



Te Akatoki o Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha (Māori Students' Association) Incorporated

Ngā Tikanga Whanonga

Code of Conduct

Organisation	Te Akatoki o Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha (Māori Students' Association) Incorporated (Te Akatoki)
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Approved by	Te Akatoki Executive, Te Akatoki Advisory Board (or its equivalent)
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Owner	Te Akatoki Executive

1. Purpose and Scope

- This Code helps us protect the mana of Te Akatoki and look after the way we relate to one another, make decisions, carry responsibilities, and work through concerns. It is grounded in tikanga Māori and the values of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, rangatiratanga, kaitiakitanga, ukaipōtanga, mahi kotahitanga, and ngākau māhaki.
- This Code applies to members, Executive members, Academic Representatives, Advisory Board members, and anyone acting for or representing Te Akatoki. Everyone covered by this Code helps protect the wellbeing of the collective, uphold the mana of others, and strengthen Te Akatoki as a kaupapa Māori organisation
- This Code explains the behaviours, responsibilities, and processes that help Te Akatoki act with integrity. It supports good decision-making, encourages concerns to be raised early and respectfully, and explains how

matters will be managed in a fair and tika way, consistent with the Te Akatoki Constitution.

- The aim is for people to feel safe, respected, connected, and accountable as part of the Te Akatoki whānau. Where concerns arise, Te Akatoki will seek a fair and tika resolution that reflects natural justice, manaakitanga, and the restoration of trust where appropriate.

2. Definitions

“Advisory Board” means the Te Akatoki Advisory Board, or interim equivalent where applicable.

“Stakeholders” means the people who have an interest in the activities of Te Akatoki, or are affected by it.

“Te Akatoki Executive” and **“the Executive”** mean the officers of Te Akatoki, equivalent to a Board of Directors.

“UC” means the University of Canterbury.

3. Values and Decision-Making

Te Akatoki is guided by these kaupapa Māori values:

- whanaungatanga — relationships, connection, and shared responsibility
- manaakitanga/aroha — care, generosity, respect, and support for others
- ukaipōtanga — belonging, home, and connection to place

We also express our kaupapa through:

- Kaitiakitanga (guardianship)
- Mahi Kotahitanga (cooperation, working together)
- Whakaritetanga (legitimacy)
- Rangatiratanga (leadership, responsibility)
- Ngākau Māhaki (respect)

These values guide who we are, how we treat each other, how we make decisions, and how

we hold ourselves accountable. They are not separate from this Code; they are the foundation for how the Code should be understood and used.

4. How to make the right decision

Before acting, pause and ask yourself:

- Is this consistent with our values and tikanga?
- Is it lawful and fair?
- Would I be comfortable explaining this decision to our members, whānau, UC, or the wider community?
- Could this harm another person, Te Akatoki, or our reputation?

If the answer is unclear, seek advice from the Executive or Kaihāpai before continuing.

5. General Expectations

The expectations below are written so members can understand what good conduct looks like in practice.

❖ Our Reputation

*#whakaritetenga #rangatiratanga
#manaakitanga #whanaungatanga
#kaitiakitanga #ngākau māhaki*

- a) Te Akatoki supports tauira Māori to succeed holistically at UC. Our reputation is part of our collective mana. When Te Akatoki is trusted and respected, we are better able to secure support, funding, relationships, and opportunities that benefit our members.
- b) We need to think about how our behaviour and words may be understood when we are seen as representing Te Akatoki. Our rights to freedom of thought, expression, and assembly matter, but those rights sit alongside our responsibility to protect Te Akatoki's reputation. Online content can be copied, searched, and connected back to us long after it is posted, so one lapse in judgement can affect both personal and organisational credibility.
- c) All members of Te Akatoki have an obligation to exercise good judgment and take responsibility for their behaviour when attending Te Akatoki events, using the

where, or working or speaking on behalf of our organisation.

