Creating whanaungatanga: Kaupapa Maori support in the Psychology Department at the University of Waikato

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Attendance at university has been recognised by some as a competitive environment that does not cater for a co-operative philosophy followed by many Maori. Within the Psychology Department at the University of Waikato there have been efforts since the Departments early days to place emphasis on the Maori cultural experience, but there were few Maori students and no Maori staff back then. Now, in 2004, the Department has a team of Maori staff and courses with Maori content at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Yet the environment that the students move in is still competitive. Grades are based on individual assessments through undergraduate level. At graduate level the emphasis on group dynamics comes to the fore. The availability and accessibility of Maori staff at different levels in a Kaupapa Maori Programme provides one of the strategies of support for Maori students at Waikato. This paper discusses the issues around managing, delivering and providing opportunities so that Maori students studying psychology feel supported for the duration of their time at Waikato University.

Keywords: Maori, psychology, support mechanisms, community.

Context

This paper is a collaborative piece with contributions from Maori teaching staff, tutors and students in the Psychology Department at the University of Waikato. The reflective writing throughout the later sections of the paper is sourced from the different perspectives. As a result the reader may note multiple personalities; these are intended.

Introduction

Research on ways to bridge the gap between Maori[1] and Pakeha, not only in education but society as a whole, has identified 3 central issues: the need for Maori input, the centrality of Maori in doing their own research, and the role of non-Maori working alongside Maori in Maori controlled contexts (Benton, 1979; Douglas, 1979; Hirsh, 1990; Reedy, 1992; Te Puni Kokiri, 1993). Douglas (1979) found that Maori have a vast store of under-utilized ability and the benefits received from gaining better formal education could reap untold benefits of society. While the identification of issues towards supporting Maori students is not new, the education system has a history of limited Maori input (see Alderfer, 1994; Calabrese, 1990; Durie, 1995a) and was noted for its demand of cultural surrender for Maori students (Durie, 1995b; Walker, 1990).

Within the field of psychology the exclusion of Maori content and perspectives in its training courses has been well documented (Abbot & Durie, 1987; Brady, 1992; Glover & Robertson, 1997; Levy, 2002; Masters, 1997; Masters & Levy, 1995; National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues, 1995; Nikora, 1998; Older, 1978; Paewai, 1997; Stewart, 1993). As a consequence of the exclusion of relativity to the context of Maori students, there are low Maori retention rates at both graduate and undergraduate level of study. Other constraints such as family expectations, financial, academic support and social support networks within the chosen discipline were relevant (Masters, 1997; Nikora, Levy, Henry, & Whangapirita, 2002). This was supported by Nikora (1998) who identified that for some Maori students, psychological training was a harsh environment because undertaking western psychological training meant that they faced a risk of rejection from their own whanau, hapu, and iwi as being too white or a "Pakeha psychologist" (Lawson Te Aho, 1994).

During the mid 1980s Maori communities were becoming more vocal with their unhappiness at whanau members returning with such Pakeha models and frameworks for managing processes (Te Awekotuku, 1991). In conjunction with the community stance, a shortage of Maori psychologists was noted (by Lawson-Te Aho 1994 & Nikora 1998). The efforts of communities to reclaim their own reality, the development of Maori philosophies, frameworks and approaches to the discipline had an impact on Maori participation in different ways (Watene-Haydon, Keefe-Ormsby, Reid, & Robson, no date).

The number of Maori students continuing on to graduate study meant that the previously identified absence of role models, mentors, teachers and psychology practitioners was less salient because Maori students were now able to see career options in psychology simply because there was another Maori person in the field who could articulate the relationship of psychology to their family situation.

Unfortunately nationwide the steady increase in Maori student numbers in psychology was not mirrored in the number of staff or the structure of course content. Course conveners expected Maori students to follow the model they had always used. As a result when Maori staff joined the Psychology Department at the University of Waikato they became a vehicle for implementing the desired change for students. An example of how this has occurred is demonstrated in the development of a Kaupapa Maori Tutorial Programme (which is discussed later in the paper).

