:

The Reference Group will be drawn from all 25 Business Divisions of Te Pūkenga and will exist to undertake work in the harmonisation of services, business processes and resources. This work is required both within regions and within the different modes of learning delivery.

National Disability Action Plan Steering Group:

The Steering Group will be comprised of a subset of the people involved in the Reference Group above. This Group's focus will be on deciding the priority of actions taken in support of the NDAP.

External Disability Reference Group:

This Reference Group will be comprised of external stakeholders drawn from relevant organisations and industry. The role of this Group will be to inform and feedback on the future direction of work in support of disabled ākonga.

The NDSA, whilst partnering with Te Pūkenga, exists to advocate for disabled ākonga and remains an external organisation in order to do this effectively. Because of the relationship between the two organisations the views of the NDSA are taken seriously.

The Disability Leadership Group is an informal community of practice brought together internally to share ideas, reflect on the developments taking place, and provide informal support to each other.

Indicative Investment for 2024

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Indicative Costs \$
Objective 1	Creating a Strong Partnership with Disabled Ākonga across the Te Pūkenga Network				
Initiative 1					50k
Initiative 2					50k
Initiative 3					100k
Objective 2	Building Disability Confidence across the Te Pūkenga Network				
Initiative 1					200k
Initiative 2					300k
Objective 3	Ensure Disabled Ākonga receive the right learning support				
Initiative 1					200k
Initiative 2					200k
Initiative 3					10k
Initiative 4					10k
Objective 4	Information and communication access that considers disabled ākonga who require this in alternate formats and use assistive technology				
Initiative 1					10k
Initiative 2					10k
Initiative 3					10k
Objective 6	Provide effective support for ākonga who experience anxiety and mental distress				
Initiative 1					50k
				Total	1,200k

Appendix

Please see the 2024 Learner Success Plan Update for a synopsis of the initiatives.

Initiatives	Benefit cohort includes disabled ākonga
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Tuākana / Teina & Peer Mentoring	
Pre start whakawhanaungatanga	
Learner Networks	
Learner Representation	
Learner Leadership Capability	
Pastoral Code capability	
Mental Health Services	
Institutional Effectiveness	
Policies	
Financial Services	
Manaaki Fund	
First Year Apprentice Retention - WBL	
Rohe 2 Māori ākonga Attrition	
Rohe 1 – Pacific Learner Wayfinding	
WBL Access	