

# NZSTA Te Tiriti o Waitangi Responsiveness Policy

## 2025

*Kua raranga tahi tātou he whāriki mō āpōpō -  
Together we weave the mat for future generations.*

### Purpose

This policy outlines NZSTA's commitment to upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi and how this commitment is embedded in all aspects of the Association's work.

The Te Tiriti Responsiveness policy is an enduring document that will be supported and monitored by the Te Tiriti o Waitangi committee and will guide the Board, staff, and members acting on behalf of the NZSTA in committees and working groups in their actions. In developing the strategic plan and annual operational plans, the Board will be informed by the contents of this policy and the Te Tiriti o Waitangi committee. Implementing this policy will breathe life into the profession and the Association's aspiration to become a Tiriti-centric organisation<sup>1</sup>.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a. Describe the NZSTA's position on Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a bicultural and Māori responsive organisation.
- b. Outline the high-level direction of the NZSTA with Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- c. Provide a Tiriti-focused foundation that members can confidently build on in future policy development.
- d. Guide the development of operational plans and actions to help us realise the vision of becoming a Tiriti-centric organisation.
- e. Set a foundation for developing pathways and policies to address the pressure and expectations of the workload of Māori speech-language therapists (SLTs) who choose to work with the association.

### Scope

This policy applies to all activities undertaken by members and staff acting on behalf of the NZSTA.

<sup>1</sup> A Tiriti-centric organisation is one that places Te Tiriti o Waitangi at the heart of governance, policies and processes (Came, et al. (2024).

## Acknowledgements

The NZSTA Tiriti Responsiveness Policy was developed and refined in two stages, with contributions from members, external advisors, and stakeholders.

### 2023 Working Party - drafted initial policy

Felicity Bright, Libby Coates, Liz Cross, Ina Fautua, Carleen Heemi, Tanya Jondahl, Katrina McGarr, Emma Quigan and Hana Tuwhare, in consultation with Pākehā Tiriti scholar Heather Came, and Māori speech-language therapist Tracy Karanui-Golf.

### Te Tiriti o Waitangi Policy Working Party

Ellen Faithfull and Philippa Friary (co-chairs), Alice Redamare, Rukingi Haupapa, Tracy Karanui-Golf, Nicki Mason, Katrina McGarr, Emma Quigan and Annette Rotherham.

This working party reviewed the profession's feedback from the policy's initial proposal.

We acknowledge everyone's valuable input and commitment to cultural safety.

## Document management and control

<b>Owner:</b>	NZSTA Board
<b>Content manager:</b>	Te Tiriti o Waitangi Responsiveness Committee
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Te Tiriti o Waitangi Policy Working Rōpu, 2024
<b>Approved by:</b>	NZSTA Board
<b>Date approved:</b>	June, 2025
<b>Review date:</b>	2030

## Policy Contents

This document comprises three key sections:

- Scope and Purpose
- Background
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi preamble and articles

The background outlines the context within which this policy is situated - both the historical context of the Association and that of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the current understanding of each of the preamble and four articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi are described in section two, as well as how they pertain to the kaupapa of the Association. This section closes with a section titled Māori final word (a legal term), which outlines a governance process that protects and honours Māori, Māori speech-language therapists (SLTs) and mātauranga Māori.

Finally, an appendix outlines actionable activities to operationalise the policy into a responsiveness plan. In line with the association's operational plan, this plan may be updated and reviewed more frequently.

## Background

The New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association (NZSTA) was established in 1946. Since its inception, the association has been led by numerous presidents, each of whom has contributed significantly to advancing the Association and the profession. We acknowledge and express our gratitude to all past and present members for their dedication and service.

The New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association (NZSTA) recognise *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (henceforth Te Tiriti) as the foundation for the relationship between Māori and the Crown. Therefore, the NZSTA acknowledges *He Whakaputanga o Te Rangatiratanga o Nū Tīreni*, the Declaration of Independence of New Zealand, as the precursor to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. In addition, we recognise the responsibilities and actions that result from our nation's signing of the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007).

From 2015 to 2022, under the leadership of Philippa Friary and Annette Rotherham, NZSTA began emphasising Te Tiriti and the concepts of Māori responsiveness and bicultural awareness. This shift has substantially changed the Association's kāwanatanga (leadership) and kawa (processes). A historic milestone was reached when Emma Quigan and Katrina McGarr became the first Māori SLTs to assume co-presidency in May 2022.

