

# Flexibility in Secondary Learning Mosaic

USER GUIDE



Grow  
Waitaha

*This Flexibility in Secondary Learning Mosaic explores the way learning in secondary education is currently delivered and considers how this may become more flexible and better equip ākonga for the future.*

Secondary kaiako, tumuaki, whānau and ākonga can use this to reflect on creating flexibility in their kura and school journeys. The Learning Mosaic is a springboard for conversation, for connecting across kura and schools and for considering next steps.

Grow Waitaha is a multi-year project designed to support schools in post-earthquake greater Christchurch through citywide educational transformation. *The Flexibility in Secondary Learning Mosaic* was designed in 2020 by Dr Cheryl Doig and Dr Chris Jansen as part of the Grow Waitaha project and has been used by educators in Aotearoa.

This 2nd edition has been refined and redesigned in 2022 with support from feedback from many Ōtautahi educators and we welcome ongoing feedback on how you have used the tool and what suggestions you would like to contribute.

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# Case for change – call to action

All parents and whānau want the best for their children as they leave home and create their own futures. This includes their work, social and community connections, and well-being in general. Understandably parents are very interested in, and sometimes quite anxious about, how kura and schools best prepare their young ones for their futures.

We would all agree that the future for our young people will be significantly different to our own lives. Local and global communities and economies face increasing volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. Over the last five years we have seen seismic shifts around the world; including both an increase in political instability, fear and polarization as well as a sense that everything is more connected.

Recent instability has highlighted increasing inequities, especially for Māori learners. We are focussing on understanding Aotearoa New Zealand's histories and exploring the devastating impacts of colonization on Māori communities. Addressing the resulting disconnection and disengagement is an urgent priority for New Zealand schools which are required to *'ensure places of learning are safe, inclusive and free from racism, discrimination and*

*bullying'* and *'have high aspirations for every learner/ākonga, and support these by partnering with their whānau and communities to design and deliver education that responds to their needs, and sustains their identities, languages and cultures'* (National Education and Learning Priorities 2022). School curriculums are being *'re-designed to meaningfully incorporate te reo Māori and tikanga Māori into the everyday life of the place of learning'*, and kura, schools and educators are expected to consider what it means to be a citizen of a country that has its foundation in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. <https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/NELP-TES-documents/FULL-NELP-2020.pdf>

Although COVID19 has stressed our health, well-being and economy, it also launched us into discovering new hybrid ways of teaching and learning that are more accessible and tech-supported. Tragic events such as the mosque shooting of March 15th 2019 in Ōtautahi Christchurch horrified and challenged us to develop new perspectives on the inclusion of all regardless of ethnicity, faith, sexuality and multiple identities.

Our children's future will undoubtedly be different from what we experienced when we left school. They will likely follow multiple vocational pathways, experiences and careers. Learning will happen in a greater range of ways, often in smaller bites and from

an increasing number of sources. New jobs will be created and routine jobs will be replaced by technology.

Exponential technologies such as artificial intelligence, and virtual and augmented reality will create new learning opportunities and also pose risks. These uncertain and ambiguous contexts will require our young people to excel in a wide range of competencies and skills from self-management, collaboration, and creativity to resilience, compassion and open-mindedness in parallel with knowledge acquisition which has been the primary focus of secondary education.

For many years, most secondary schools have adopted a model of learning that focusses primarily on knowledge acquisition. Competencies and skills are a secondary focus in both classrooms and co-curricular activity. This model of learning groups 25 to 30 ākonga of similar age together to learn for 45 to 60 minute periods, 5 to 7 times per day. Each period is focussed on one curriculum area. Although this model is very prevalent it has also been heavily critiqued over the years. However, many schools in New Zealand and globally are choosing to design different approaches to learning – where ākonga learn, test, and refine their competencies and skills throughout their learning experiences.

There is a clear rationale for evolving the way we deliver secondary education, but there is debate about how to achieve this and what it might look like.

In a world of greater polarisation; the media, parents, whānau, communities and educators have a wide variety of views. Some argue for using a traditional or standard model and others argue for more flexible approaches.

In reality, these complex issues of equity and inclusion, cohesive pathways for students, well-being for our communities while maintaining a future focus has created a necessity for all schools to become more flexible in their approaches to learning.

# What is the mosaic tool?

The *Flexibility in Secondary Learning Mosaic* is a reflection and planning tool that invites you to explore flexibility in your kura or school through three broad lenses – **Curriculum**, **Pedagogy** and **Structure**. These design variables are ones we can vary to increase flexibility.

