

# Whatu Kura Toi Guide

Nau mai, haere mai!

A warm welcome to Whatu Kura Toi, this course intends to deepen your knowledge of Te Ao Māori, and in turn, develop critical understandings and an eye for ngā toi. This guide will outline what to expect, what to bring, and what you will carry with you on your journey.



# What am I learning? *He aha ahau e ako ana?*

Ngā toi is an ancient practice, it contains an artistic genius and high level of culture that can put Shakespeare or Michelangelo to shame. Ngā toi is always evolving, taking many directions all at the same time. Our starting point however, is the rangatira of toi: whakairo. Whakairo begins in the rākau, or tree- which, separated the skies, gave us waka for migrations, and strengthened our whare and whānau.

Creativity isn't something you can force, nor is it something you can learn from a textbook. In Te Ao Māori, creativity is shaped by your wairua (spirit) and your mātauranga (knowledge). When the two combine something will, at some point, spill out. Whatu Kura Toi isn't a step-by-step-how-to-guide on how to draw x y and z. Although useful, these are things you can begin yourself, and more often than not, the hunger for knowledge, for strong and compelling ideas is what gives toi its mana.

In Whatu Kura Toi, you aren't tasked with explaining or proving to us what's been covered- the challenge is to demonstrate what you discover. This is where true learning unfolds, it's how an individual can recognise their place within the wider world. Even if you aren't a creative, there is a plethora of other things to learn. Ngā toi stretches from the traditional to the contemporary, it's the media for action, vessels of history and it's up to you to figure out where to take it.

# Kaiako



Tēnā koutou, ngā mihi nui ki a  
koutou katoa

Ko Whakarara tōku maunga  
Ko Kopua Kauwau tōku awa  
Ko Matauri tōku moana  
Ko Ngāpuhi te whare tūpuna  
Ko Ngāti Kura tōku hapū  
Ko Tapui tōku marae  
Ko noah tōku ingoa

Based in Melbourne, originally from Ōtautahi, I studied Literature and Anthropology where I unintentionally found a way to articulate Te Ao Māori and see ngā toi from two complementary perspectives. Culture is a journey without a horizon, it's constructed and maintained by everyday people, and we're all in this waka together- be patient, be kind, and let clouds of doubt pass over. Enjoy the small moments. Creativity comes from following your nose, the world's your playground, don't put yourself in a box. Hopefully you get something from my writing, if not, hold me to cooking you a feed.

# Key information

There are five learning modules and one creative module. The learning modules average the length of one book chapter. This means you only have to read one chapter per week to complete the course. However, for some it has been a while since you last picked up a book. Don't stress, each week we wānanga each module where you are able to listen and ask any questions.

On the date kura begins, the login that has been provided to you will open a payment window. Once payment has been made, you will have access to our e-learning platform. However, we are in a cost of living crisis, and financial insecurity is real for many. If this applies to you, please don't hesitate or feel ashamed to let us know as we are more than happy to figure something out which works for you.

As an online course, this is a digital space where ideas and opinions are welcomed. But it's important we clarify that as taurira you respect one another's views and beliefs, keep the kōrero appropriate to the learning, and check writing errors. And please don't post anything abusive, defamatory, obscene or illegal. No promotional or advertising material, phone numbers, or physical addresses please and thank you

# The Creative Design

This is the central component of the course that will determine whether you leave kura with something or not. The name implies what's required: a design. But, if you wish to actually create a physical piece you're more than welcome to do so (tauirā sometimes prefer to do this). If you're struggling for an idea, reach out to kaiako so we can help you out. As mentioned, ngā toi is both traditional and contemporary, and the journey into whichever form you take is welcome in Whatu Kura Toi.

As long as your design/piece can speak to the mātauranga that is covered, then you're heading in the right direction!

Ka rite te tauira, ka puta te kai-whakaako  
*When the student is ready, the teacher appears.*