❖ Traditional and Social Media

#whakaritetenga #rangatiratanga #ngākau māhaki #whanaungatanga #manaakitanga

- a) Traditional media means printed and online newspapers, magazines, journals, and news blogs.
- b) Social media means any digital platform that can be used by anyone to post content – the common platforms are X, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.
- c) We think carefully about what we create, share, post, and comment on because our words can affect people, relationships, and the mana of Te Akatoki. The internet is public, permanent, and often searchable, so content linked to Te Akatoki can affect our reputation even when the connection is indirect or made later.
- d) Only the Tumuaki may speak to the traditional media on behalf of Te Akatoki. If we think Te Akatoki should make a statement or be heard, we need to get the Executive's approval first. If the matter is urgent, the Tumuaki can decide.
- e) Members of the Executive or the Advisory Board may not post content about Te Akatoki without the express permission of the Executive. If they state a personal opinion about the actions of any person or organisation on social media, they must use respectful and truthful language, because their role can be easily connected back to Te Akatoki through an internet search.
- f) Only the Tumuaki Tuarua, the Pou Pāpāho, or the Kaihāpai may post content on Te Akatoki digital channels, including social media.
- g) If we post about Te Akatoki on personal social media, we use positive and respectful language. If we have a concern about something Te Akatoki has or has not done, we raise it directly with the Tumuaki or a Tumuaki Tuarua rather than posting negative content online.

❖ Health, Safety, Security and Wellbeing

#manaakitanga #whanaungatanga #mahikotahitanga #ngākau māhaki #rangatiratanga #kaitiakitanga

- a) This means acting with manaakitanga so everyone is kept safe and away from harm when participating in Te Akatoki events or using the whare. It includes noticing physical hazards, removing them where we can, and protecting others from harm.
- b) It also means taking care not to cause psychological harm. We do this by treating each other with respect and kindness, using inclusive language, and recognising that people bring different experiences, identities, and ways of seeing the world.
- c) Security means that we make sure the whare is secure and only tauira use it – it's not a place for our friends and whānau, or a place of business.
- d) Te Akatoki should be a positive place that uplifts people and does not cause harm. This matters at events, in the whare, and anywhere Te Akatoki activities take place. Because paid staff may work alongside Te Akatoki or support use of the whare, some Te Akatoki spaces and events may also be workplaces with legal obligations, including obligations under health and safety law.
- a) We all have a responsibility to look after ourselves and each other. This means identifying hazards, raising concerns early, following event and whare guidance, and acting in ways that protect the wellbeing of others.

❖ Respectful and Inclusive Behaviour

#whanaungatanga #manaakitanga #ukaipōtanga #ngākau māhaki

- a) Respectful and inclusive behaviour means upholding the mana, dignity, tapu, and wellbeing of every person we engage with. Guided by manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, ngākau māhaki, and ukaipōtanga, we create spaces where people feel safe, valued, heard, and able to contribute.

- b) We practise manaakitanga by putting people at the heart of what we do, listening carefully, speaking with care, keeping confidences, respecting decisions and choices, and making space for different ideas, experiences, cultural views, and political views.
- c) We practise whanaungatanga by treating relationships as taonga. We avoid dismissive, indifferent, or harmful behaviour, and we take care before making assumptions or drawing conclusions about others. Where we are unsure, we check the facts and seek understanding before reacting.
- d) We uphold ngākau māhaki by using respectful language and not making comments, jokes, gestures, or online posts that belittle, shame, stereotype, intimidate, or exclude another person or group, including comments about appearance, gender identity, sexuality, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, age, ability, nationality, or socioeconomic status.
- e) We protect the safety and mana of others by avoiding violence, threats, harassment, bullying, intimidation, and any behaviour that makes another person feel unsafe, isolated, humiliated, or unable to participate fully in Te Akatoki spaces or activities.
- a) Harassment includes unwanted actions, requests, words, gestures, messages, images, written material, or digital content that offends, humiliates, intimidates, or creates an unsafe or hostile environment for another person.
- b) Bullying includes repeated, or potentially repeated, inappropriate behaviour that is direct or indirect, verbal, physical, written, or digital. It is behaviour by one or more people that undermines another person's mana, safety, confidence, or ability to belong.
- c) Sexual harassment is not acceptable in any Te Akatoki space or activity. It includes any unwanted verbal, non-verbal, digital, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that affects a person's dignity, safety, or ability to participate.

