Describe any challenges to learning that the proposed student population may face

Students may face a number of challenges, including:

- Learning difficulties (general or specific)
- Behavioural issues
- Low socio-economic circumstances
- Social and cultural isolation, disconnection and alienation
- Prior negative learning experiences within a traditional learning environment
- Trauma and abuse
- Lack of parental/whanau recognition and involvement
- Environmental and sensory deprivation
- Health problems, impairment or disability
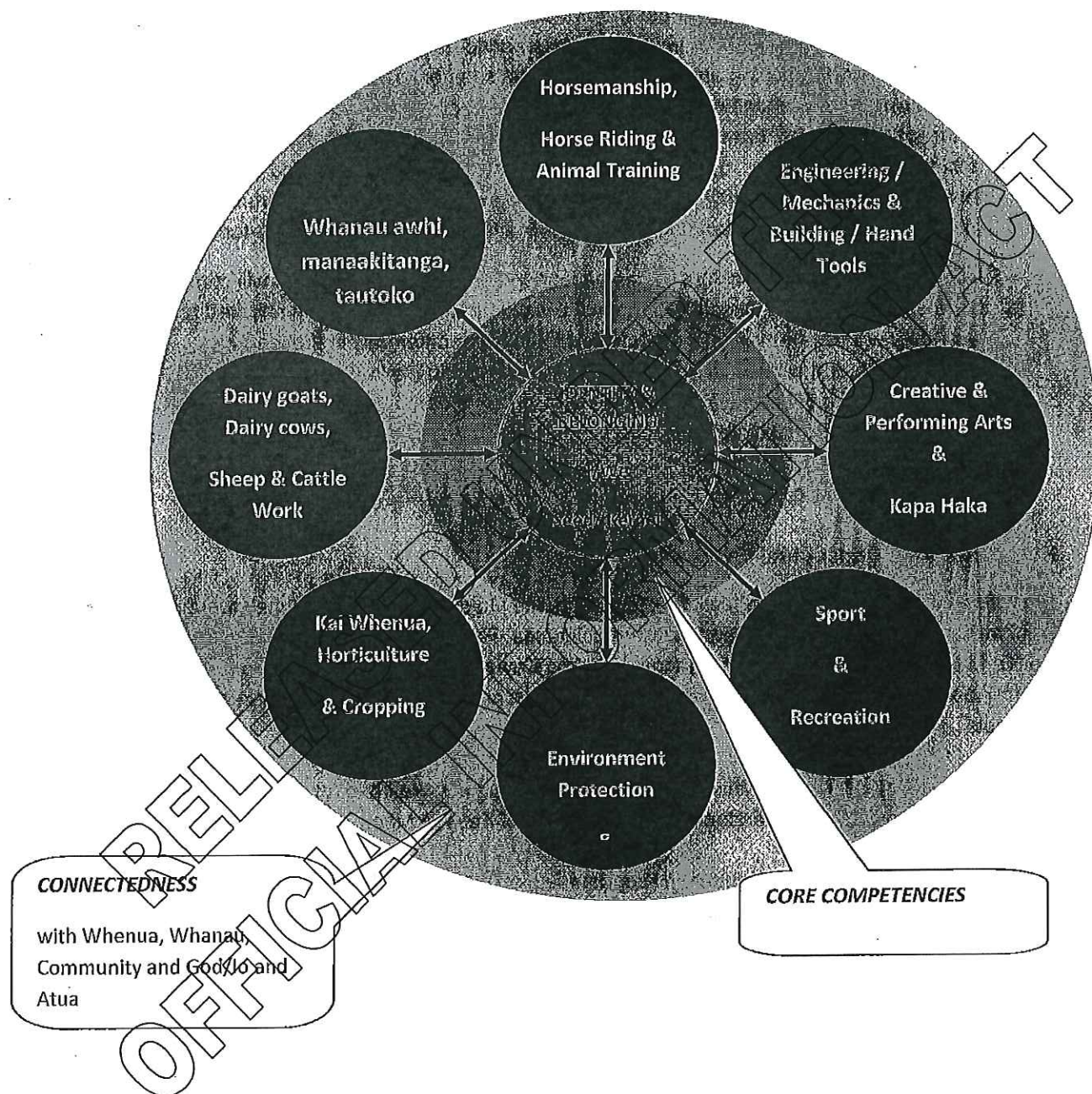
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, TEACHING AND CURRICULUM

Provide an overview of the essential elements of the education programme of the proposed school, including key teaching practices and evaluation and assessment strategies.

