

Review of Ngā Pou Here: Te Pou Mātauranga me te Pou Tikanga Whakaako (Dr Alex Gunn)

To provide context for a discussion of assessment, Gunn begins by discussing the interrelatedness of curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and learning, and shifts in thinking that have occurred since *Te Whāriki* was first published in 1996. She argues that, following *Te Whāriki's* lead, 'curriculum' should be understood in its broadest sense, and that fit-for-purpose assessment is a form of curriculum that involves the take-up of sociocultural and ecological, formative, self-referenced, situated, and inclusive practices. In the early learning context, fit-for-purpose assessment that fosters learning is formative assessment or assessment for learning.

The author then discusses *Te Whāriki's* 'higher-order' learning outcomes – enhancing mana, developing one's positive learning identity, and working theories – arguing that they should be more explicitly addressed by Ngā Pou Here indicators.

She challenges what she sees as an assumption in the current indicators (te pou Mātauranga) that the curriculum 'belongs' to the kaiako and the service, and suggests how indicators can be reworded to avoid this. She also observes that the current indicators (Tikanga Whakaako) lack direct reference to play, and that they have a fairly narrow definition of 'environment' which is out of step with the ways in which non-western peoples (including Māori) perceive the natural and material world.

The paper concludes with a wide-ranging set of other suggested revisions. Ngā Pou Here is seen to be a fundamentally sound framework that can be judiciously revised to make it fit for its purpose.