



Aotearoa New Zealand's histories

Summary of findings from the public engagement on the draft curriculum content

The Ministry of Education ran a public engagement campaign from 3 February through to 31 May 2021 to support the implementation of content changes to the national curriculum to explicitly include Aotearoa New Zealand's histories in schools and kura. People responded to three questions:

- Do people think the draft content reflects us as a nation?
- What is most important to people?
- What do people see as the challenges in implementing this curriculum change?

People gave feedback about the draft curriculum content in the following ways:

General online survey
(4,323¹ people)

Submissions
(488 submissions)

Ākonga/learners online survey
(168 people)

Over 90 workshops, fono, and hui

The majority of general survey respondents self-identified as NZ European/European (64%) and Māori (14%). This pattern was the same for the ākonga/learner respondents (59% NZ European/European and 32% Māori).

The majority of respondents were community members and parents or caregivers. Just over a quarter of the respondents were kaiako/teachers.

Most survey responses related only to *The New Zealand Curriculum*. A much smaller number of responses related to both *The New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*, or solely to *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*.

¹ Some survey responses were submitted on behalf of groups, and not all responses state the number of people they represent, so the total number of survey respondents is higher than stated.

Six key messages

There was general support for the history curriculum content.

People were supportive of bringing Māori histories to the forefront of the history curriculum content alongside other histories.

People saw strong links between the history curriculum content and their identity, culture, and citizenship.

Partnering with hapū and iwi was seen as a significant step in the right direction, but resourcing and support is needed.

Schools and kura will play a significant role in whether or not the implementation of the history curriculum content proves successful.

People had differing views about the nature of history.

There was general support for the history curriculum content

Across most respondent groups, there was a general sense of positivity and interest in the draft history content for both *The New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*. Most respondents provided supportive commentary about the draft curriculum content, offering constructive feedback and pointing to areas for further improvement.

Compared to all other respondent roles, those who identified themselves as “kaiako/teachers” or “ākonga/learners” were the most positive in their survey responses and feedback about the draft content. Overall, those directly involved in education seemed most positive and hopeful about the history curriculum content. Māori were also very positive overall about the introduction of new content about Māori histories.

People saw strong links between the history curriculum content and their identity, culture, and citizenship

People made clear links that connected the teaching of history to their identity and sense of belonging, culture, and citizenship. Māori welcomed the new curriculum content with high hopes, indicating that it is a positive step towards strengthening the identity of ākonga Māori and knowledge of their own histories and genealogy. Many respondents spoke of the benefits this would bring to the wellbeing, confidence, and aspirations of all ākonga in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Some tensions were also evident, typically reported by those advocating for a singular and/or Eurocentric view of a history curriculum. Those respondent groups were concerned that privileging Māori histories and knowledge in the draft content would “devalue” their own sense of belonging and identity.

People were supportive of bringing Māori histories to the forefront of the history curriculum content alongside other histories

Support for including Māori histories in the curriculum content, provided there is space for multicultural histories, was a strong theme. Many Pacific and Asian respondents in particular spoke about wanting to see themselves and their cultures reflected in the curriculum content and tied to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Partnering with hapū and iwi was seen as a significant step in the right direction, but resourcing and support is needed

There was general support for building respectful relationships with hapū and iwi to develop local curricula and marau ā-kura that incorporate hapū and iwi histories. Kaiako, teachers, ākonga, and learners expressed enthusiasm and interest in wanting to learn more about local hapū and iwi histories, but at the same time many teachers did not feel confident in their ability to establish and maintain relationships and partnerships

with hapū and iwi. The need for professional development opportunities and other types of resourcing and support came through strongly.

Just as importantly, many people were concerned about whether all hapū and iwi will have the capacity, or desire, to support schools and kura.

People had differing views about the nature of history

Those who believed in the idea that there is only one “true” version of history were overall less positive in their responses. Such responses often conveyed the sense that the history content must be “objective”, “unbiased”, and “accurate”. Respondents who advocated for such a singular view offered different opinions on what content should be included or excluded from the history curriculum.

