



**Te Akatoki: Ngā taurira Māori  
ki Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha  
“He toki ngao pae ki te ao mārama”**

*He rautaki whakarauora reo*

**1) Introduction: Whiua te reo ki ngā wāhi katoa (creating spaces for te reo Māori on campus at The University of Canterbury)**

This is a strategy that will contribute to the revitalization of te reo Māori at The University of Canterbury and in Waitaha. According to the statistics te reo Māori is in a particularly unhealthy state in Te Waipounamu (See Appendix 1). The conceptual underpinnings of this strategy lends itself to a line from Ngōi Pewhairangi’s classic waiata “whakarongo”- *Whiua ki te ao, whiua ki te rangi, whiua ki ngā iwi katoa.*

In essence, this strategy aims to expand language speaking domains by creating culturally inclusive ‘spaces’ where te reo Māori/tikanga Māori can be seen, heard, felt and used.

**2) Purpose:**

The purpose of this language strategy is to further acknowledge and define Te Akatoki’s commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as it relates to the promotion and protection of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori. This includes Te Akatoki’s own responsibilities as a Māori students’ association and in our work within the tertiary sector at The University of Canterbury.

**3) Supporting Policies:**

Article Two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi recognises te reo Māori as a taonga requiring protection. In 1985 the WAI11 claim sought to have this recognised by the Crown. The Waitangi Tribunal supported the claimants in its 1986 report, noting that the language “...is an essential part of the culture and must be regarded as a *valued possession*” and so requiring protection. Following this report, the Māori Language Act of 1987 declared te reo Māori an official language of Aotearoa New Zealand. Whilst not prescriptive, it sets an expectation that where te reo Māori is used as a first choice, there will be an acceptance that it is appropriate to do so. The Māori Language Act also set up Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (The Māori Language Commission) which is responsible for ensuring that the Crown is an active partner with Māori in working to ensure the revival and retention of te reo Māori. Beyond this official recognition, supporting the retention and revitalisation of te reo Māori and the practice of tikanga Māori are important for all who live in this country, because both form part of our identity as a nation.

Te Akatoki's language strategy aligns with the Māori Language Strategy (Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo, 2014) which consists of five results areas:

1. Te Mana o te Reo: increasing the status of the Māori language in New Zealand society.
2. Te Ako o te Reo: increasing the number of whānau Māori and other New Zealanders who can speak Māori.
3. Te Mārama Pū ki te Whakaora Reo: increasing critical awareness about Māori language revitalization.
4. Te Kounga o te Reo: supporting the quality and appropriate use of the Māori language and iwi dialect maintenance.
5. Te Kōrerotanga o te Reo: increasing the use of the Māori language among whānau Māori and other New Zealanders.

#### **4) Action Plan: Café Reo (Te Whare Kōrero o Te Akatoki @UC)**

Te Akatoki will establish a Whare Kōrero (Reo Café) on campus at The University of Canterbury. Students, teachers, whānau and the wider hapū can socialize in a place where te reo Māori will be the primary medium of communication. This strategy will support all levels of te reo Māori competency (from beginners to fluent speakers). Café Reo will put into practice the action of 'reclaiming and reframing linguistic/cultural spaces'. A place where reo speakers/learners can use and practice the language in a culturally inclusive environment. This will in turn increase the status of te reo, as an everyday 'normalised' language, whilst supporting students and whānau in their learning journeys. It promotes 'critical awareness' about language revitalisation and is an act of 'tino rangatiranga' – which sought to resist cultural and linguistic hegemony. Café Reo will support the Māori Language Strategy which aims to improve the quality and usability of the language through providing reo speaking opportunities in everyday meaningful contexts.

##### **Phase one: Planning/Preparation**

- Reaffirm our Vision: 'Whiua te reo ki ngā wāhi katoa' (Expanding Māori language domains/ te reo Māori in public spaces).
- Whānau, hapū and iwi involvement- propose the idea of a 'reo café' to both the internal and wider networks for buy-in and support. Establish a relationship with all the stakeholders.
- Create a business plan.
- Secure funding to initiate the business plan.
- Establish a Charitable Trust (for managing of pūtea).

## **Phase two: Implementation**

- Provide professional development for those who are involved in the operations of this initiative. This includes and is not limited to the Te Akatoki Executive and wider members/alumni of the association.
- Action business plan.
- Employ te reo Māori speaking staff to work at the café.
- The space reflects Ngāi Tahu (Ngāi Tūāhuriri) as the mana whenua.
- Regular appraisals to ensure the intent/purpose of the strategy is being upheld and to ensure that goals are being met.

## **phase three: Maintenance**

Te Akatoki will employ kairangahau (post-graduate researchers) to gather data and document/analyze the progression of this strategy. This can include a longitudinal research project (3-5 years) that will inform the effectiveness of the strategy as well as highlight areas for improvement.

## **5) Educational and Cultural Change at UC:**

For successful planning implementation and maintenance and for change to occur there must be good systems of support in place, taking into account the manner in which the change is to be worked through, and any possible issues or problems that may arise (Hendy, 1995). The process of creating change within any setting is incremental and considers the multiple realities of the main participants involved (Fullan, 1991 as cited in Hendy, 1995). In this sense change is considered to be “evolutionary” (Hendy, 1995, p. 58). In other words, change is not a ‘guaranteed product’, it is translucent and evolves with the people and the socio-cultural paradigms that influence their realities. Smith (1989) maintains the position that in the process of constructing realities, we must always consider the historical contexts of time and cultural place.

## **6) Conclusion:**

In conclusion, Te whare Kōrero o Te Akatoki is a synchronistic approach that places the core values of ‘whanaungatanga’ (relationships) and ‘kōtahitanga’ (unity) at the center to achieve dual aims; 1) to raise levels of commitment to te reo Māori (Māori language movement) and 2) to expand Māori language domains.

As the Māori language starts to repopulate The University of Canterbury, we will begin to notice a shift in culture to a language-in culture-in language identity-shaping praxis. This is a place where the people are ‘culturally connected’ – this will, in turn, empower whānau, enhance the mana of our ākonga and transform community.

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## Appendix 1- Statistics around Māori language

According to recent statistics te reo Māori is spoken mainly in the North Island of New Zealand, in particular in the far North, Central and Eastern areas of the North Island where sizeable populations of Māori are found. There are a number of speakers of Māori in all the main urban centers of New Zealand, but no native speakers in the South Island tribal groupings (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Currently the actual numbers of speakers of Māori is hard to ascertain because there are many varying estimates. A national census undertaken in 2013 suggests there were approximately 125,000 speakers of Māori which is approximately 21 % of all Māori and around only 3 % of all people living in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). However, the survey *Te Kupenga* undertaken by Statistics New Zealand in 2013 suggests there were approximately 50,000 (11 %) Māori adults who could speak Māori well or very well. Many of the very fluent speakers of Māori were likely to be over 65 years old (Statistics New Zealand, 2013).

Whilst only 2.6% of the total Māori population said that te reo Māori is the main language spoken in the home (Statistics New Zealand, 2014), the statistics for Te Waipounamu were not available. However, one can extrapolate from the data that the number of adult speakers in the Tuahiwi community are very few for any sort of sustainable intergenerational transmission of te reo Māori, likely to be less than 1% given that there are no adult native speakers that have grown up learning te reo Maori in the district. The statistics co-incide with my experience of the local community.