



Te Tiriti o Waitangi Policy

Purpose

This policy is a formal expression that provides high level direction for how AQA will work to uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi and honour our obligations as a Tiriti partner. This policy is a ‘living document’, one that can evolve as the organisation’s expectations and Aotearoa New Zealand’s maturity on Te Tiriti grows and adapts over time.

Policy Statement and Guidelines

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti/Tiriti) is one of the founding documents in Aotearoa New Zealand and acts as a guiding framework to advancing partnership, achieving equitable outcomes, and enabling the collective wellbeing of Aotearoa New Zealand. This Te Tiriti Policy Statement confirms the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities’ (AQA) intention of being a good Tiriti partner and broadly outlines how we will honour our obligations, responsibilities, and commitments to Te Tiriti. This commitment applies to both the undertaking of our functions and responsibilities, and our day-to-day work.

Our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi

With notable differences observed between the English and Te Reo Māori texts, it is important to note that any references made to Te Tiriti throughout this policy refer solely to the Te Reo Māori text and the provisions behind that text. AQA are united in acknowledging and upholding Te Tiriti in all our work.

Our expression of Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The provisions of Te Tiriti provide the framework for how AQA will meet its obligations in our day-to-day work:

Preamble - Te Tiriti o Waitangi is central to AQA’s work, functions, and processes.

Kāwanatanga – AQA will work in partnership with Māori in the governance, design, delivery, and monitoring of its work and functions.

Rangatiratanga – AQA will enable for Māori tino rangatiratanga and mana Motuhake in the design, delivery, and monitoring of all our work.

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Ōritetanga – AQA is committed to achieving equitable outcomes for Māori, which means centering equity in all our work and amending processes and standards to allow for more equitable outcomes. AQA will also act to achieve equitable outcomes for Māori by being informed on the extent and nature of Māori education outcomes and efforts to achieve equity for Māori in education and quality assurance.

Wairuatanga – AQA will ensure that all their services are provided in a culturally appropriate and safe way that recognises and supports expressions of te ao Māori.

Connections and Alignment

Application of the Critical Te Tiriti Analysis Tool in AQA’s work

The Critical te Tiriti Analysis Tool (CTA) is a form of critical policy analysis that includes reviewing policy documents against the Preamble and the Articles of Te Tiriti. It aims to improve Māori outcomes and ensure Indigenous engagement, leadership, and fundamental authority in the policy process. It offers an approach to analysing policy that is simple to use and is inherently a tool for advancing social justice¹.

The CTA is an effective quality assurance tool for AQA and AQA staff as it can be used not just in the evaluation of policies against Te Tiriti, but in guiding the organisation and staff in what questions need to be answered and understood when engaging in any piece of work.

A set of questions based on the CTA have been developed to help staff understand what they need to consider in the development of their work:

- What elements show that Te Tiriti is central to the development of your work?
- How are Māori equal or lead parties in the development of your work?
- What elements ensure equitable Māori participation and/or leadership in setting priorities, resourcing, implementing, and evaluating your work?
- Does your work enable Māori to express rangatiratanga?
- Where have Māori been able to influence and hold authority over during the development of your work?
- What evidence is there of Māori values influencing your work?
- Have you acknowledged the importance of wairua, āko and other te ao Māori concepts in the development of your work?

A vital way the organisation reflects leadership for their staff in this space is in their commitment for this process to be reflected in AQA’s strategic and annual plans.

¹ Came, H., O’Sullivan, D., & McCreanor, T. (2020). Introducing critical Tiriti policy analysis: A new tool for anti-racism from Aotearoa New Zealand. *European Journal of Public Health*, 30(5).
<https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckaa165.674>

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The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is a framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world, and it elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of indigenous peoples. Aotearoa New Zealand signed the UNDRIP in 2010, and AQA supports the intention of this document and its natural alignment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. When considering its work, AQA will refer to the articles of UNDRIP to ensure they are reflected within the organisation's work. Additionally, AQA will consider the role UNDRIP plays when completing international work with countries where the indigenous peoples do not hold the majority population.

Policy Review

The policy will be considered annually by AQA and will go through a systematic review every five years to ensure it remains relevant and in line with good practice.

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