Essential Elements:

The key elements of the Kura Kete Ora Programme underpin the creation of a unique learning environment, which will provide a broad and diverse framework for innovative and creative teaching and learning. Young people will be fostered, mentored, empowered and supported to become independent, responsible individuals who are adequately prepared for work and lifelong learning, through active engagement in their learning process.

The Kura Kete Ora educational curriculum is integrated across the following eight domains (see diagram on following page):

Conceptual Map for Te Kura Kete Ora

Horsemanship, Horse Riding & Animal Training

Engineering / Mechanics & Building / Hand Tools

Whanau awhi, manaakitanga, tautoko

IDENTITY & BELONGING AND connectedness

Creative & Performing Arts & Kapa Haka

Dairy goats, Dairy cows, Sheep & Cattle Work

Kai Whenua, Horticulture & Cropping

Environment Protection

Sport & Recreation

CONNECTEDNESS

with Whenua, Whanau, Community and God/Io and Atua

CORE COMPETENCIES

Identity, belonging and connectedness are central to all elements of the Kura Kete Ora eight domain partnership school concept.

Tamaiti akona i te kainga, tau ai i te marae
A child educated to be strong in their own identity stands as a chief on the land.

In order to foster strong bonds of identity, belonging and connectedness, divergent thinking and stewardship (kaitiakitanga) will be emphasised:

- Stewardship (kaitiakitanga) it is the way we do things in the Kura Kete Ora learning community/environment, both teachers/kaiako and learners/akonga are to be kaitiaki in the processes of teaching and learning and it is also a focus for curriculum – whether that be in terms of understanding the interconnectedness of the life cycle, or interdependence of the water systems, drawing on science, technology and social sciences learning area achievement objectives. Students will recognise that human welfare and care for the environment are inextricably linked. They will be aware of the need to nurture and maintain knowledge, environment and resources for the short term or long-term future

- In regard to divergent thinking, within the learning environment, students will come to understand that it is a place where diversity is celebrated. Rather than required to fit 'one way' they will be affirmed and encouraged for thinking differently in the learning environment, and where they will have the opportunity to explore consequences or implications of a wide range of ways of thinking. Divergent thinking will be valued, fostered and opportunities to practice such will be provided through 'being' the learning community as well as within what may be thought of as more conventional learning experiences (White, 2007)

Kura Kete Ora's Conceptual Framework

Embedded in its philosophy and actions of practice, the Guiding Principles of whakapapa, whakawhanaungatanga, Te Reo Maori, Manaakitanga, Rangitiratanga, Kaitiakitanga, Whakanui, Toi Te Mana, Nga Kawenga, Wairuatanga, and Ahu Kawatanga (Barlow, 1991; Gray, 1991) are central to all elements within Kura Kete Ora's education programme and its partnership school concept.

Kura Kete Ora values Te Reo Māori, and opportunities will be developed for all the Kura Kete Ora community to grow in the understanding and speaking of Te Reo Māori.

Accordingly, Kura Kete Ora's Education Programme's conceptual framework is shaped by:
1. A holistic understanding of persons
2. who learn best in authentic social settings
3. undertaking purposeful, meaningful activities

It draws on a wide range of theorists and thinkers including: Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 2005) ecological systems theory of education, Penetito's (1993, 2009) place-based education, Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory, Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy, Krathwohl's Affective taxonomy and Williams (1970, 1993) Taxonomy for Creative Thinking., Pestalozzi's (developed further by Hollinger's 'head, heart and hands', Freire's (1976, 1987, 2000) educational thinking and Dewey's focus on 'how to think' (1910/1997) and his work on learning from experience (1916, 1938).