The mosaic is non-linear and suggests no obligation for a kura, school or kaiako to follow a particular pathway or action. This mosaic can be tailored to meet the needs and share stories in your context and for your community. There isn't a 'right or wrong' or a 'one size fits all' outcome. The context and history of each kura or school and community inform the learning model to meet local needs within the global environment of change. The culture and well-being of your ākongā, kaiako and whānau also needs to be acknowledged as this will vary over time.

For each of the three design variables (Curriculum, Pedagogy and Structure) there are a range of elements which contain multiple options for kura or schools to select from. These are not exhaustive, and there are spaces for you to add your own ideas.



# Using the mosaic

The Flexibility in Secondary Learning Mosaic can be used in a range of different ways and by a wide range of stakeholders.

There are two formats:

- the full table of variables and elements that can be viewed at a glance. <https://bit.ly/3qhlfA7>
- a series of cards that are colour coded for each of the three variables, with one element on each card. <https://bit.ly/3Qp5AZW>

Here are some steps that can be useful and will need to be varied and repeated depending on where your school is at.

## 1. Explore creatively

'Play with the cards' - Let all stakeholders have a voice and focus on both celebrating the positive shifts you have made over the past few years as well as the areas you would love to develop. Look at what systems, curriculum and pedagogies are used within the kura or school. Explore knowledge, values and skills; for example, what knowledge is of value today compared to past, and what knowledge will be valued in the future? Work with your ākonga, whānau and kaiako to sort through the cards and sort them into the following categories:

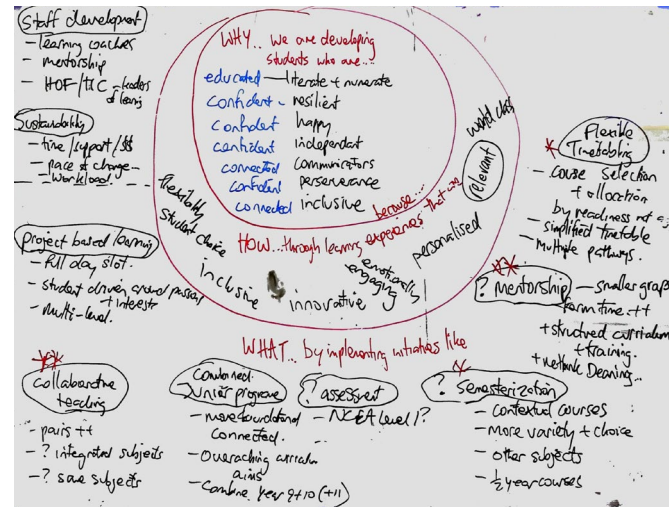
- Elements you already do currently (DONE)
- Elements you would consider as an option in the future? (DOING)
- Elements you wouldn't consider (DON'T).

## 2. Equity pause

Consider whose voices are being heard and whose voices are missing? Stop the process until this is rectified.

"How are mana whenua and tangata whenua engaged in the process and what is their vision for Māori learners and all learners?"

"How does our vision advocate for equity for Māori and ensure inclusion and success for all ākonga?"



Acknowledgement to Central Southland College

### 3. Scan your environment

What's shifting in the world you are preparing your ākonga for?  
 What options have other kura or schools chosen and why?  
 What can you learn from their successes (and mistakes)?  
 Explore what the character and culture of your kura or school has been over the past 20 years. How has the kura or school changed and how has it stayed the same?

### 4. Clarify your vision (why)

Link back to your kura or school vision and values (and special character). What are you wanting your young people to achieve and why? Turn these ideas into a learner profile (junior profile, graduate profile, staff profile) that shows specifically what your vision looks like when it's enacted.

### 5. Identify what types of learning experiences you need to develop your vision (how)

Simplify this into key words and descriptors (inclusive, engaging, flexible, rigorous etc).

### 6. Choose your priorities (what)

Look back at the variables and elements you selected in Step 1 and prioritise those that explicitly connect to your vision. Select a small number and justify the why and how for each.

### 7. Create a timeline

Start by mapping the initiatives you have already begun or completed in the last few years. Then plan what's feasible over the next 3-4 years and back map from your future vision to this year and next year to create clear steps.

### 8. Grow your teams skills and knowledge

Consider the staff capability your team will need to implement these steps and develop a well-paced comprehensive plan to address this.