1 A Glossary of terms has been provided at the conclusion of this paper.

University of Waikato

First established in 1964, the University now employs approximately 1,000 academic staff and 1,200 general staff who teach and support more than 13,000 students annually. The Psychology Department at the University of Waikato is well known for having made significant progress in relation to furthering Maori focused agendas, in terms of teaching, research and support for Maori students. Reflective of this, the Department has a long history of supporting Maori students. In 1989 the Department made the first Maori academic appointment to a Psychology Department, which was followed in the 1990s with the introduction of the Kaupapa Maori (KM) support and tutorial programme. Currently the Department has three Maori teaching staff, one full-time Kaupapa Maori Student Advisor, an undergraduate tutorial support programme and the Maori and Psychology Research Unit[2] (MPRU), staffed by a full-time convener.

Relevant Department Policies

The University Charter, a high level strategic policy document, provides those focused on Maori workforce development within psychology with a platform from which to validly operate, and a foundation in which to embed our Kaupapa Maori support programme and associated activities. The University Charter highlights the commitment the University places on partnerships with Maori; namely commitment recognised within the Treaty of Waitangi to kaupapa and tikanga Maori on the campus environment and amongst the University community. In particular, the University recognises the value of Maori students and staff and the significance of their contributions to the University (University of Waikato, 2004). Building on the direction of the Charter, there are two key Psychology Department policy documents which are used to facilitate our aims for Maori development within the Department. Firstly the Psychology Department Strategic Plan which includes as goals:

- Provide an environment that serves the educational needs of the Maori community, in both the Waikato region and nationally

- Create a reputation as the Department of choice for Maori students (undergraduate and graduate) throughout the country

- Objectives to achieve focus on maintaining emphasis on Kaupapa Maori in Department, and on the recruitment and retention of Maori students and staff

The second key policy document focuses specifically on our expectations for Kaupapa Maori in the Psychology Department. This policy includes a focus on:

- Recruitment and retention of Maori students
- Course content
- Research activities

- Kaupapa Maori Tutorial Programme
- Kaupapa Maori Management Committee
- Maori and Psychology Research Unit

The purpose of the policy is to clearly indicate that Kaupapa Maori is an integral part of the day to day business of the Department. Reflective of this is a statement within the policy which recognizes psychology as a platform for Maori development and that the policy aims to encourage and support Maori students to reach their potential in their chosen specialty. Within the KM policy is an acknowledgement of the diverse approaches needed to contribute to active participation of Maori (students, staff and researchers) at the University and within the Psychology Department. In addition, the Kaupapa Maori policy aims to provide all psychology students with Maori and bicultural perspectives in psychology. Clearly noted within the policy are Maori staff positions and the Kaupapa Maori Student Advisor role within the Department.

To achieve these aims the policy includes a focus on monitoring the recruitment and retention rates of Maori students and on monitoring grades and addressing any issues which may arise. It is the expectation that courses will be regularly reviewed by course conveners to ensure that the educational needs of Maori students are being met and that bi-cultural perspectives are being incorporated within courses.

With respect to research, it is expected that all staff will ensure that staff and student research meet the Responsiveness to Maori section in the Psychology Department Ethical Review Forms. The Department also undertakes to support staff and students in developing an awareness and understandings of those requirements.

The policy clearly states that the Kaupapa Maori Tutorial Programme is recognized as a normal part of Department activity, with the minimum requirements being the availability of Kaupapa Maori tutorials in core psychology papers. Reflections on this programme are provided later in the paper and so will not be discussed in any depth here.

There is a Kaupapa Maori Management Committee which oversees Department development and further develops support mechanisms. The implementation of the policy has brought about an awareness of issues pertaining to Maori and more importantly, denotes collective responsibility. It is the collective responsibility of all staff (monitored by the Department Chair) to contribute. While Maori staff are often the active contributors, it is clearly documented that all psychology staff are responsible for creating and supporting such an environment. As such Maori staff are often the ones who deliver questions that remind staff of their accountability requirements. Rather than have individual (and sometimes junior) Maori staff approach more senior academics, a designated person manages such matters and does so with the confidence that they represent the views of the Maori staff.