The learning environment takes place within a whenua-based context, where young people will experience an outdoor working environment which introduces them to a variety of disciplines within the whenua-based sector. This will enable learners to develop the technical knowledge, skills and understanding of commonly and specifically used practical skills associated with a

selection of whenua-based industries. Learners will also have the opportunity to develop a basic knowledge of a selection of these whenua-based industries and related job roles, which will assist them to prepare for more focused further learning opportunities, study and training for employment in whenua-based industries or vocational pathways of their choice.

Learning will foster kinesthetic, interpersonal and emotional/relational intelligences with an emphasis on "learning by doing" and having fun while learning; "edu-tainment". Co-operative and collaborative learning will create opportunities for students to work on and solve problems, reach goals and make decisions together. Activity-based learning will generate a sense of engagement, excitement and purpose, in comparison to didactic models of learning which often transmit information without providing relevant experiences for students to connect their learning. Key to this activity-based environment, is 'applied learning', which supports students to develop the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to enter vocational pathways of their choice.

Recognition of Multiple Intelligences (MI) within the Kura Kete Ora curriculum (refer page 16) is crucial to the Kura Kete Ora inclusive learning environment. MI emphasises the value of difference and diversity, unique qualities and characteristics of all learners, and the broad range of individual skills and abilities each young person has. Literacy, numeracy and cultural connection will link all elements of the Kura Kete Ora curriculum, creating a fluid learning environment, supported by a curriculum which is designed to generate divergent thinking, foster creativity and innovation, and stimulate the young person's interest in learning how to learn.

Kura Kete Ora's Teaching and Learning Climate

Integral to effective teaching, assessment design and practice is the relationship between the teacher and the student. It is widely understood that teachers have a significant effect on the learning climate and students' learning experience through their interactions with students. If students experience the positive value (extrinsic and intrinsic) of engaging in learning within a constructive learning environment, teachers can use this value to generate positive results. This is endorsed by Abbott (1999), who advocates "the test of successful education is not the amount of knowledge that a learner takes away from a school, but the appetite to know and the capacity to learn".

The Kura Kete Ora teaching, learning and assessment framework aligns theory and practice through the use of an activity learning schedule, which integrates Bloom's Taxonomy and Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. The focus is on nurturing learners' cognitive skills and connecting them with their preferred learning styles through engagement, depth and rigour. The programme is facilitated within a whenua-based environment, with connections to Marae and respective kaimoana environs, to ensure the learning is socially and culturally connected. Content related to Māori Te Reo and Tikanga, which reinforce the connectedness of learning to the immediate environment, are incorporated within the Kura Kete Ora programme. Subsequently, some assessments may require Te Reo, whilst others are optional in language choice. Assessment is viewed as learner-responsive, involving inclusive rather than exclusive activity, the purpose being to empower learners to become independent, responsible individuals, through active engagement in the learning and assessment process. Integral to this process is on-going involvement, support and encouragement from Teachers/Specialist Tutors/Kaiawhina teams, Volunteers, Learners, Whanau and Kaumatua. Teachers/Specialist Tutors/Kaiawhina assume a high level of responsibility for removing learning impediments, whilst learners take responsibility for becoming independent learners through active engagement in the learning and assessment process.

Young people at Kura Kete Ora will be facilitated and mentored to experience:
- Learning activities which nurture their thinking skills and cater for individual characteristics of intelligence and learning
- Developing confidence in the use of different thinking tools to grasp a variety of concepts
- Choosing the activities and tasks they would like to do in order to complete the work they are participating in
- Becoming engaged and make connections with their learning and in turn, develop lifelong learning skills

Multiple Intelligences, as developed by Gardner, is based on the understanding that people learn utilising different types of learning styles (Griggs et al., 2009). McFarlane (2011) advocates individual learning can vary across a range of human potentialities, stemming from bio-psychosocial and cultural factors which affect their skill sets and abilities.

MI can specifically cater to the diversity within learning environments and subsequently generate a more effective and realistic approach to address the uniqueness of learning needs. The implications for educators and students are significant in terms of the richness and flexibility MI brings to teaching and learning (McFarlane, 2011). Griggs et al. (2009, p.55) concur, adding that by teachers knowing which intelligences a student possesses, the student's learning is enhanced and the teaching is more effective.