2022.	2023.	2024	2025
<p>Draft strategy <u>Botobato</u> Finalise strategic plan                      - Plan 2023-2025                      - Priorities                      - Action Plan</p> <p>Curriculum innovation project - continue staff engagement process                      - confirm 2023 plan                      - implement key steps                      - course body/plan days (selection/stills)</p> <p>• Do consider our leadership roles + structure to support this (seminars etc)</p> <p>• Staff development focussed on seniorisation + academic mentoring</p> <p>• Leadership development for middle leaders</p> <p>Course selection support for students.</p> <p>• more school visits of HOD's</p> <p>Consider implementation of curriculum refresh + Artearona                      - NZ Histories + Manā                      Orite o Matauranga Māori</p>	<p>• No change to period lengths.</p> <p>• Synchronise junior senior timetable.</p> <p>• Semesterisation - 1/2 year to increase options/flexibility</p> <p>- Juniors - some staff developing new courses. (could be interpreted as passion based courses)</p> <p>- Seniors - allow student more flexibility choice (Range of options for staff) Minimum requirement.</p> <p>Continue to form classes (25 min model + begin academic mentoring (and smaller class size))</p> <p>Re-purpose Saturday time for passion projects (earlier in the day)</p>	<p>? Consider 75x4 or 90x3 courses</p> <p>? consider condensing year 11 to courses.</p> <p>Develop more integrated junior courses.</p> <p>Drop level 1 NCEA</p> <p>Create our own CRC qualification (certificate)</p> <p>Enhanced mentoring time (2x50 min sessions)</p> <p>Develop more extensive passion projects</p>	

# Principles of effective change processes

Lets not forget the principles of leading effective change as we undertake this process, which includes creating the conditions for change by genuine engagement with all stakeholders.

'Working with' rather than 'doing to' is critical rather than a top down approach. Work closely with your middle leaders and all staff. Ongoing two-way communication with all stakeholders allows everyone to get on the same page. Consider legacy – who is coming after you and what do you want to leave for them?

As an example of these processes, the [Grow Waitaha Guide - Leading Sustainable Change \(pdf\)](#) collates the collective change wisdom of a wide range of educational leaders and on page 3 includes a Quick Guide of 10 tips for leading sustainable change.

Consider asking yourself the following questions:

## STUDENT FOCUSED

Who are our ākongā?

Has there been change to their diversity?

What are the needs of our ākongā?

What do our ākongā care about?

What knowledge will ākongā need in the future? How do we know?

Where do our ākongā go once they finish at our kura or school?

Are we preparing them?

Have we spoken to our ākongā and what did they say?

## TEACHER FOCUSED

What are teacher capabilities for undertaking the change?

Who are the kaiako usually driving change?

Are we overloading the same kaiako?

How do we move kaiako from here to there?

Do we need to have an honest conversation?

Can we explain why we are shifting our practice?

How can we use our middle leaders including deans to implement change?



# Sharing our stories

Many kura and schools are sharing their reflections with each other and contributing to a collective shift across the whole secondary sector in Aotearoa.

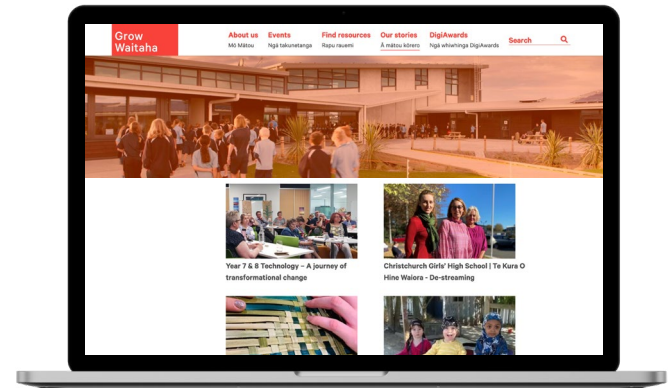
Sharing a range of road-tested approaches and examples of practice helps strengthen the resolve of secondary kura and schools to continue to adapt and create more flexibility, in order to meet the future needs of our young people. This requires the secondary sector as a whole to tell their stories of thoughtful and flexible approaches to learning.