Schools and kura will play a significant role in whether or not the implementation of the history curriculum content proves successful

Many respondents were worried that too much is being expected of schools and kura in a short timeframe. Respondents were concerned that without enough time and preparation, schools and kura would not be set up to be successful in implementing the draft curriculum content.

Respondents expressed high expectations for how teachers and kaiako should teach the histories curriculum content. They thought that the ideal teacher or kaiako should be interested and knowledgeable in history, confident and competent in teaching it, and able to translate the curriculum content into relevant, relatable, and interesting learning experiences for ākonga. They should be able to manage difficult—and potentially painful—learning conversations with ākonga and with other teachers and their communities, to care for the wellbeing of all. In kura, this would all happen in te reo Māori.

There was a general concern that many teachers would not be able to live up to this ideal without a great deal of support. People emphasised the negative consequences (both intended and unintended) of not supporting teachers to develop sound disciplinary knowledge and teaching strategies to engage ākonga with the history curriculum content. They also cautioned that teacher bias could negatively influence how, and to what extent the content is taught.



Ngā tirohanga mai i ngā ākonga

Perspectives from learners

Key messages and themes are drawn from survey responses of 168 ākonga and learners from all education levels who responded to the survey.

Do ākonga and learners think the content reflects us as a nation?

Despite the relatively low number of responses, ākonga and learners were clearly positive about the new curriculum content, indicating that they would be interested to learn about the new content and Aotearoa New Zealand's local history and stories at school and kura. The majority agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed history content reflects Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural history as a nation.

Themes:

Interested in knowing more	History must be interesting and engaging
Multicultural lenses	More Māori knowledge and stories

What is most important to ākonga and learners?

The most frequently selected aspect was the opportunity to learn more about local, regional, or national Māori history. This was followed by understanding Aotearoa New Zealand more, and opportunities to learn local stories and histories.

Themes:

A wide range of histories	Connecting to relevant local stories
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What do ākonga and learners see as the challenges in implementing this curriculum change?

The most frequently selected option was having a knowledgeable and supportive teacher. The second and third most frequently selected options were about the learning of history, and how to deal with racism.

Themes:

Histories teaching is teacher dependent	Ensuring learning is relevant to students of all cultures
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Ngā tirohanga mai i ngā kaiako

Perspectives from teachers

Key messages and themes are drawn from 1,199 kaiako and teachers, including early childhood, primary, junior and senior secondary, and tertiary lecturers.

Do teachers and kaiako think the content reflects us as a nation?

Similar to ākonga and learners, kaiako and teachers were clearly positive in the views of the curriculum content. They agreed or strongly agreed that the content reflects stories young people need to know, that it reflects Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural history as a nation, and that it will encourage more diverse local stories to be acknowledged and learnt by young people in school and kura.

Most noticeably, collective responses from teachers were more positive than those from family/whānau, and community members.

Themes:

Overall positive comments	Multicultural and diverse histories
Balance and nuance	Specific improvements suggested

What is most important to teachers and kaiako?

The three most frequently selected responses to a question about what kaiako and teachers are most interested in young people learning and developing were: a deeper cultural understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand, critical thinking skills, and a greater sense of identity and belonging.

What do teachers and kaiako see as the challenges in implementing this curriculum change?

Kaiako and teachers were most likely to select lack of in-depth history knowledge as the biggest challenge, followed by managing teacher biases on different historical accounts.

Themes:

Teachers see their lack of in-depth history knowledge as the biggest challenge	Resources
Teacher knowledge, professional learning, and biases	Consultation with mana whenua and iwi



Ngā tirohanga mai i te iwi Māori

Perspectives from Māori

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and The New Zealand Curriculum

Key messages and themes are drawn from five submissions, several hui and workshops, and 620 survey responses from individuals and groups who identified themselves as Māori.

Do Māori think the content reflects us as a nation?