As outlined by Smith (2008), Gardner's nine (9) Multiple Intelligences comprise:
1. Linguistic Intelligence
2. Logical Mathematical Intelligence
3. Musical Intelligence
4. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence
5. Spatial Intelligence
6. Interpersonal Intelligence
7. Intrapersonal Intelligence
8. Naturalist Intelligence
9. Existential Intelligence

(Source: Smith, M.K. (2008), www.infed.org,p1)

Armstrong (2011) describes MI as being extremely integral to the teaching-learning process in any environment, in that whatever we teach and learn can be connected to the different intelligences as seen in the figure below:
- Words (linguistic intelligence)
- Numbers or logic (logical-mathematical intelligence)
- Pictures (spatial intelligence)
- Music (music intelligence)
- Self-reflection (intrapersonal intelligence)
- Physical experience (bodily-kinesthetic intelligence)
- Social experience (interpersonal intelligence)
- Experience in the natural world (naturalist intelligence)

(Source: Armstrong, T. (2011), Multiple Intelligences)

Kura Kete Ora will seek to utilise those intelligences which are often not catered for in mainstream schooling, such as kinesthetic and naturalistic intelligences, but also integrate reading, maths and writing skill development within and related to 'learning through doing' and 'edu-tainment' activities

(see page 28 for an example). It will be the teachers and specialist tutors role and responsibility to find the keys to each student's learning, those which will unlock previous gates or barriers to learning, to invite the learner to be engaged in the learning process. As stated, integral to this is the belief that each learner is unique, and their uniqueness extends to learning style preferences, and multiple intelligences. By understanding learner's preferred ways of processing knowledge, teachers can shape learning and assessment experiences, as well as strengthen the student's ability to work in other intelligences. The question at the heart of Kura Kete Ora's approach to teaching is not, "Are you smart?" But rather, "How are you smart?" (Koch, 2007; Markova, 1992).

Evaluation of Kura Kete Ora's Education Programme

The Kura Kete Ora education programme will be evaluated by the Advisory Group, whose members have been appointed by the Kura Kete Ora Governing Board, who will have relevant expertise and qualifications to monitor the implementation, progress and effectiveness of Kura Kete Ora's education programme. Feedback from the Advisory Group and the data provided to them by the Principal /Director and staff, will be collated in preparation for external auditing and reporting to the Ministry of Education (MOE) and other organisations that Kura Kete Ora has key relationships with. These reports will be developed and completed by the Kura Kete Ora Principal/Director.

Assessment

International and national research has indicated that assessment is at the heart of the student experience and constitutes a vital and integral component of the teaching and learning process (Alton-Lee, 2003; Mahuika & Bishop, 2011; Scouller, 1996). It acts as a signal to point students to what educators and institutes consider most important to learn (Boud, 1998). Currently, for many in New Zealand secondary education it appears that teaching equals assessment preparation and evidence collection, and learning equals assessment completion. Traditional methods of assessment have placed an emphasis on summative tasks for purposes of efficiency and the need to meet the demands of larger class sizes, a diverse range of students, rapid changes within technology and what is commonly perceived as the commodification of learning.

The Kura Kete Ora approach to assessment is different and reflects the three types of connectedness referred to earlier, working together -- relational, pedagogical and curriculum in harmony. This means careful consideration of who assesses, how assessment occurs and the curriculum content which is the target of assessment.