All Maori staff in the Department are members of the Kaupapa Maori Management Committee (KMMC). This official forum maintains the KM systems and ensures that the collective responsibilities are upheld.

In recognition of the policy focus on monitoring student process, the KMMC implemented a Monitoring Project that involved phone calls to a selection of first year students. This project helped emphasise the help available to students and gave an opportunity to talk one-on-one with someone who could advise them where to go for help. Within the monitoring project direct help was offered by way of telephone conversations at key times (for example, before assessments or tests were due). During the conversation, if it was identified that further help was needed, referrals to on campus services (such as counseling, tutors, course conveners etc) were given. Many found that they appreciated this form of support and discovered later their studies that such support is very rare at university.

Barriers to Maori Participation in Psychology

To support Maori students to reach their potential in their chosen area of psychology it is important that we understand the barriers which may impact on their ability to enter the field of psychology. In the first instance, a number of barriers to Maori participation in tertiary education have been identified. These include isolation and lack of support; financial barriers; external commitments; transition and adaptation to unfamiliar environment; racism and discrimination; unwelcoming educational environments; and a shortage of Maori as teachers and academic role models (Nikora, Levy, Henry & Whangapirita; 2002).

In addition these general barriers to tertiary education, Levy (2002) has also identified barriers which are specific to psychology. The dominant barrier to Maori participation in psychology is the environment in which Maori students and psychologists are required to participate. It is an environment which is dominated by paradigms, frameworks and models which are perceived to be of little relevance to the realities of Maori in Aotearoa today. It is also an environment where there is limited Maori participation in the training of psychologists, resulting in isolation and a lack of role models and mentors for potential Maori psychologists. The environment is also characterized by a lack of commitment to Maori focused agendas in psychology (Levy, 2002; Parsonson, 1993; Stanley, 1993).

How then to do we address these barriers? Levy (2002) identifies that the primary way to remove these barriers is through the creation of environments in which Maori wish to participate. Such environments would be characterised by the presence of other Maori students, psychologists and staff; there would be meaningful participation and active valuing of the contributions made by Maori psychologists; competency to work with Maori would be viewed as part of best practice; there would be the provision of opportunities to contribute to

the development of Maori focused psychologies and the environment would include the provision of effective support for Maori students and psychologists (Levy, 2002).

What does our Maori student population look like?

Our role as staff within the Department is then is to work towards the creation of an environment in which Maori wish to participate, both as students and as staff. One of the means by which to do this is to be more familiar with the student population with whom we are working. Some general trends we have identified are discussed below.

Our analyses clearly indicate that different types of support are required for subsequent levels of study. For example, we have identified that at 100 level (First year courses) Maori students are tending to lack engagement with the support mechanisms available. The result of this is that we need to be thinking about the specific type of support necessary for first year students. Support mechanisms at this level need to be more focused on negotiating course requirements, the university system and creating a whanau environment. Our analyses show that as course levels increase, pass rates increase and fail/incompletion rates decrease (see Ashwell, Nikora, & Levy, 2003). This suggests that as familiarity and competence with the University environment increases so too do pass rates, with a corresponding decrease in fail and incompletion rates. Support mechanisms therefore need to be aligned with these findings.

Across all levels the majority of the fail grades for Maori students are recorded as Incomplete (IC) grades, as opposed to fail grades. This means that students are opting out of courses by failing to complete required pieces of assessment, as opposed to actually failing the assessment tasks themselves. Often, an IC grade can be avoided by advising students of potential solutions should they find themselves in a situation where they have not completed a required piece of assessment. In addition to pass and fail rates, we are also interested in the grades Maori students are achieving. Whilst we are achieving high pass rates, the average grade is B-/B. This has implications for entry into graduate study or the professional programmes. We need to be thinking about how a focus on increasing grade averages can be included into the support provided.

