



Takiala Pasifika

2020-2023

NZQA's Action Plan for
Pacific Learner Success

Fakaalofa lahi atu
Tālofa lava Kia orana
Mālō e lelei Mālō nī Noa'ia
Mauri Ni sa bula vinaka
Tālofa Kia ora
and warm Pacific greetings

***“We should not be defined by the smallness
of our islands but in the greatness of our oceans.
We are the sea, we are the ocean. Oceania is us.”***

– Epli Hau'ofa*

Pacific learners are descendants of skilled Polynesian navigators, experienced astronomers, discoverers and innovators who traversed distant horizons across the vast Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa to fulfil their dreams and aspirations. This same dream continues to guide Pacific people and it is upon this foundation that we navigate, to ensure that the New Zealand education system can fully realise the potential of all Pacific learners in Aotearoa.

* Hau'ofa, Epli (1998) The Ocean in Us. Contemporary Pacific 10 (2):391–410



Introduction

Pacific and the Future World

The Takiala Pasifika 2020–2023 outlines NZQA’s commitment to enabling Pacific learners, families and communities to achieve their aspirations. ‘Takiala’ is the Tokelauan term for ‘compass’ (pathfinder) and ‘Takiala Pasifika’ is NZQA’s compass for Pacific success.

The world is rapidly changing and is increasingly global, digital, and connected. The world of education and work is no longer as it was for the early Pacific migrants who made New Zealand their home. The aspirations and expectations of Pacific peoples, however, remain steadfast: for their children to achieve in education and successfully contribute to their families, communities, and Aotearoa.

Pacific aspirations have not been realised in the classroom at the same rate as in other parts of society. Despite the high visibility of Pacific people enjoying success in sports and the arts, achieving equitable educational outcomes for Pacific learners is an enduring challenge. Pacific learners aged 14 and younger represent the fastest growing ethnic group in Aotearoa, and as such, they will be key drivers of success for our future. It is essential that the education, training and employment pipeline responds to the needs of Pacific learners and their families, and better prepares them for the cumulative impacts of digitisation, automation and the future of work. Fully realising the potential of Pacific learners will have reciprocal benefits for families, communities, and Aotearoa.

NZQA’s role within this landscape is the quality assurance of qualifications and administering the secondary school assessment system. Over the next three years, we will focus our efforts on achieving the two key strategic goals of **Equity** and **Lifelong Learning**.

The 30-year Education Vision

The actions included within the Takiala Pasifika are closely aligned to the 30-year education vision as well as the Action Plan for Pacific Education¹. The five objectives for education that underpin the 30-year vision are:

- ✘ Learners at the Centre
- ✘ Barrier-Free Access
- ✘ Quality Teaching and Leadership
- ✘ Future of Learning and Work
- ✘ World-Class Inclusive Public Education

¹ The Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020–2030 has a vision that diverse Pacific learners and their families feel safe, valued and equipped to achieve their aspirations. Visit: <https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/action-plan-for-pacific-education/>

Equity for Pacific Learners and their Families

Takiala Pasifika 2020-23 sharpens NZQA's focus to achieve equity for Pacific learners, families, and communities. It articulates our contribution to the education system for Pacific learners and demonstrates our commitment to ensuring equity of access and outcomes for all learners.

The implementation of the Takiala Pasifika is the responsibility of everyone at NZQA. A Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) will be the sponsor of each of the five focus areas. This is a critical role to ensure we are collaborating both externally and internally to achieve the outcomes sought in the Takiala Pasifika.

The implementation of the Takiala Pasifika will be closely monitored with regular progress reporting to the NZQA Board.

Pacific communities across New Zealand are diverse and dynamic, with rich and varied genealogies, histories, languages, cultures and identities. Although the term 'Pacific' is used throughout the Action Plan, it is important that implementation plans developed to progress the goals and objectives of the Takiala Pasifika are responsive to and include ethnic-specific approaches that meet the needs of different Pacific communities.

COVID-19 has exacerbated existing inequities faced by Pacific learners in the education system and further highlights the importance of ensuring NZQA actions explicitly focus on addressing these issues. The Takiala Pasifika aims to provide responsive education support to Pacific learners, families and communities.