Assessment -- relational connectedness

Assessment that is culturally appropriate and inclusive benefits all students and honours the relationships which are important to the learner, the targeted learning and the learning community (Mahuika & Bishop, 2011). For Kura Kete Ora, knowing is viewed as an active, not an objective, process. For each student their experience in and of the world is not of an objective, distant nature but rather integral to their being. Interpreting the world is what human beings do as they seek to live with purpose and meaning. Consequently, individual experiences are not seen as objective snap shots of events, but rather as interpretations and constructions in the process of

meaning making, a process holistically connected with who they are, and consequently assessment practices seek to honour these connections. In the Ako Aotearoa funded research undertaken by Hannah Hohapata focused on Integrated assessment for Maori youth learners, she reports of the positive influence for Maori (and we believe for all learners) when the assessment phase of the learning/teaching relationship occurred in an appropriate place and by an appropriate person. The examples she gives are of a student whose attempt at a karanga was assessed by her nanny who gave her feedback that led to further learning. In the Kura Kete Ora model, choices about who are involved in assessment and feedback can be made in consultation between learner and their teacher/specialist tutor. Similarly, the place to assess a karanga is not in a sterile classroom, but on the marae. The place to assess one's engagement in and through the eight domains is in the place of working and learning. One's understanding of horticulture can be assessed in the garden with the produce in front of one. One's understanding of working with horses can be assessed through observation and discussion as well as other more traditional methods. Hohapata reports that before any assessment occurred "we deliberately embedded integrated assessment by looking at the roles and responsibilities, tasks and opportunities for capturing naturally occurring evidence" (2011, p. 15).

Currently, assessment practices in NZ secondary schools tends to be individualistic while learning theory continues to show the importance of social connectivity for learning (e.g., Siemen's (2005) Connectivism Learning Theory). In order to meet this significant challenge, places of learning need to redefine the role of the teacher-learner relationship in the assessment process, in order to shift the balance of power and responsibility towards facilitating a student-centered approach to learning and assessment. Creating a collaborative teaching and learning environment where Kura Kete Ora young people are able to become self-regulating and take a more active role in the assessment process, will build the capacity for them to develop as independent learners who are adequately prepared for work and lifelong learning.

In their work with effective assessment for Maori, Mahuika & Bishop (2011) challenge educators to consider assessments which enable collaboration, but also iwi differences, noting that "a holistic approach to teaching and assessment features considerable potential for more culturally inclusive assessment measures" (p. 189). Integral to this process is on-going involvement, support and encouragement from Teachers/Specialist Tutors/Kaiawhina teams, Volunteers, Learners, Whanau and Kaumatua. Teachers/Specialist Tutors/Kaiawhina assume a high level of responsibility for removing learning impediments, whilst learners take responsibility for becoming independent learners through active engagement in the learning and assessment process.

Assessment – Personal Connection

Norsworthy's (2008) research indicated that from a student perspective, assessment tasks most likely to contribute to ongoing learning and development required students to process information through a personal filter and sense of fit. In other words, assessment tasks which were influential were deemed to be "personal to me" (Kava[2]). This is not the same as saying that one's knowledge is so personal and situationally specific that it cannot be defined or held to account (Furlong, 2000; Schön, 1983).   According to Kava, such assessment tasks get "me to dig deep

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[2] Participants chose their own pseudonym

into personal values, looking at character, something I have struggled with" (FQ). This same sense of personal connectedness can be illustrated when Lily who identified a high level of self-awareness in assessment tasks which "make you think carefully about how you are forming your ideas and what is informing your attitudes/involvement". It appeared that students seek personal connection and seek to understand their own reasons for accepting ideas or developing levels of skill. We believe that this sense of connectedness is at the heart of the reciprocal processes of learning and teaching and needs to be at the heart of assessment design. We reject the western scientific view of knowledge indicative of an objectivist epistemology and agree with Palmer, who holds such a view as "morally deforming" because "it sets students at arm's length from the world they are studying; they end up with a head full of knowledge but without any sense of personal responsibility for what they know, no sense of connectedness to the world that their knowledge reveals to them" (1999, p. 2).

Designing assessments which honour this personal connection can counter the typical deficit discourse which many students attending Kura Kete Ora will, unfortunately, be very familiar with and which is a "major impediment to Maori students' educational achievement) (Mahuika & Bishop, 2011, p. 185). Kura Kete Ora staff will prioritise engaging learners in a transformative process which fosters an understanding of why they are being assessed, what it is they need to be learning and the most effective way to learn it. This places strong emphasis on the need to balance assessment *for* and assessment *of* learning, through the use of formative assessment, formative feedback and feedforward processes. The dual benefit is that formative strategies enhance learning and achievement through supporting students to focus on the process of learning, rather than gaining surface information to pass a test or obtain a final grade.