- d) Everyone has a place at Te Akatoki. We strengthen ukaipōtanga by making sure people are not excluded, harmed, or made unsafe because of another person's words, actions, assumptions, or misuse of power.
- e) If something is not tika, we speak up early and respectfully. A person may seek support from a member of the Executive, the Kaihāpai, or another trusted person so concerns can be addressed in a way that protects mana, wellbeing, and relationships where possible.

❖ Environmental Responsibility

#kaitiakitanga #rangatiratanga

- a) As a Māori students' association, environmental responsibility is central to our values. Through kaitiakitanga, we reduce waste, conserve resources, use sustainable materials where possible, and consider the environmental impact of our events and operations.
- b) Environmental responsibility matters because our wellbeing is connected to the health of the natural world. By caring for land, water, and air, we honour those before us and help protect the environment for those who come after us.
- a) All members of Te Akatoki have a role in caring for the environment. We make thoughtful choices about what we buy, where it comes from, how we manage waste, and how much waste we create. When organising Te Akatoki events or activities, we plan for waste management and avoid damaging the natural environment.

❖ Use of Resources

#kaitiakitanga #rangatiratanga #ngākau māhaki #mahi kotahitanga

- a) We use Te Akatoki's pūtea and equipment carefully. Our funds are provided so we can deliver services for tauira Māori, and our equipment has been made possible by the work of earlier members. We look after these resources so they last and continue to support the kaupapa.

- b) Te Akatoki receives funding from UC and community or philanthropic providers. We have agreements about how that funding will be used, so we must show integrity by spending carefully, following those agreements, and making good choices about how and when we use Te Akatoki money.
- c) The Executive will set a conservative and clear budget for Te Akatoki's activities for the year ahead, and report against it regularly so we can all see how our money is being spent.

❖ Raising Concerns and Dispute Resolution

- a) Te Akatoki supports honest and open communication and encourages everyone to ask questions and report concerns. We will support anyone who, in good faith, discloses actual or suspected breaches of the Code or participates in an investigation (subject to natural justice).
- b) If a person is unsure whether a concern, conflict, or conduct issue should be raised under this Code, they should seek advice from the Tumuaki, a Tumuaki Tuarua, the Kaihāpai, or the Advisory Board, or interim equivalent, before the issue escalates.
- c) Complaints, disputes, and concerns are managed in accordance with the Dispute Resolution section of the Te Akatoki Constitution. This Code does not replace the Constitution. If there is any inconsistency between this Code and the Constitution, the Constitution prevails. Performance and engagement matters should also be managed consistently with the Te Akatoki Honorarium Policy.
- d) When Te Akatoki manages a concern or investigation, it seeks fair outcomes that address the issue and protect the mana, wellbeing, and dignity of everyone involved.

6. Executive and Advisory Board responsibilities

Further obligations apply to the Executive and Advisory Board members.

