

Tā Te Pūkenga tauākī e pā ana ki te kano ārai mate KŌWHEORI-19 |

Te Pūkenga Position Statement on proof of COVID-19 vaccination status

1 April 2022

Te Tāhuhu Kōrero | Background

In December 2021, Te Pūkenga adopted a position statement that supported a requirement for only eligible people who are vaccinated to be onsite unless a risk assessment determined otherwise. It aligned with widespread vaccine mandates put in place by Government and businesses.

We acknowledged then that kaimahi and ākongā would be affected by the impact of this position on their work and study life. We also noted the impact of the disease on people's health and wellbeing.

Events since December 2021 have shifted how the Government and society respond to the pandemic. Collective immunity and the relative severity of infection from the Omicron variant are two factors that have influenced this shift and, in turn, have led to this update of our December 2021 position statement.

Although this position statement does not refer explicitly to other public health measures than vaccination, such as face coverings, physical distancing, hand sanitising, and so on, we recognise the critical role they play in controlling transmission of the virus.

This statement is valid as at 1 April 2022. It will continue to be regularly reviewed and updated as more information comes to hand and further decisions are made by Te Pūkenga network.

The policies that were implemented as a result of the December 2021 position statement on this matter should be held in abeyance, that is, temporarily suspended, effective from 1 April 2022.

All references to Te Pūkenga are references to Te Pūkenga and each of its subsidiaries.

Pūtake | Purpose

To provide clarity as to the expectations of Council in relation to proof of COVID-19 vaccination status for Te Pūkenga kaimahi, ākongā and visitors to Te Pūkenga workplaces.

Ngā Mātāpono | Principles

1. We want to take a risk-based approach that appropriately strikes the balance between inclusion and equity for kaimahi and ākongā and our health and safety obligations for all.
2. We accept that a risk-based approach may lead to different positions in exceptional circumstances by subsidiaries to meet the needs of their communities, iwi aspirations and the requirements of any COVID-19 legislation.
3. We encourage and support proactive measures by subsidiaries to engage with and support kaimahi and ākongā affected by this position statement

4. We strongly encourage everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand to be fully vaccinated.
5. We will collect and retain only the personal information needed to satisfy the intent of this position statement (and underlying positions taken) and will do so in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.
6. We accept that positions and approaches on COVID-19 matters need to be flexible enough to adapt to the rapidly changing environment in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Tā Te Pūkenga tauākī mō te whai rongoā hei ārai i te KŌWHEORI-19 | Te Pūkenga position on proof of COVID-19 vaccination

The position is that:

1. Unless deemed through legislation or a risk assessment, Te Pūkenga kaimahi and ākonga are not required to provide proof of vaccination status to enter Te Pūkenga workplaces or otherwise engage in the learning and work activities of Te Pūkenga from 5 April 2022.¹
2. Unless deemed through legislation or a risk assessment, visitors to Te Pūkenga workplaces are not required to provide proof of vaccination status from 5 April 2022.
3. Te Pūkenga kaimahi and ākonga will follow any proof of vaccination requirements imposed by third party organisations that they interact with.
4. In relation to kaimahi recruitment, where the role would reasonably expect a requirement of proof of vaccination, a Te Pūkenga entity can require proof of vaccination as a pre-requisite for that role.
5. In relation to prospective ākonga seeking to enrol in courses that require a placement in a sector that falls within scope of a vaccine mandate and/or where proof of vaccination is required, then vaccination can be a pre-requisite to enrolment.

Ngā mahi hei aromatawai i te whatitata | Assessing risks and making decisions

Decisions will be made by each subsidiary with reference to (among other things):

1. This position statement.
2. The work and learning spaces, the people in those spaces and their work and learning activities.
3. The need to put ākonga at the centre and the impact of any decisions regarding proof of vaccination status on ākonga and the communities that they come from.
4. Obligations under the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 to ensure the health, wellbeing, and safety of people, so far as reasonably practicable.
5. Updated risk assessments.

¹ This position recognises that from 5 April 2022 there are four sectors still under a legislated vaccine mandate. They are healthcare and disability, aged care, corrections and border. The work and learning of some Te Pūkenga kaimahi and ākonga intersect with these sectors.

6. The effectiveness and reliability of existing and proposed measures to prevent transmission and infection.
7. Obligations under Te Pūkenga Charter, for instance, to achieve equity for underserved learners and to offer a mix of education and training in each region, including face-to-face learning.
8. Government legislation and directives, Ministry information and guidelines, and other credible public health and safety advice.

Dated: 1 April 2022

Signed:



Kim Ngārimu

**Acting Chair and Deputy Chair
Te Pūkenga Council**