There also appears to be a retention issue between first and second year study, with Maori enrolments tending to decrease primarily between first and second year, and numbers remaining relatively stable from second to third year. In order to manage the diverse needs of our Maori students, one of our Maori staff members holds one half of a full-time employment position. Her title is the Kaupapa Maori Student Advisor.

Kaupapa Maori Student Advisor

The Kaupapa Maori Student Advisor (KMSA) is a link between the student, tutors and staff. Some students are intimidated at the thought of discussing issues with staff, and so can

approach their tutor who can then liaise with the KMSA who is a recognized staff member.

The KMSA position is a full-time position that has been filled, of late, by two part-time staff. At present there is only one person employed under this title. The role and responsibilities of a KMSA go beyond recruitment and retention of Maori psychology students. It includes the responsibility of being part of each Maori student's educational journey. Hence the preference is for the smooth journey for both parties. Creating a warm and inviting space is paramount to the job. Therefore all spaces have a functional use. The KMSA utilise their door as a space to advertise up-coming events and inform students about resources available such as APA reference guides. The bright and vibrant look of the door within the Department helps students identify the office in a building where the doors look largely the same.

Involved in the recruitment and retention of Maori undergraduate and graduate students, the KMSA helps enact our goal of increasing Maori student participation and retention in psychology.

Recruitment

Maori staff and the KMSA are part of the ongoing recruitment of Maori undergraduate and graduate students by doing presentations on the diversity of psychology as a career for Maori and promoting the Maori support avenues available for students within the Psychology Department.

We have successfully organised and completed a haerenga to Wellington, with a group of Maori undergraduate and graduate psychology students, to attend the Annual New Zealand Psychological Society Conference. The aim of this haerenga was to encourage students to continue studying and explore the range of fields within the discipline of psychology. The underlying assumption of this exposure was to aid the student's decision to continue with further graduate training in psychology. During the haerenga it was envisaged that students would be exposed to:

- a range of psychologists and their different roles,
- practitioner psychologists thus increasing networking opportunities,
- a noho marae experience, which fosters a sense of belonging within the group of students and to psychology.

A form of recruitment (with the added bonus of retention on to graduate study) we are implementing at the moment is to present profiles that highlight the diverse interests of Maori graduates and their intended professional direction. A profile of our students and their areas of studies are posted on a notice board. On the board we acknowledge their achievements as students and give them an opportunity to share their words of wisdom to any willing to learn from their experience.

Retention

Retention of Maori students involves the monitoring of student grades and progress. Coordination and communication is a skill that is necessary for a KMSA. Building rapport and trust with course conveners is essential so that if any issues arise for Maori students they can be dealt with quickly and effectively. Study and test preparation sessions are available for the first and second year courses with study groups encouraged at third year level.

Identifying and addressing student needs is a major part of the role, whether it means connecting students to the necessary supports or providing kanohi ki te kanohi. Opportunity to meet with the KMSA is provided within specific student consultation hours where students are helped in a one-to-one session with issues such as career planning, specific course work, tutoring and scholarship information.

The role of a KMSA intertwines with many other Maori support systems throughout the campus. Two examples of these are Te Puna Tautoko and Te Aka Matua. University wide, Te Puna Tautoko is a student support system for all Maori tauira enrolled at this institution. In addition, because the Psychology Department is situated within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) we link into that support system. At the Faculty level is a support avenue named Te Aka Matua. They provide support across the different Departments; such as History, Anthropology, Geography, and Linguistics. Te Aka Matua aims to provide a comprehensive and coordinated support service to tauira Maori. This allows KMSA and psychology students to be part of the events that Te Aka Matua organize (like study wananga, or whanaungatanga activities). Being part of this support structure means that the kaiawhina can refer students to other Departments with the understanding that the students are being referred to knowledgeable and culturally safe support people.

