

# Tapatoru Referee Guidance and FAQ

## The important bits are first

### Thank you...!

First of all, thank you for considering whether you can provide one of the two independent referee support statements for Tapatoru Skill Level 2 - Pūkenga Papa Rua with Ako Aotearoa for this applicant.

The purpose of this document is to provide some guidance and clarity for this process. With that in mind, we want to look at a couple of key questions first as well as what you have to do to support this applicant.

After that, there is a range of other questions and answers that, while still important, could be of less relevance depending on each situation.

## What is the function of the referees' supporting statements?

The award of Tapatoru Skill Level 2 - Pūkenga Papa Rua is based on peer recognition of professional practice supporting or teaching foundation learners. The applicant has asked you to support their application as a valued peer with expertise in this area.

Assessors will use the two independent supporting statements provided by the referees to confirm that the submission presents a fair and accurate reflection of the applicant's professional practice.

## Am I the right person to provide a supporting statement for the applicant?

Ako Aotearoa expects that you:

- Have current or recent experience of working in foundation education. This can include management or professional development.
- Have worked closely with the applicant including within the last two years.
- Have first-hand knowledge of their professional practice.
- Are in a position to comment on and substantiate the applicant's record of effectiveness within their teaching or learner support context.
- Can confirm that the applicant has represented their practice accurately.
- Provide your opinion that they demonstrate the requirements Descriptor 2 criteria of the Tapatoru.

Supporting statements for Tapatoru awards should reflect professional relationships. This means that they should not be from family members or based on personal friendships.

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The Supporting Statement is your independent and authentic account in support of the application.

## Can I decline the request to provide a supporting statement?

If you feel that you are not in a position to give a supporting statement then you should decline the request. Your supporting statement won't be accepted if its professional integrity is called into question.

## How do I get up to speed quickly?

First of all, read and refer to the following:

1. **The Tapatoru - An Overview.** Start with this. The PDF gives you a brief summary of the Tapatoru professional standards framework and awards.
2. **Tapatoru Referee Guidance and FAQ.** This document that you're reading now includes a more detailed FAQ and other information.
3. **Tapatoru Referee Survey and Supporting Statement** template. This is what you write your response in and send back to us.
4. The applicant's **Reflective Commentary** which they should have supplied you.

## What do I need to do to write a referee's supporting statement?

Next, here are the two things you'll have to do. You can complete both of these in the same template. The applicant should have also supplied you with this as well.

### Tapatoru Referee's Confidence Assessment.

This is a short survey where you rate your confidence in the applicant with regards to the different aspects of the Tapatoru. The applicant has also completed a similar survey. It's a way of helping us think about the applicant's strengths.

### Referee's Supporting Statement

For a written statement:

- Aim to write between 300 to 500 words using the template provided.

For a verbal statement:

- Aim for approximately four to five minutes. If you would prefer you can record this yourself and supply and audio or video file. Alternatively, we can arrange to record your statement. Please get in touch with us to arrange a time if this is your preferred method.

Also, in submitting your supporting statement you agree to the declaration on the first page.

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## Question prompts

Please use the question prompts below to help structure your supporting statements. These prompts match questions in the confidence survey. Please use your professional judgement to:

- Use the prompts to structure your supporting statement for the applicant.
- Expand on the prompts, or be selective, as appropriate. You don't need to address every question.
- Summarise or synthesise your response.

How does the applicant:

1. Encourage or foster positive and meaningful relationships and support systems?
2. Maintain, promote and protect the wellbeing - the mana - of their learners, their communities and the land?
3. Understand how to embed adult literacy, numeracy and cultural capability into their content and context?
4. Use effective approaches, concepts and resources that enhance foundation learning experiences for Māori, Pacific or youth?
5. Design and plan learning in ways that strengthen learners' foundation learning skills?
6. Facilitate foundation learning or support foundation learners effectively?
7. Use assessment and give feedback to foundation learners in ways that are relevant and appropriate?
8. Engage with their stakeholders?
9. Engage with ongoing professional learning and development?

Results and supporting statements are confidential and you should send the completed document directly to us by email noting the name of the applicant that you're supporting. Please send to:

- [K.Rive@massey.ac.nz](mailto:K.Rive@massey.ac.nz)

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## Other Frequently Asked Questions

### What do you mean by current or recent practice?

The application for Tapatoru Skill Level 2 - Pūkenga Papa Rua is based on current and recent practice supporting and teaching foundation learners. This means that evidence should be from within the last two years.