Takiala Pasifika Vision

Pacific Learners Qualify for the Future World

The two strategic goals underpinning the vision are:

Equitable access and opportunities
enable Pacific learner success

Qualifications enable Pacific
lifelong learning and wellbeing

Five focus areas will contribute towards achieving these strategic goals:

Le’o ’o e Kakai’ Community Voice

Pacific learners,
families, and
communities
benefit from
tailored NZQA
services

*DCE Quality
Assurance*

Fakafetuiaga Partnerships

Strategic
partnerships
enable Pacific
learner success

DCE Māori

Alāfua Pathways

Pacific learners
and families
can confidently
and successfully
navigate
education and
employment
pathways

DCE Assessment

Tamata People

NZQA staff
and leaders
have increased
capacity and
capability to
achieve equity
of access and
outcomes for
Pacific learners

*DCE Strategic
and Corporate
Services*

Tiratira tū ē te tūranga teitei Equity and Excellence

Equity and
excellence for
Pacific learners
is informed by data,
evidence, and
best practice

*DCE Digital
Assessment
Transformation*

Le'o 'o e Kakai' (Lea Faka-Tonga)

Community Voice

Pacific learners, families, and communities benefit from tailored NZQA services.

A comprehensive understanding of Pacific learners, families, and communities informs the development and delivery of tailored NZQA products and services. Ensuring that assessments, programmes, and qualifications are culturally relevant for Pacific learners will enable NZQA to better meet their needs and contribute to increased equity of access and outcomes. Pacific identities, languages, and cultures are key to Pacific learner success and therefore are fundamental in both the design and delivery of NZQA services. The STEM² ambassadors and NCEA navigators are two examples of how Pacific student voice can successfully contribute to effective NZQA product design and delivery.

² Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics



What we will do

	Key action	Benefit	Success indicator
1	Increase Pacific learner voices in NZQA stakeholder engagement work to inform service design and delivery	Pacific learners and their families experience responsive services that meet their needs when engaging with NZQA	Pacific learner voices are evident in stakeholder engagement reporting and have been used to inform and improve NZQA product and service design
2	Prioritise Pacific learner input and increase opportunities for Pacific learner participation in NCEA Online assessment by seeking advice from the NZQA Taupulega ³ and other Pacific student, education and community groups	Pacific learners experience equitable access to, and outcomes from, digital assessment	Pacific learner and community input guides our choices in prioritising initiatives in digital assessment development
3	Ensure that Pacific voices and perspectives inform the design and delivery of quality assurance services	Pacific learners receive appropriate high-quality education	Evidence shows that NZQA quality assurance services have met the cultural expectations of Pacific learners

³ NZQA's Pacific Advisory Group.

Fakafetuiaga (Vagahau Niue)

Partnerships

Strategic partnerships enable Pacific learner success.

The NZQA Taupulega will continue to provide strategic advice and support to the organisation and ensure our approach is consistent with Pacific values, world-views, and expectations. We will develop joined-up actions across NZQA divisions and work with government agency partners, schools, tertiary education organisations, local education providers, and Pacific community groups to enable equity of access and outcomes across the education pathway from compulsory to tertiary education.

We will also continue to provide advice and support that contributes to achieving the government's strategic priorities in the wider Pacific region, with a particular focus on fulfilling Aotearoa's obligations and responsibilities to Pacific realm countries, including the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau.

We will work closely with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Pacific Peoples, Tertiary Education Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and other relevant agencies to progress shared Pacific strategic priorities.



What we will do

	Key action	Benefit	Success indicator
1	Work with schools and assessment experts to ensure digital assessments are culturally authentic, meaningful, and engaging for Pacific learners	Pacific learners experience equitable access to and outcomes from digital assessment	Comparison of NCEA entry, achievement and user experience data for Pacific students in digital versus paper-based assessments is used to determine the beneficial effects for Pacific students of digital assessment
2	Facilitate fono for contracted teachers of Pacific languages to ensure a shared understanding of quality assessment and enable their collective feedback to schools	Teachers are supported to develop quality assessment materials that reflect Pacific learner contexts	Contracted teachers of Pacific languages are well supported and are enabled to develop fit for purpose assessments and/or provide quality and consistent assessment feedback
3	Progress NZQA's Pacific programme of work to strengthen qualification recognition and labour mobility in the Pacific region under the PACER Plus ⁴ agreement	Labour mobility of Pacific people is enabled through strengthened partnerships	Increased recognition of Pacific qualifications and frameworks
4	Develop strategic partnerships that position Pacific learners, families and communities as a strong "demand voice" in the system to achieve equitable outcomes	Pacific learners experience equitable achievement outcomes, for example, in STEM-related subjects	Co-designed solutions with Pacific and non-Pacific experts that benefit Pacific learners Feedback shows that the engagements have been positive and effective

⁴ The Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus is a trade and development agreement that will lower barriers and provide greater certainty for NZ businesses, and raise living standards, create jobs and increase exports in Pacific Island countries. Visit: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/overview.pdf>

Alāfua (Gagana Samoa)

Pathways

Pacific learners and families can confidently and successfully navigate education and employment pathways.