While these developments represent positive and necessary progress, they have also placed considerable pressure on Māori SLTs, who constitute less than 4.5% of the Association's registered full members (as of 2024 NZSTA data). We are grateful to the tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti within the Association, who have volunteered their mahi, time and expertise in helping to guide the waka on the NZSTA's journey towards biculturalism and being Te Tiriti-centric. In particular, NZSTA would like to acknowledge and thank the contributions of Te Ohu Māori o Aotearoa: Speech Language Therapy. Until now, NZSTA has operated without a formal Te Tiriti Policy. As our Association and profession continue to evolve, we now find ourselves at a point where we are prepared and capable of transitioning towards a Te Tiriti-centric association and profession.

The policy draws on the translation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi by Professor Margaret Mutu (2010).

## Historical context

Tāngata whenua Māori are the first people of Aotearoa. In 1840, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the authoritative Māori text, was negotiated, defining the relationship between hapū and the Crown (Healy, Huygens, & Murphy, 2012). This treaty outlined the terms and conditions of settlement for those settlers already here and all settlers yet to come. We recognise that Māori never ceded sovereignty and that te reo Māori and mātauranga Māori are taonga to be actively protected by the Crown.

The NZSTA acknowledges that Te Tiriti has a painful history, as successive governments have breached

this foundational document. This has contributed to long-standing social, educational, justice, health, and economic inequities between Māori and non-Māori (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2009). We note Māori have always resisted settler colonialism and made substantive contributions to the international movement for Indigenous rights (United Nations, 2007; Walker, 1990). We acknowledge the complex socio-political context and history underlying this NZSTA Tiriti policy.

## Te Tiriti o Waitangi Preamble and Articles

Te Tiriti has five key elements:

- a) The preamble affirmed existing relationships.
- b) Article one granted the British kāwanatanga over their (non-Māori) people.
- c) Article two reaffirmed Māori tino rangatiratanga,
- d) Article three granted hapū the same rights and privileges as British subjects
- e) Oral article four guaranteed cultural and religious freedom.

Below, this policy defines these five key elements in relation to the NZSTA and articulates how they should be operationalised within Association activities. The highlighted box at the end of each element outlines key policy points that will guide the Association in implementing this policy.

### Preamble

The preamble affirms the strategic and political alliance between hapū and the British Crown. In the context of the NZSTA, this Tiriti relationship is currently between Māori and tāngata Tiriti (people in Aotearoa who do not whakapapa to a Māori ancestor and recognise their place in Aotearoa is due to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and actively work to honour Ti Tiriti). This relationship is one of mutual care and protection, as well as autonomy and self-determination. This Tiriti relationship should be informed by tikanga (Marsden, 2003; Mead, 2003) and the mātāpono (values) of the NZSTA - kōtahitanga, rangatiratanga, whanaungatanga, aroha, and wairuatanga. A Te Tiriti relationship founded on these NZSTA mātāpono is one in which everyone can share experience and expertise in a way that empowers others. Relationships formed with integrity and respect demonstrate humility and focus on clinical excellence through collaborative and authentic connections. This approach embodies partnership, sharing expertise in communication and swallowing, maintaining a person- and whānau-centred focus, and providing equitable and excellent service to all.

### Article One - Kāwanatanga

Many Māori initially understood kāwanatanga under Te Tiriti as granting the Crown the right to govern British settlers without ceding Māori sovereignty over their lands and people. In contemporary interpretations, kāwanatanga is viewed as the right of Māori to govern in partnership with the Crown, emphasising shared power and collaborative decision-making that respects and upholds Māori rights

and interests as guaranteed under Article Two of Te Tiriti.

To achieve honourable *kāwanatanga*, the NZSTA understands that Māori need meaningful input into decision-making at all levels, from the inception of ideas to the completion of kaupapa. This includes involvement in strategic decisions, representation in advisory groups, and input into financial decisions. Where this is unachievable due to capacity or capability from within the Māori membership, this should not preclude progress or create undue pressure. Kaupapa will maintain an *open-door* approach that allows Māori participation throughout all stages of projects and initiatives.

