

Pulse Check: Results from Surveys on Draft Curriculum Documents

PPTA Te Wehengarua Members



Introduction

This report summarizes feedback from PPTA Te Wehengarua members on the draft curriculum documents across six learning areas following their release on the 29 October, 2025.

Survey period: Collected over ten days, November 2025.

Method: Online survey using Likert-scale questions and open-ended comments.

Survey Questions and initial analysis

Likert Scale Questions

To what extent do you agree that:

- the **purpose statement** adequately captures the learning area and subject?
- the **learning area structure** is appropriate for the learning area and subject?
- the **introduction** to the learning area/subject is logical and coherent?
- The **content** of the teaching sequences is appropriate for the year level?
- The **vision** of young people is well represented?
- The needs of **neuro-divergent** young people will be met?
- All **ākonga will be well supported** to make progress?
- The '**approximate**' **time allocation** for your learning area is sufficient for years 9 and 10?
- There is a genuine attempt to give effect to **Te Tiriti o Waitangi**?

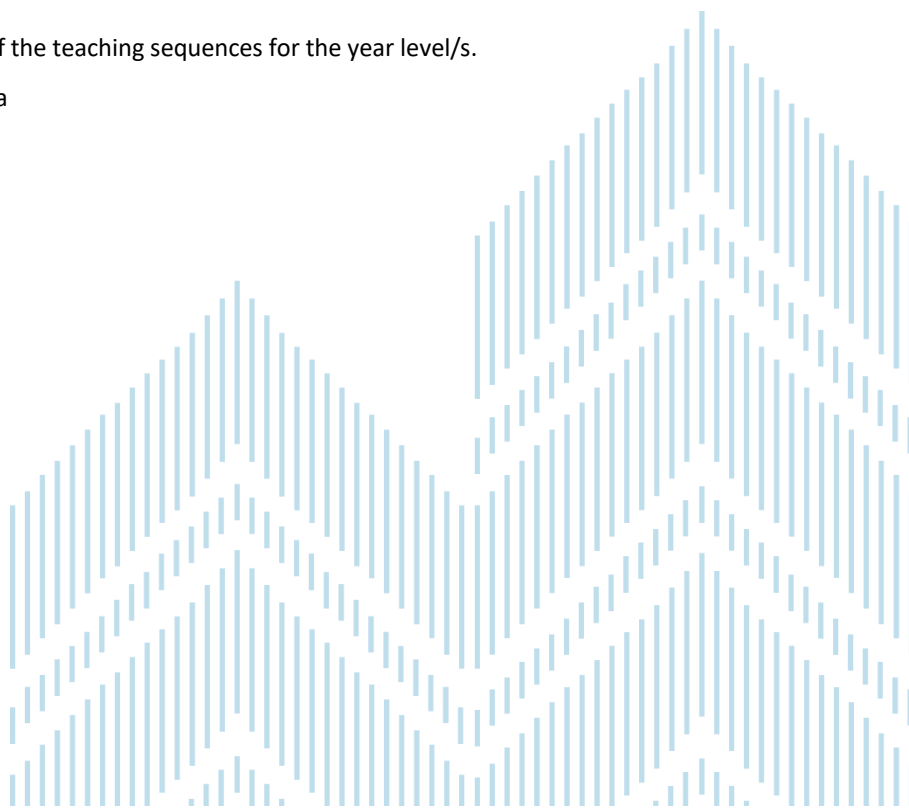
(Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree):

While each survey had slightly different questions depending on how the learning area is structured, the key questions throughout all surveys are detailed in the boxes with initial findings below:

Overall trend: Strong disagreement dominates across all learning areas and most questions in this section.

Open-ended questions invited participants to provide comment

- if they would like to add something to, or change something about the purpose statement, introduction, learning area structure
- on the appropriateness of the content of the teaching sequences for the year level/s.
- on any other aspect of the draft curricula
- on the rewritten Te Mātaiaho



Learning Area highlights

The results below do not attempt to report on every element for every learning area. They offer a snapshot of the strongest results/comments for each learning area. Note that some results cannot be reported at subject level due to small numbers of respondents.