Overall, half or more of Māori respondents believed the content reflects stories young people need to know, and that it reflects their bicultural history as a nation, with two-thirds hopeful that the content will encourage more diverse local stories to be learnt through the new curriculum.

Themes:

A positive response to the content overall	Connections to whenua and tāngata
Pride in identity and culture	Understanding the ongoing effects of colonisation and racism

What is most important to Māori?

The three most frequently selected responses to a question about what Māori are most interested in young people learning and developing were: a deeper cultural understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand, critical thinking skills, and a greater sense of identity and belonging.

What do Māori see as the challenges in implementing this curriculum change?

The two most frequently selected responses were both related to teachers and kaiako— managing teacher biases and lack of in-depth history knowledge.

Themes:

Teacher knowledge and bias	Building relationships with iwi and hapū
A need for safe spaces to kōrero	Resources
Time to prepare	Impact on historical sites

Te Takanga o te Wā — Te Marautanga o Aotearoa

Key messages and themes are drawn from 10 workshops (98 participants) and 30 survey responses from individuals and groups who identified themselves as Māori. Given the small number of survey responses the key messages are not generalisable.

Do Māori think the content reflects us as a nation?

Māori were more likely to strongly agree that the content of *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* reflects the stories young people need to know. They were also more likely to strongly agree that the content reflects our bicultural history as a nation, and that the content encourages more diverse local stories.

Themes:

A positive response to the content	Familiar content
Supporting iwi and hapū	

What is most important to Māori?

The three most frequently selected responses to a question about what Māori are most interested in young people learning and developing were: a deeper cultural understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand; a greater sense of identity and belonging; and awareness of the differing local, regional, and national Māori histories.

What do Māori see as the challenges in implementing this curriculum change?

The two most frequently selected responses were both related to teachers and kaiako: lack of in-depth history knowledge and managing teacher biases.

Themes:

Ensuring the right support is available	Resourcing
Professional development	English-medium schools

Ngā tirohanga mai i te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa

Perspectives from Pacific peoples

Key messages and themes are drawn from 148 online surveys, face-to-face fono in Wellington, Auckland, and Christchurch, and several engagement events with Pacific historians, teachers, and students in Wellington and Auckland.

Do Pacific peoples think the content reflects us as a nation?

Around half of Pacific respondents believed that the content reflects the stories our young people need to know and that the content reflects our bicultural history as a nation. Almost two-thirds of Pacific respondents felt the content will encourage more diverse local stories to be acknowledged and learnt by young people in school and kura.

Themes:

A positive response to the content overall	Multicultural perspectives
New Zealand and the Pacific Islands	Pacific history in New Zealand

What is most important to Pacific peoples?

The three most frequently selected responses to a question about what Pacific peoples are most interested in young people learning and developing were critical thinking skills, a deeper cultural understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand, and a greater sense of identity and belonging.

What do Pacific peoples see as the challenges in implementing this curriculum change?

The most frequently selected responses were managing teacher bias, lack of kaiako and teacher in-depth knowledge, and making the topics engaging. The issue of whether students will engage with the content was an underlying theme in Pacific peoples' feedback.

Ngā tirohanga mai i ngā tāngata o Āhia

Perspectives from Asian peoples

Key messages and themes are drawn from 11 submissions and 237 survey responses from Asian respondents and groups who indicated that their feedback represented an Asian perspective. Overall, the submissions and survey responses from Asian respondents showed a positive and near-identical pattern to those reported by Māori and Pacific respondents.

Do Asian peoples think the content reflects us as a nation?

Asian respondents tended to agree or strongly agree that the draft curriculum content reflects stories young people need to know, that it reflects Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural history as a nation, and that it will encourage more diverse local stories to be acknowledged and learnt by young people in school and kura.

Themes:

Include diverse Asian cultures	Include an overview of histories of Asian nations
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What is most important to Asian peoples?

Themes:

Acknowledging the diversity of Asian groups	Acknowledging the contribution of Asian peoples to New Zealand society
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What do Asian peoples see as the challenges in implementing this curriculum change?

Themes:

Managing diversity	Resources
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