By ensuring Māori participation is integral at every stage of the process, the NZSTA aims to uphold the principle of partnership inherent in Te Tiriti and create a more equitable and inclusive organisation. This approach recognises that true partnership goes beyond consultation, requiring active Māori involvement in shaping the direction and operations of the NZSTA. It acknowledges the importance of Māori perspectives and expertise in all aspects of the Association's work. This commitment to shared decision-making power aligns with contemporary interpretations of *kāwanatanga*. It reflects the NZSTA's dedication to honouring the spirit and intent of Te Tiriti in its governance practices.

## Article Two - Tino Rangatiratanga

Article Two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi reaffirms tino rangatiratanga, a principle with profound implications for speech-language therapy (SLT) in Aotearoa, New Zealand. In the context of SLT, tino rangatiratanga recognises the absolute authority of Māori over their language, communication practices, and health services. It asserts the right of Māori to make decisions about SLT services, research, and practices that affect their communities. This principle extends beyond consultation; it ensures active Māori leadership in developing culturally responsive assessment tools, intervention strategies, and service delivery models. By embracing tino rangatiratanga, the SLT profession commits to protecting te reo Māori and te ao Māori communication practices as taonga, ensuring that services are delivered in a manner that respects te ao Māori and fosters Māori-led research and development in the field. This commitment is not just about the current practice but also about nurturing sustainable, culturally appropriate SLT services that will benefit generations to come, honouring the intergenerational responsibility inherent in the concept of tino rangatiratanga.

## Article Three: Ōritetanga

Ōritetanga recognises Māori as having equal rights as citizens in Aotearoa. Te Tiriti o Waitangi guaranteed Māori the same rights and privileges as British subjects; however, there remain entrenched ethnic inequities in speech and language, health and social outcomes (Brewer, Taki, Heays, & Purdy, 2023). These avoidable, unnecessary, and unjust disparities have become normalised within the sector and must be addressed. Given the devastating intergenerational impacts of colonisation and Te Tiriti breaches, this speaks directly to the importance of the NZSTA to proactively strive for equitable outcomes for Māori members, whānau, hapū and iwi.

The members, staff, and leadership of the NZSTA have a shared responsibility and accountability to actively and continuously work towards addressing these systemic inequities. This involves monitoring and evaluating Māori excellence and tracking progress toward and beyond equity.

## Oral Article Four: Wairuatanga

Article four of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is recognised as a verbal agreement of Māori freedom of religion and belief. It ensures Māori worldviews, values, and wairuatanga are recognised and represented. For the NZSTA, honouring wairuatanga involves providing the space, time, and resources to embed te reo Māori and tikanga Māori within the everyday activities of the profession. This requires Māori leadership and engagement with kaumātua to oversee engagement with tikanga and cultural safety. It is also an invitation to engage respectfully and proactively with the spiritual dimension in all NZSTA work. The mātāpono of the NZSTA needs to continue to be socialised and embedded into everyday practice.

The mātāpono of the NZSTA will continue to shape and guide the Association, ensuring they underpin all aspects of the profession. This includes fostering a shared understanding of these values across the membership and integrating them as core elements of speech-language therapy practice.

Centring wairuatanga requires re-examining and transforming historical practices, alongside building awareness of where attention to wairua may be absent. The NZSTA remains committed to being guided by Māori leadership and ensuring that tikanga is engaged in a manner that upholds cultural safety and respectful interactions.

## Māori Final Word

*Māori final word* is a way to recognise and express tino rangatiratanga within policy documentation actively. Being Te Tiriti-aligned requires long-standing, robust, critically and culturally informed engagement with the diversity of Māori policy, thought, and aspirations. The NZSTA recognises that Māori leadership, engagement, critique, and peer review are inherent in Te Tiriti alignment. This encourages Māori to assert authority over mātauranga Māori and validate NZSTA's policies and documents.

Under Article One of this policy, the level and nature of Māori participation should be evident in the decision-making processes and the development of NZSTA policies. These should be publicly defended if there were good reasons for not engaging with Māori.

The purpose of the Māori final word is not an assertion of power but the protection of mātauranga Māori. This prevents tokenism and proactively pursues an equitable outcome.

In the final phase of the NZSTA's policy developments, Māori who have been involved in the review or development of policy will have the final word for these to be adopted. We understand the final word to

mean that Māori members of working parties and committees have the opportunity to review and ensure that their contribution to kaupapa is accurately and fully represented as it was intended. The people providing the final word will be the same people who have contributed to the kaupapa throughout. The flexibility around Māori involvement recommended in Article 2 means there should be more opportunities for Māori to be consulted if they do not have the capacity to be involved in an entire project.