The Arts (n=102)

- **Likert-scale questions**
 - **Strong disagreement** on the appropriateness of the content of the teaching sequences for the year level for The Arts overall, and particularly for Music.
 - **Strong disagreement** that the 'approximate' time allocation for the learning area is sufficient for years 9 and 10.
 - **Strong disagreement** that there is a genuine attempt to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- **Themes from open-ended comments**
 - Positive intent noted, but lacks depth and cultural alignment.
 - Reject combining Dance & Drama; retain four strands.
 - **Recommendations:** Embed biculturalism, emphasize arts as agents of change, reduce prescriptiveness, and clarify time allocation.

Music:

- Seen as regressive and overly focused on theory.
- Lacks engagement and relevance for students.
- Teachers feel under-resourced and undervalued.
- Concerns about time allocation and unrealistic expectations.

Visual Arts:

- Perceived as more coherent and aligned with learning science than other subjects.
- Concerns about being merged with performing arts and losing depth.
- Curriculum is too prescriptive and demanding for junior levels.

Drama/Theatre:

- Needs to be taught by specialists, not generalists.
- Proposed content is too advanced for Year 9–10 students.
- Risk of discouraging student participation due to complexity.

Health & PE (n=81)

- **Likert-scale questions**
 - **Strong disagreement** that the 'approximate' time allocation for the learning area is sufficient for years 9 and 10.
 - **Strong disagreement** that there is a genuine attempt to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- **Themes from open-ended comments**
 - Te Tiriti o Waitangi – concerns about tokenistic inclusion and lack of genuine integration. Loss of Hauora and Te Whare Tapa Whā.
 - Consultation – lack of teacher input and rushed process.
 - Overly sport-centric; neglects holistic well-being and Food/Nutrition.

- **Recommendations:** Reinstate Hauora model, add Food & Nutrition strand, consult with teachers.

Languages (n=57)

- **Likert-scale questions**
 - **Strongest disagreement** of all learning areas that the 'approximate' time allocation for the learning area is sufficient for years 9 and 10.
 - **Strong disagreement** that the content of the teaching sequences is appropriate for the year level
 - **Strong disagreement** that the needs of neuro-divergent young people will be met
 - **Strong disagreement** that all ākonga will be well supported to make progress.
 - **Strong disagreement** that there is a genuine attempt to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- **Themes from open-ended comments**
 - Insufficient time allocation (1.5 hrs/week) is the most frequent criticism.
 - Optional status of languages seen as devaluing the learning area.
 - Te Reo Māori should have its own curriculum, not grouped with other languages.
 - Structure overly prescriptive and unrealistic for mixed prior knowledge.
 - Purpose is outdated; lacks focus on communication and intercultural competence.
 - Removal of Communication strand widely opposed.
 - Many comments link language learning to global citizenship, literacy benefits, and equity.
 - **Recommendations:** Reframe around communication, identity, and global citizenship; reduce grammar-heavy approach; allow flexibility for heritage languages; allow for sufficient time for learning.

Science (n=130)

- **Likert-scale questions** a lot more neutral than other learning areas
- **Disagreement** that the content of the teaching sequences is appropriate for the year level.
- **Themes from open-ended comments**
 - Concerns about loss of Nature of Science and cultural perspectives.
 - Overloaded curriculum - for some, the content is too advanced; risks disengagement and inequity.
 - Concerns about equity and teacher capability.
 - Fear of rote learning replacing inquiry-based approaches.
 - **Recommendations:** Restore Nature of Science strand, reduce load, scaffold progression, and embed Mātauranga Māori.

Social Sciences (n=172)

- **Likert-scale questions**
 - **Strong disagreement** on the appropriateness of the content of the teaching sequences for the year level (for teachers of Social Sciences, History, Geography and Civics and Society)
 - **Strong disagreement** that the 'approximate' time allocation for the learning area is sufficient for years 9 and 10.
 - **While still graded negatively**, the purpose statements were the least problematic
 - The purpose and introduction for Civics and Society had the greatest number of neutral responses
- **Themes from open-ended comments**

- Eurocentric and fact-heavy; lacks conceptual framing.
- Calls for integrated thematic approach and cultural depth.
- Overloaded content: “too much to cover,” “unrealistic timeframes”, Unrealistic scope for time allocation (3 hours/week).
- Age appropriateness: “topics too advanced for Year 9–10” (e.g., French Revolution at Year 7).
- Loss of integration: “fragmented strands,” “lack of conceptual focus” shift to siloed disciplines.
- Te Tiriti & Māori perspectives: “tokenistic,” “missing local context”
- Positive voices: A small minority strongly supports the “knowledge-rich” approach, citing improved rigor and clarity.
- **Recommendations to**
- shift to a concept-driven curriculum
- reduce prescriptive content
- embed bicultural principles
- provide trauma-informed guidance.