Electronic Avenues of Support

Internationally and nationally, electronic support is becoming an instantaneous and common way of staying in contact with each other. As such, another way in which we maintain contact with our students is via electronic avenues for example, email and web-based learning (ClassForum). Many psychology courses have an electronic component to them. Thus the benefits of maintaining contacts via these mechanisms are twofold; tauira become accustomed to using the technology, and can develop their confidence to access staff support[3].

KMSA have established different electronic avenues[4] of support. Such avenues involve:

- *Maori Psychology Online* - this website is an extension of the online information sources currently offered by the Department to students. The focus of this website is on

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3 Staff generally have office hours when they a appointment. This can be intimidating for those who think such a meeting might draw unwanted attention to them and incite the need for a conversation. By accessing email or ClassForum students can prepare their question and wait for a response without having to present themselves physically to staff.

4 These are still 'works in progress' that are undergoing construction and development on an ongoing basis.

informing Maori students of upcoming events.

- *Maori Psychology Support Network* - this interactive learning tool is based in ClassForum (webased interaction). The Network facilitates academic study through discussion, posting messages, and informing students about hui, wānanga, and any other events.

- *The Maori Psychologists Email List* - Available via email list, this list keeps current and former students as well as Maori psychology professionals up to date with current events and other important information on/around campus.

While technology is changing all the time and the way in which information is being disseminated to our students is also evolving, we recognize that some students prefer to engage in the age-old face to face manner. Therefore, the ways we access Maori students and provide support are diverse and provide an essential part of our ongoing support processes.

Kaupapa Maori Tutorial Programme

The Kaupapa Maori Tutorial Programme (KMTP) is part of the normal way in which the Psychology Department provides support for Maori students. Referred to as KM tutorials, this support system is available for first and second year psychology papers as a space for Maori students to critique, question, challenge and learn course work in an environment that is safe and tailored to their needs. The KM tutorials are facilitated as "face to face" sessions that are structured specifically alongside course content. Prior to the commencement of the tutorial series, course conveners are expected[5] to explain the nature of KM tutorials in an open lecture to all students.

While the KMSA is employed to provide support for Maori students, a key part of that role includes ensuring that the KMTP runs smoothly. Effective communication between course conveners and KM tutors is central to that process. As a consequence, the recruitment of KM tutors involves knowing and trusting the tutors that work with our students. As such the KMSA is involved in the selection of KM Tutors who will work in the KMTP.

The selection process of a KM Tutor involves an additional step in the standard tutor[6] selection process. Once the course convener has received applications, they will then work in collaboration with the KMSA to select tutors that will support the KM processes that occur within the KM tutorials. Potential tutors are chosen firstly on the basis of good grades as a reflection of their understanding of course material. However, when selecting KM tutors it is imperative to consider qualities that go beyond academic attributes. An ideal tutor displays aroha and manaakitanga to others and understands that their

role is kaitiaki of the knowledge that they are to pass on. It is our roles as teachers, tutors and kaitiaki to support our Maori students so that we produce practitioners that are knowledgeable and competent in their fields of choice. But rather than provide an overview of the attributes here, a reflective piece has been included by one of the KM tutors.

Reflection from the perspective of a KM Tutor[7]

Deciding to become a KM tutor in the first place was a decision based on my own positive private experiences and wanting to reciprocate that back to my students. I noticed that coming from Gisborne, a small town on the East Coast, there were not many other students from my school that were going on to tertiary education. It was with this in mind that I wanted to make sure that I created an atmosphere that was suitable and comfortable for Maori students at first year level who were in an unfamiliar environment. Being Maori myself, I wanted to encourage students to stay at university and show them where they can get to if they carry on past first year level (which is where many Maori students tend to drop out).

As a KM tutor I wanted to introduce myself to my students in a way that let them know more about me than just my name. Allowing students and tutors to introduce themselves using their own whakapapa and in Te Reo Maori helps create a whanau environment. All aspects of the tutorials are undertaken using tikanga Maori practices. Maori beliefs are held in high regard with appropriate protocol being respected by both tutors and students. Through my own experience of KM tutorials I found three students in my tutorial were affiliated to my iwi. This created a personal bond for us.