The following questions are designed to guide your kura or schools sharing of your story:

- In what ways are you/have you added more flexibility to your learning programme? (what)
- What has been the impact so far? pro's and con's (so what)
- What learning would you like to take forward?  
What's your next opportunity and challenge? (now what)

The Grow Waitaha initiative in Ōtautahi Christchurch has been working for over seven years to support kura and schools in this mahi and to curate and collate a wide range of case studies.

<https://www.growwaitaha.co.nz/our-stories/>



# Design variable 1: Curriculum

## What we teach

### SEPARATION OR INTEGRATION OF LEARNING AREAS

Curriculum is taught within learning areas and features discrete and separate knowledge sets with kaiako working independently from each other.

Curriculum is taught within learning areas with kaiako taking opportunity to work with colleagues in that area.

Two or more existing subjects are integrated across relevant real-world contexts.

There is full integration of curriculum areas and staffing to create a wide range of new courses.

### LOCAL CURRICULUM

The school's curriculum follows a national or international framework that is independent from its local context.

Allowances are made for differentiation in the curriculum based on interests of ākonga, special events or emerging issues.

The school's unique context is used to differentiate learning, with a strong place based approach

The school's cultural narrative is woven through the curriculum and te ao Māori is sustained in all practices.

### INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

Western knowledge is yet to be complimented by indigenous knowledge.

Mātauranga Māori is integrated into some subjects.

Mātauranga Māori is integrated into all departments to some degree.

Mātauranga Māori is integrated into all learning areas naturally.

### COMPETENCIES & SKILLS

Key competencies, skills and values have little impact on curriculum design.

Key competencies, skills and values are integrated within learning areas.

Key competencies, skills and values drive the curriculum and are a key consideration in its design.

21st century and transferable skills are constantly re-evaluated to support ākonga pathways within and beyond the school.

### BREADTH OF FOCUS

Teachers design the curriculum based on their own knowledge and preferences.

Local and national learning trends are used to design and define curriculum approaches.

Student interests and passions impact on curriculum design, content and context.

Global curriculum trends and influences are used to influence the design of curriculum.

Emerging local and global issues such as sustainability, geo-politics, exponential technologies are explored as an essential part of curriculum.

# Design variable 2: Pedagogy

## How we teach

### PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

Transmission or downloading of learning approaches are the norm.

Culturally responsive pedagogies are deliberately embedded in pedagogical approaches.

Student Inquiry processes are a feature of learning.

Project based learning allows ākonga to follow their passions.

Use of flipped classroom models of learning.

Design thinking processes are used in designing pedagogy.

Concept based or thematic based learning models are adopted.

### USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Ākonga mostly learn in a kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) environment.

Ākonga mostly learn in an online environment using elearning methodologies.

Hybrid approaches are used when factors (eg covid) require this but not otherwise.

Ākonga have learning available both face to face and online.

Learning is differentiated to meet the needs of the learner, which may change over time and circumstances.

Ākonga have access to immersive technologies of an advanced nature eg VR, AR, metaverse to enhance learning.

### STUDENT TO STUDENT INTERACTION

Ākonga are working as individuals on common material for most of their day.

Ākonga have opportunities to work together and as individuals over the course of a day.

Ākonga are collaborating in groups for most of their day.

Ākonga work in a self paced, self-directed way for most of their day.

Ākonga interact flexibly and informally to meet their diverse needs.

### TEACHER TO TEACHER INTERACTION

Kaiako are working alone in a specialist area or discipline.

There is paired co-teaching in a specialist area.

Three or more kaiako are working in partnership in a specialist area.

Two or more kaiako are collaborating across 2 or more specialist areas/ disciplines.

Kaiako learn together in whole staff PLD.

Kaiako learn together in small professional learning groups or communities of practice.

### TEACHER TO STUDENT INTERACTION

Teaching is teacher centric with kaiako being most focused on explicit teaching and directing the pathway of learners in a synchronous way.

Teaching supports a focus on self-directed and self-managed learning. Ākonga work independently at their own pace in an asynchronous way.

Kaiako act as mentors focussing on ako with all ākonga and kaiako learning together.

Learners have agency and shared partnership to help design:

- the timetable
- their learning
- the school environment.

# Design variable 3: Structure

## How we support learning (sort, organise, resource)

### LEARNER NEEDS

The school is resourced and equipped to meet the needs of Māori and Pasifika learners.

Systems are organised to ensure that culturally sustaining practices are embedded.

Professional learning systems support the needs of diverse learners.

Systems are designed to reduce inequities and combat racism and bullying, creating cultural and emotional safety.