Assessment: Curriculum Connections

Authentic assessment is embedded in purposeful and meaningful activities and work. In current New Zealand educational landscape assessment has tended to become isolated from purposeful and meaningful activities and work. An example of this is the focus on literacy in isolation. At Kura Kete Ora literacy is understood in a broad sense and as critical to participation and contribution in society, but is connected pedagogically to curriculum content rather than isolated. Consequently, literacy components for reading, writing, presenting and listening will be embedded in authentic purposeful activities. The Kura Kete Ora educational approach believes that where meaning making is respected, learning is increased.

Well-designed assessment which is clearly aligned with learning outcomes, focused on formative assessment and feedback processes, is integrated, innovative, culturally-responsive and facilitated by teachers who are supported to make informed professional judgements, will ensure Kura Kete Ora learners become active agents in their educational journey. A coherent and systemic approach to teaching, learning and assessment will subsequently ensure this transformative approach to education is a viable option across all domains of the Kura Kete Ora curriculum. Kura Kete Ora aims to use formative and summative assessment methods that are fair, valid, reliable and consistent, which are appropriate to supporting learning and achievement. Assessment processes will be regularly evaluated through Kura Kete Ora internal moderation processes and external moderation with an education provider(s) who are allied to the values and key concepts of Kura Kete Ora.

Also central to quality assessment practice is effective assessment design which:

- Avoids over-assessment and develops strategies to reduce the assessment load
- Redresses the balance between formative and summative tasks
- Provides timely and effective feedback to students
- Ensures the match between teaching, assessment and learning outcomes
- Develops and implements innovative assessment techniques

Assessment: Pedagogical Connections

As mentioned earlier in this proposal, one in which Kura Kete Ora will meet learner needs is through a pedagogy which embraces assessment of learning, for learning and *as learning*. Wherever possible, assessment of learning will be situated within authentic learning experiences and, where appropriate and possible, result in 'treasures' which serve other communities/real-world audiences. Such an approach will reduce the "traditional time constrained pencil and paper tests" which "have proved unreliable indicators of Maori achievement in the past" (Ministry of Education, 1992 p. 13; cited by Mahuika & Bishop, 2011, p. 193).

Kura Kete Ora teachers and special tutors will use a wide range of assessment methods , including oral, aural, narrative (written), video, musical, drama, artistic presentation or oratory format, group presentation and one on one meetings. Activities will integrate all learning outcomes, ensuring the programme is not over-assessed and the workload is efficient and manageable for teacher and learner alike. Some assessments will require te Rèo Maori, and some learners may choose to be assessed in te Reo Maori, while others will choose English.

In providing feedback to students on their progress, there is substantial literature that identifies the importance of effective, specific feedback as part of effective assessment, and consequently effective teaching and learning (Alton-Lee, 2003; Black & William, 1998, 2007; Burnett, 2002; Clarke, Timperley & Hattie, 2003; Dweck, 2007; Eyers & Hill, 2004; Fluckiger et al., 2010; Hattie, 2001; Jang & Stecklein, 2011; Mahuika & Bishop, 2011; Ronanyne, 2002; Williams, 2010). However, not any kind of feedback is influential. At Kura Kete Ora, feedback will engage with the student's thinking about their own meaning making and ways of knowing and learning. Notably, feedback will not necessarily imply written feedback for many times feedback is more influential if it is oral (Hawe, Dixon & Watson, 2008) and interactive (links to relational connectedness).

Within all aspects of the Education Programme, Kura Kete Ora will seek to employ outcomes-based education, where the focus is on:

- Competency based, mastery learning
- Achieving outcomes according to ability (not age criteria)
- Support is given to facilitate development of new skills rather than topic coverage
- Instructional guidance and outcomes achieved lead to progression to new learning
- Competition that positions some students as failures is actively discouraged whereas team-work and opportunities to succeed as part of a team is actively encouraged (Malan, 2000)