Another major part of KM tutorials is that we encourage students to participate in group discussions and group work. The work and assessments covered are exactly the same as that covered in general[8] tutorials but the establishment of personal bonds helps learning and follows a Maori philosophy of learning through co-operation. Group work helps students develop relationships with fellows in the tutorials and encourages them to open up when discussing course work.

As KM students and tutors it is important for us to have a good support network. As tutors we have this with our course conveners and the KMSA who helps with all student issues. She monitors our students test results, their progress with assessments, and also follows up with any students who may need extra help.

The Psychology Department has made available a space for KM tutors to do their mahi, such as preparing for their tutorials and marking assignments. This room is for the use of both tutors and students and we very often get students coming in

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5 The KM policy establishes the appropriate training for course coordinators and provides a standard description of KM tutorials to present to classes to ensure that a clear and consistent message is communicated across all courses in the Department.

6 The standard process involves potential tutors submitting an application to the course convenor, before a selection process takes place.

7 Because this section is a reflection piece by one of the KM tutors, it has been written in first person.

8 Students have the choice to attend either KM tutorials or general tutorials. While general tutorials can have Maori students in them, the philosophy that the general tutorials operate from is different to that of the Kaupapa Maori tutorials.

just for a chat or to discuss any queries they have about their course work. I have found it useful to have somewhere quiet to study with access to a phone, computer and other learning resources. Having the room situated close to the KMSAs and other psychology staff is an added bonus. The room provides a place for tutors to meet and support each other. Such interactions amongst the tutors may not have otherwise happened if a space was not available for us to use in this way.

Reflections from the perspective of two Maori students[9]

Support available for Maori students is promoted through Psychology course lecturers and noted in course outlines. A major aspect of this support is Kaupapa Maori tutorials. The main focus of the tutorials is to provide support for Maori students new to the university system. At our first Psychology lecture we were introduced to the KMSA and the value of KM tutorials. It was through this process that we (as Maori students) were inspired to attend our first KM tutorial.

Some of the differences we found when attending KM tutorials in comparison to the general tutorials were that the introductions and whakawhanaungatanga were a lot more personal. They allowed us to make links between whanau and iwi. For instance in our first encounter with a KM tutorial we were asked to introduce ourselves and it was through this process that we found out we had affiliations with our tutor, who was also from the same region and shared the same whakapapa.

Another important aspect that we noticed about KM tutorials was the way they try to make everyone feel comfortable as some students were whakamā. When we first met our KM tutor it was a really comfortable experience. She did not create a hierarchical relationship. Instead she communicated with us on an equal level as she was a student herself. This allowed us to feel a lot more comfortable with our environment. Creating that feeling of belonging is the whole idea behind the KM tutorials.

One example of the additional supports we encountered as tauira were the drop-in sessions at the KMSA office. The drop-in sessions were allocated hours where the student advisor was available for consultation in her room. ClassForum allowed us to contact fellow students electronically and also allowed them to contact us. An important part of the support we encountered as students was the study wānanga. These were study sessions that were set up by the KMSA, where we all met in a designated room and spent a couple of hours going over course material and studying for any up-coming tests (not to mention eating lots of toffee pops!). These sessions made studying fun and were somewhere we could go if we had any queries. Both the KM tutorials and study wananga created bonds and networks at first year level that have been carried through to third year. People we went to for help in our first year are still there for us now as third year and graduate students.

Conclusion

There are many support mechanisms operating within the Department that are led by Maori staff. Some mechanisms are clearly visible to the students, such as the Kaupapa Maori Tutorial Programme, and others not so visible (the Kaupapa Maori policy & Kaupapa Maori Management Committee). No matter what level of support being implemented there are common factors that can provide lessons to other institutions intending to deliver a support programme that recognises its indigenous population. While there is no claim that the University of Waikato provides a perfect form of support, we offer these words as a reflection of the lessons learned.