Ensuring Pacific learners and families have equitable access to quality information, resources, and support networks to successfully navigate education and employment pathways will be essential to Pacific learner success. This will include supporting Pacific learners and families to make informed decisions about tertiary education, vocational pathways, and employment opportunities. There will also be a focus on lifelong learning opportunities for Pacific people who are returning to study to upskill and/or change careers later in life. We will work with employers and Pacific businesses to ensure plans are responsive to both community and labour market needs.

We will grow the reach and impact of NCEA ma le Pasifika workshops across a wider range of channels and strengthen key information regarding the use of digital assessment and NCEA Online. Tailored information will be provided on the range of tertiary options and opportunities available to Pacific learners and their families, including STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education and employment pathways.



What we will do

	Key action	Benefit	Success indicator
1	Grow the reach of NCEA ma le Pasifika to positively impact more Pacific learners and families	Pacific learners and families have increased confidence and capability to successfully navigate education to employment pathways	10,000 NCEA ma le Pasifika engagements and 30 trained NCEA Champions by 2023 Feedback from participants confirms increased confidence and capability
2	Support quality assurance of Pacific languages assessment, and ensure Pacific learner assessment is relevant and provides accurate insights into learner ability	Assessment material is relevant for Pacific learners and contributes to increased engagement and achievement	Teachers are able to develop new assessments and recontextualise existing assessments to make it relevant and accessible for Pacific learners
3	Increase the uptake of Special Assessment Conditions (SAC) for Pacific learners	Pacific learners receive equitable access to SAC to support their learning and assessment	A clear trend upwards in the numbers of new SAC applications from schools with a high population of Pacific learners

Tamata (Vosa Vakaviti)

People

NZQA staff and leaders have increased capacity and capability to achieve equity of access and outcomes for Pacific learners.

Attaining equity for Pacific learners will require our organisation to strengthen its cultural capability. We will work to increase capacity and develop the capability of NZQA leaders and staff to better understand Pacific worldviews and experiences, address racism and unconscious bias, and ensure our work intentionally focuses on equity of access and outcomes for Pacific learner success.

Being a workplace that attracts and retains top Pacific talent is important. NZQA will continue to actively support the Pasifika Staff Network and create career development opportunities that advance Pacific staff aspirations and progression.



NZQA's Pasifika Staff Network Planning Day

What we will do

	Key action	Benefit	Success indicator
1	Provide training opportunities for non-Pacific and Pacific staff to strengthen their Pacific cultural competencies and use of appropriate engagement methods	A capable and confident workforce that is responsive to the needs of Pacific learners and communities	Staff develop and strengthen their Pacific capability and confidence through training opportunities provided
2	Implement a plan to increase the number of Pacific employees across NZQA including in senior roles	NZQA has increased capacity and capability to achieve equity of access and outcomes for Pacific learners	NZQA increases Pasifika employee representation to 8.1% ⁵ including senior roles by 2023

⁵ Equivalent to the Pacific population percentage of total NZ population (Census 2018). This equates to an increase from 25 staff, as at 30 June 2020, to 35 staff by 30 June 2023.

Tiratira tū ē te tūranga teitei (Te Reo Māori Kuki 'Airani)

Equity and Excellence

Equity and excellence for Pacific learners is informed by data, evidence, and best practice.

Data and evidence will inform the development of NZQA Pacific strategic priorities and be used to monitor, track and evaluate progress and impact across divisions and teams. Pacific data, research, best practice, and case studies will be collated, developed, and shared to ensure NZQA has a strong evidence base of what works for Pacific learners and is focused on equity priorities.



What we will do

	Key action	Benefit	Success indicator
1	Develop and implement a Pacific Learner Success Evidence Framework to ensure that quality data, information and evidence informs NZQA planning for our drive towards equity	Pacific Learner Success Evidence Framework is used by NZQA and key strategic partners to inform collaborative planning and practice to achieve equity of access and outcomes for Pacific learners	Evidence that the Pacific Learner Success Evidence Framework is used while making key decisions across NZQA
2	Develop NCEA Online Equity Ratio and share insights appropriately to create initiatives addressing equity of digital access and outcomes for NCEA	Pacific learners experience equitable access to, and outcomes from, digital assessment	The rate of Pacific learner participation in digital external assessment is the same as, or better than, their non-Pacific peers
3	Develop and share case studies documenting Pacific learner success with key stakeholders including schools, education providers and Pacific communities	Sharing good practice has a multiplier effect and supports the focus on equity for Pacific learners	Education providers and schools demonstrate how they are meeting the needs of Pacific learners and striving for equity (including in External Evaluation and Review (EER) ⁶ reports)

⁶ External evaluation and review (EER) is an essential component of NZQA's evaluative quality assurance framework. Through the EER process, NZQA periodically checks and reports on the quality of education delivered by non-university tertiary education organisations.



NEW ZEALAND **QUALIFICATIONS** AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!