The systems are designed to address needs of ākonga who are disconnected and disadvantaged.

Learning is supported by whānau and ākonga voice.

### TIMETABLE

The timetable is structured in 40-60 mins periods.

The timetable is structured in longer time periods of time e.g. 90-120 minutes.

The same timetable is used throughout the junior and senior schools so that this is not a barrier to choice.

The timetable is designed by an individual or small team of people with the timetable driving the possibilities for flexible learning.

Kaiako collaborate to create a timetable that focuses on learner needs and flexible opportunities.

There is no set timetable, with learning happening in flexible and less structured formats.

### COURSE STRUCTURE

Courses are structured in year long programmes.

Courses are structured in half year programmes (semesterisation).

Courses are a combination of semester and whole year programmes.

Courses are modular in approach e.g. 5-10 week blocks.

SMS/LMS systems determine timetables, course structure and the subsequent recording of progress.

Formative feedback influences the structure of course design with SMS/LMS supporting this.

### STUDENT GROUPING

Ākonga are most typically grouped by age.

Ākonga are most typically grouped by year level.

Ākonga are most typically grouped by achievement levels.

Ākonga are most typically grouped across multiple year levels.

Ākonga are most typically sorted depending on readiness or interest.

Ākonga are grouped for different approaches to learning and whānau connection.

## WHERE DOES LEARNING MOST COMMONLY OCCUR

Learning is most often situated within classrooms or set learning spaces.

Learning most often happens in a range of spaces across the school including the library, outside spaces.

Learning often happens beyond the school gate with ākonga being involved in industry internships, tertiary connections or community-based learning etc.

Learning typically occurs in a blended way using f2f, online, at school and out of school environments.

## SUPPORT OF STAFF

Leadership of learning is given high priority.

Structures of leadership model flexibility for current staff.

Recruitment strategies enhance learning needs of ākonga and staff.

Leaders consider the school as a space for staff growth and provide structures to enable this.

Leaders ensure learning needs for all ākonga are paramount while also creating clear and sustainable systems to support and enable staff.

## SPATIAL DESIGN

Buildings and spaces act as barriers to flexibility in learning through their design, size and flow.

Buildings and spaces are deliberately designed to enable flexibility in learning and collaboration between groups of ākonga.

Cultural inclusion is evident in building design.

Community members experience manaakitanga through welcoming spaces.

Rules and signage restrict flexibility and inclusion eg 'out of bounds' 'no ākonga past this point'.

Rules and signage encourage flexibility and inclusion.

## FURNITURE DESIGN

Furniture is typically static within the space.

There is a set allocation of seating for ākonga with little negotiation or change (seating plans).

Furniture is easily moved within and between spaces.

Furniture is of multiple types within each learning space so ākonga can choose the most appropriate place to work.

# Design variable 3: Structure (cont.)

How we support learning (sort, organise, resource)

## ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

Assessment systems are driven completely by kaiako and their subjects.

NCEA guides assessment.

Assessment is completed across learning areas with collaboration across teaching teams.

Assessment is a mix of self, peer, group and teacher led practices.

Collaborative and group practices are assessed for broader capabilities and skills needed to succeed in the future.

## DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

Learning is monitored almost solely as a means to meet curriculum and NCEA requirements ie summative.

Learning is systematically designed and monitored to meet learner needs through assessment for learning practices i.e. formative.

Learning is demonstrated mostly with portfolios, celebrations of learning or exhibitions to support growth of competencies and skills.

Microcredentials and alternative pathways are used to support learners develop a portable kete of learning that can be shared to community and workforce.

# Quick Reference

Below is a quick reference guide to the design variable topics within the mosaic which have all been colour-coded within the respective category.



## Curriculum

SEPARATION OR INTEGRATION OF LEARNING AREAS
LOCAL CURRICULUM
INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS
COMPETENCIES & SKILLS
BREADTH OF FOCUS



## Pedagogy

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES
USE OF TECHNOLOGY
STUDENT TO STUDENT INTERACTION
TEACHER TO TEACHER INTERACTION
TEACHER TO STUDENT INTERACTION






## Structure

LEARNER NEEDS	SUPPORT OF STAFF
TIMETABLE	SPATIAL DESIGN
COURSE STRUCTURE	FURNITURE DESIGN
STUDENT GROUPING	ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS
WHERE DOES LEARNING MOST COMMONLY OCCUR	DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

# Contact details

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