Technology (n=45)

- **Likert-scale questions**
 - **Strong disagreement** that all ākonga will be well supported to make progress.
 - **Strong disagreement** that there is a genuine attempt to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- **Themes from open-ended comments**
 - Purpose feels vague; missing design thinking and practical pathways.
 - Strong opposition to merging practical strands; overemphasis on digital.
 - Strong calls for teacher involvement in curriculum design.
 - Concerns about digital strands being too narrow or overly complex.
 - Issues with insufficient time allocation for teaching content.
 - Calls for retaining hands-on, practical components.
 - Confusion or dissatisfaction with learning area structure.
 - Calls for fundamental rewrites.
 - Concerns about lack of creative aspects.
 - AI: 0 mentions — despite being in the draft, not a major focus in comments.
 - **Recommendations:** Separate strands, simplify language, scaffold skills, and balance digital with hands-on learning.

Overall Themes Across Learning Areas from all comments

1. **Time Allocation (Years 9–10):** Overwhelming disagreement for most learning areas; seen as insufficient for the volume of content.
2. **Language & Tone Issues:** Wording often feels generic, jargon-heavy, or AI-generated; lacks authenticity and conceptual depth.
3. **Cultural Responsiveness:**
 - Māori perspectives are not meaningfully integrated; true cultural alignment requires co-design, not just consultation.
 - Strong calls to embed Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Te Ao Māori, and bicultural principles authentically.
 - Need for more Māori and Pasifika resources and leadership.
 - Te Tiriti (some strong agreement with what's on offer, but the majority critical of lack of embeddedness).
4. **Equity & Feasibility:**
 - Content is widely seen as **too dense, advanced, and unrealistic** for allocated time and resources;
 - Risks favouring well-resourced schools.
 - Curriculum perceived as a list of disconnected ideas rather than a coherent framework.
5. **Developmental Appropriateness:**
 - Learning sequences assume prior knowledge and senior-level skills
 - Lack of scaffolding for age-appropriate progression.
6. **Consultation & Implementation:**
 - Teachers and subject experts feel excluded; process perceived as rushed and politically driven.
 - Poor change management and unrealistic timelines.
 - Limited understanding of school logistics (e.g., timetabling, assessment).
7. **Risk Factors:**
 - Loss of cultural inclusion and student engagement.
 - Teacher wellbeing concerns: burnout, attrition, and job losses in practical areas.
 - Risk of disengaging neurodiverse students who thrive in creative subjects.
8. **Curriculum Design Concerns**
 - Over-prescription and lack of flexibility.
 - Disconnect between curriculum content and actual student needs.
9. **Vision of Young People**
 - Draft does not adequately represent young people's vision; responses are neutral rather than supportive.
10. **Neurodivergent Learners**
 - Teachers doubt the curriculum provides strategies for neurodiverse learners.

Strategic Recommendations

1. **Embed Cultural Principles**

- Integrate **Te Tiriti o Waitangi**, tikanga, and local contexts throughout all strands.
- Provide Māori and Pasifika leadership and resources.

2. **Simplify and Clarify Language**

- Revise wording to be clear, authentic, and conceptually strong.
- Remove jargon and overly generic phrasing.

3. **Reduce Content Load**

- Focus on **big ideas, core concepts, and practical experiences** rather than heavy theory.
- Ensure realistic expectations for allocated teaching hours.

4. **Ensure Developmental Progression**

- Scaffold learning from basics to advanced concepts.
- Avoid senior-level content in Years 7–10.

5. **Improve Consultation and Change Management**

- Engage teachers and subject experts early in the process.
- Provide clear timelines and realistic implementation plans.

6. **Support Implementation**

- Offer strong professional development, resources, and clear communication.
- Address school logistics such as timetabling and assessment.

7. **Prioritise Equity**

- Design curriculum that is feasible for all schools, not just well-resourced ones.
- Include strategies for neurodiverse learners and creative subjects.

8. **Maintain Flexibility**

- Avoid over-prescription; allow adaptability for local contexts and diverse learners.

9. **Reflect Young People's Vision**

- Incorporate student voice to ensure relevance and engagement.