If you no longer work with the applicant, it is important that you are familiar with their recent practice. You are required in the template to indicate how long you have worked together.

### What are the requirements of Descriptor 2 of Tapatoru?

The applicant needs to provide evidence of effectiveness in relation to their professional role(s) and experience in foundation learning. This will encompass teaching and/or learning support responsibilities.

If the applicant has learners, workers or clients who need support with language, literacy or numeracy, then the Tapatoru is the right professional standards framework for them.

The experience and evidence included in the applicant's reflective commentary must relate to working with foundation learners. This doesn't automatically align with any particular level in the New Zealand Qualification Framework although it is unlikely that they will be working above Level 4.

Typically, those who are likely to be at Skill Level 2 - Pūkenga Papa Rua include:

- Practitioners seeking to expand their understanding and practice of working with foundation-level learners and programmes, including adult language, literacy, numeracy, and cultural capability. Practitioner roles encompass both teaching and learning support, and typically include those who embed literacy and numeracy into vocational training and support.

Specific roles may span education and training, workplace and employment; and community including:

- Tertiary Education Organisation (TEO) vocational and trades tutors teaching below Level 4 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF), as well as learning support or pastoral care staff including from Iwi Investment Initiatives (III).
- ITO training advisors, workplace literacy and numeracy tutors.
- Educators working in an iwi-facing context, Adult Community Education (ACE) tutors, if relevant.

Candidates at Skill Level 2 - Pūkenga Papa Rua may be working towards or already have gained an appropriate adult teaching or other relevant qualification, such as one of the following:

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- New Zealand Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education (Vocational/Workplace) (40 credits, Level 5)
- New Zealand Certificate in Adult and Tertiary Teaching (60 credits, Level 5).

## What are the Descriptor 2 criteria?

As per the published Tapatoru framework, Skill Level 2 - Pūkenga Papa Rua is awarded to practitioners who can:

Demonstrate a broad understanding of effective approaches to teaching and/or learning support with evidence of:

1. A commitment to the four professional values.
2. Appropriate base-level knowledge across all four areas of professional knowledge.
3. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and/or learner support practices across all four areas of professional practice.
4. Successful engagement in continuing professional learning and development in relation to foundation education. This encompasses teaching, learning, assessment, learning support, pastoral care, and other areas as appropriate.

## What do I need to do before I write or record my supporting statement?

Before you write or record your supporting statement, the applicant needs to provide you with their reflective commentary. Please read this before you begin writing your supporting statement. Your statement should verify the accuracy of the applicant's reflective commentary

## Do I need to hold a Tapatoru award above the level of the applicant?

You do not need to hold the Tapatoru award above the level of the applicant. However, it is ideal if you do. You may wish to refer to the Ako Aotearoa website for more information about the gaining Tapatoru Skill Level 2 - Pūkenga Papa Rua or above.

## What is the format of the supporting statement?

We have provided a template for you to use when writing your supporting statement. The template is available as a Word document and should be completed in this format or saved as a PDF. You can also provide a verbal statement following the same format. You can provide a video or audio recording of this or we can record you.

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## What else do I need to think about?

In addition to Descriptor 2 criteria, as a guide, it is important that you comment on the following in your supporting statement as appropriate or relevant:

- Your own experience of the applicant's recent foundation learning practice.
- Peer observation of the applicant's teaching, if you have been involved in this.
- Examples of how they support learning.
- Any good or innovative practices or contribution to developments in the field by the applicant in teaching and/or supporting learning.
- Your perspective on any practical examples provided within the application to illustrate the requirements for Tapatoru Skill Level 2 - Pūkenga Papa Rua.

## Can I provide the supporting statement in Te Reo Māori?

Please contact us to discuss this if you would like to provide the supporting statement in Te Reo Māori.

## After completing your supporting statement

Once you have completed the survey and supporting statement using the template, please return it directly to us via this email noting the name of the applicant that you are supporting:

- [K.Rive@massey.ac.nz](mailto:K.Rive@massey.ac.nz)

## Quality Assurance Process

You may be asked to confirm that you have written the supporting statement yourself and that the information you have provided has been written specifically for this applicant.

As part of Ako Aotearoa's ongoing quality assurance process, we may check references including for individual authenticity by using anti-plagiarism software.

If the professional integrity of the supporting statement is in question, the statement will not be accepted.