❖ Legal Obligations

*#kaitiakitanga #rangatiratanga #whakaritetenga
#ngākau māhaki*

- a) Legal obligations are the things we must or must not do under the laws of Aotearoa New Zealand. This is especially important for Executive members because they are officers of Te Akatoki, which is an incorporated society. As officers, Executive members must:
- act in good faith and in the best interests of Te Akatoki
 - Exercise their powers for proper purposes only
 - Comply with the Incorporated Societies Act
 - Comply with the Charities Act
 - Comply with the Te Akatoki Constitution
 - Exercise reasonable care and diligence
 - Avoid creating or contributing to a risk to anyone that lends Te Akatoki money or other resources
 - Avoid letting Te Akatoki take on an obligation that the Executive member knows that Te Akatoki won't reasonably be able to meet
 - Ensure that Te Akatoki files its annual statements and returns
 - Make sure that Te Akatoki has all the licenses and approvals it needs to operate
 - Ensure Te Akatoki doesn't give any of its money to members of the organisation
 - Cooperate with liquidation if Te Akatoki was put into liquidation
- e) There are rules about who can be an officer of Te Akatoki, so we check eligibility before someone can stand for election.
- f) Executive members are elected to act on behalf of members and make responsible decisions for Te Akatoki. If officers allow Te Akatoki to act unlawfully, or act unlawfully themselves, they may be personally accountable.
- g) When Executive members are nominated

for election, they agree to comply with the laws relating to being an officer. If they are elected, they sign a consent of officer declaration before they start their term, and that declaration is filed with Te Akatoki's official records.

❖ Confidentiality

*#manaakitanga #whanaungatanga
#rangatiratanga #whakaritetenga #ngākau māhaki*

- a) Confidentiality means being trustworthy with personal, privileged, or sensitive information that we access through our roles or come across unintentionally. We do not share the following information unless disclosure is required by law:
- Minutes from sections of an executive meeting where non-Executive members have been excluded
 - Minutes from Advisory Board meetings
 - Commercially sensitive matters, including procurement responses, contracts, invoices, technical drawings, marketing strategies, pricing, trade secrets, and intellectual property
 - Personal information about members, stakeholders, or people working with or for Te Akatoki
 - Information about people or organisations involved in dispute or complaint situations
 - Investigation notes and decisions
- b) We do not release the following transparency information until it has been approved for release by the Executive:
- Financial records and reports
 - Strategic and annual plans
 - Minutes of executive meetings
 - Performance reports
- c) Confidentiality matters because it shows that Te Akatoki is trustworthy, reliable, and capable. Protecting information helps us maintain credibility and secure the support we need to serve our members and achieve

our purpose.

- d) It also matters that we check our facts and figures before we make them available to the public (including our members), which is why we need Executive approval before we publish our plans and reports.
- e) The Executive will ensure all information is kept confidential and securely stored and will authorise the release of our transparency information.

❖ Conflict of Interest

#rangatiratanga #whakaritetenga #ngākau māhaki

- a) A conflict of interest exists when an Executive member's personal or financial interests could influence, or appear to influence, their judgement or decisions for Te Akatoki. The conflict may be actual, potential, or perceived, and includes situations where the member may benefit personally or financially from a Te Akatoki decision.
- b) The Incorporated Societies Act requires officers to disclose interests and requires Te Akatoki to keep a register of those interests. Officers must excuse themselves from any matters in which they have an actual, perceived, or potential interest. This supports good governance and protects the integrity of Executive decisions.
- c) Before an Executive member starts their term, they must declare all interests and ensure these are recorded on a register in our Governance Software Portal.
- d) Throughout the Executive member's term, they need to declare any interests that they develop, and make sure the register is updated.

❖ Professional Conduct

*#whanaungatanga #manaakitanga
#rangatiratanga #ngākau māhaki*

- a) Professional behaviour means acting honestly and making choices that help Te Akatoki, not ourselves. It means being well prepared for meetings, listening to others, sharing views respectfully, following

through on commitments, taking responsibility for decisions, and explaining those decisions when asked.

- b) By behaving professionally, we model the way for others and show that Te Akatoki is a credible, reputable organisation which is well-run and working hard for its members.
- c) Executive members behave professionally whenever they are in their role, including in meetings, at events, when leading ceremonies, and in informal conversations with members.

7. Review and Approval

This Code will be reviewed at least every three years, or earlier if required by changes to the Te Akatoki Constitution, relevant law, or Te Akatoki policies.

Amendments must be approved by the Te Akatoki Executive and the Te Akatoki Advisory Board, or interim equivalent, before taking effect.