Approaches that we found to facilitate the creation of a sense of community amongst our Maori students include (but are not exclusive to): ownership and accountability at the Department level; creation of an environment that supports their cultural values while delivering required coursework; having a team of staff who are seen as mentors; knowing the population that you are dealing with; and, providing a space for meaningful interaction.

By providing an environment that offers a support base that is embedded in policy, it ensures that all staff within the Department are accountable, have ownership and therefore contribute to the delivery of support. This strategy ensures that the provision of such support is not personnel dependent. If staff leave, or new staff enter the Department, the same level of accountability is expected at all times from everyone.

Creating an environment that supports the cultural values of indigenous students while delivering the required coursework helps students see the relevance of their training to their lives outside of academic training. In this instance, creating such a space has opened opportunities for relationships between students and amongst staff that go beyond the classroom. In addition, when students recognise their cultural norms are equally important and relevant in their training, they do not feel as though they need to surrender their cultural values to achieve a tertiary level education.

Visibility of, and access to, a team of staff from the same ethnic group facilitates a 'magnet' approach. Students (in this instance, Maori) are drawn to staff that communicate academic training that correlates with their cultural experiences. Having access to a number of staff (both senior and junior) makes mentors visible to students and creates opportunities for apprenticeships. Such relationships encourage retention and can facilitate an interest in developing further models from one's own cultural perspective. This creates a synergy towards the development of indigenous models and frameworks. Such models can be negotiated with 'whanau' thus eliminating the sense that Maori are returning to their communities as "Pakeha psychologists".

Maori students in the Psychology Department at the University of Waikato have been vocal when communicating their

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9 Similar to the reflections noted previously by the KM Tutor, this section has been written in first person context and is a reflection from two Maori students.

expectations and needs as students. Often these students are the catalysts for change. Support systems are tailored to meet their needs and as such knowing the population that you are dealing with is important. For us it is a matter of listening to their ideas, understanding of the issues, observing the statistics (i.e. pass and fail rates) and making adjustments accordingly.

The provision of space for Maori students to engage with their study creates an environment where debates can be held, agreements forged and new learning shared. Whereas in the past system students may have felt alone in their journey towards higher learning, within this programme the opportunity to meet with fellow students and share their feelings reduces the feeling of isolation within their psychology training. Where there is space and opportunity for Maori students to engage in discussions with peers and mentors as they acquire knowledge and experience it has become clear that they gain confidence in themselves and feel an allegiance to their chosen field. The development of meaningful relationships that begin within courses and continue beyond academic study is evident as this programme has continued for several years.

Glossary of terms

Note: Maori words can have different meanings depending on the context that they are being used in. The definitions/clarifications listed here are given as explanations for the context that the words were used within this paper only and cannot be assumed to generalise to all contexts.

Aotearoa	New Zealand, or "Land of the long white cloud"
aroha	Affection, compassion
hakinakina	Sporting events
hangi	Process of cooking food in an earth oven
haerenga	To take a trip, journey or to travel
iwi	Tribal affiliation group (extended family)
kaiawhina	Helper, mentor or support person
kaitiaki	Caretaker, custodian or guardian
kanohi ki te kanohi	Literally translates as "face-to-face" or in person
Kaupapa Maori	Maori philosophical base, or world view
mahi	Job, tasks, responsibilities
manaakitanga	The act of taking care of people(s)
Maori	Indigenous people of New Zealand
noho marae	Communal sleeping at a meeting house
Pakeha	People of predominantly European descent who reside in New Zealand
tauira	Students or learners
Tikanga Maori	Processes that the indigenous people follow
Te Aka Matua	Name of a support group at Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences at the University of Waikato
Te Puna Tautoko	Name of the support group available to all Maori students enrolled at the University of Waikato
Te Reo Maori	The language of the indigenous people of NZ
Treaty of Waitangi	An internationally recognized document between Maori and the British Crown
wānanga	Place of learning (eg. study group)
whakamā	To be shy or embarrassed
whakapapa	Family genealogy
whakawhanaungatanga	Act of developing familial relationship
whanau	Family relative (immediate or extended)
whanaungatanga	Process of familial relationship

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