# Appendix 1: Responsiveness Plan

The Responsiveness Plan operationalises the Te Tiriti Responsiveness Policy and provides action points for the Association and Board to consider in implementing this policy.

1. The NZSTA will develop, strengthen and maintain relationships with Māori organisations that align with the kaupapa of the Association.
2. The NZSTA will foster a culture of mutual learning and respect, creating an environment where Māori and tāngata Tiriti members can share experiences and expertise in a way that empowers others and emphasises collaborative and authentic connections.
3. The NZSTA constitution will centre Te Tiriti within our rules, governance, and leadership structures.
4. All Boards, committees, leadership roles, and kaupapa initiated or endorsed by the NZSTA will aim for at least 50% Māori representation from inception. Where this representation cannot be met at inception, a seat will be held, and best efforts will be made to engage with this mātauranga; however, this will not impede progress in the interim.
5. Where specific knowledge or skill sets are central to the kaupapa progressing in a way that honours this policy, the NZSTA will take steps to source requisite knowledge or skills, including externally, where required.
6. The NZSTA will provide opportunities for all SLTs and board members to strengthen their understanding of:
  - Te Tiriti o Waitangi
  - Te ao Māori
  - Cultural safety
  - Anti-racism praxis within the SLT context
7. The NZSTA will foster and support the reclamation of mātauranga Māori, te reo Māori revitalisation, and the development of Māori leadership skills.
8. The NZSTA will foster an environment where all SLTs and Board members actively engage in anti-racism practices. Te Tiriti o Waitangi Responsive Committee will support the implementation, monitoring, and ongoing development of NZSTA's Te Tiriti o Waitangi Responsiveness Policy and its operational objectives supporting expressions of Māori tino rangatiratanga. This includes:
  - access to anti-racism training for members and leaders within the Association

- safe reporting systems for instances of racism, including transparent follow-up processes
  - recognition of anti-racism efforts within the NZSTA community through cultural awards
9. The NZSTA will collect robust ethnicity data on the SLT workforce utilising Māori data sovereignty principles (Te Mana Raraunga Network, 2015).
  10. The NZSTA will commit to ongoing investment in Māori workforce development, including:
    - tuakana-teina mentoring initiatives for Māori members
    - cultural supervision
    - raising awareness of SLT as a career pathway for rangatahi Māori
  11. The NZSTA will use a critical Tiriti analysis framework to ensure that all NZSTA policies and endorsed kaupapa are equitable and culturally safe for Māori.
  12. The NZSTA will uphold the mana of te reo and tikanga Māori, striving for the authentic integration of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori into the everyday activities and communications of the NZSTA.
  13. The NZSTA will provide regular cultural immersion experiences for NZSTA members to deepen their understanding of tikanga Māori.
  14. The NZSTA will prioritise Māori, resource leadership, and kaumātua guidance in overseeing tikanga and cultural safety within the NZSTA.
  15. The NZSTA will ensure that NZSTA mātāpono (values) are understood, socialised, and embedded in everyday practice.
  16. The NZSTA will proactively align policies and processes with wairuatanga.
  17. The NZSTA will create spaces for ongoing dialogue about decolonising SLT practices.
  18. The NZSTA will establish and implement a process for drafting, writing, and finalising policy and procedural guidance that ensures Māori final word is implemented by working groups during policy development.
  19. The NZSTA will implement transparent reporting on its progress in meeting these action steps.

## Papakupu - Glossary

Hapū	- subtribe
Iwi	- tribe, often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.
Kāwanatanga	- The Māori word 'kāwana' is an adaptation of the English word 'governor'. 'Kāwanatanga' is derived from it and is often translated as 'governance'.
Kaupapa	- topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan, proposal, agenda, subject, programme, theme, issue, initiative.
Mātāpono	- values
Mana motuhake	- self-determination, independence, sovereignty, authority – mana through self-determination and control over one's own destiny.
Mātauranga Māori	- literally translated, means 'Māori knowledge'. It's a modern term that broadly encompasses traditions, values, concepts, philosophies, worldviews, and understandings derived from uniquely Māori cultural perspectives.
Rangatahi Māori	- Māori teenager or young adult.
Tāngata Tiriti	- all people in Aotearoa who do not whakapapa to a Māori ancestor and recognise their place in Aotearoa is due to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and actively work to honour Te Tiriti. This is a political rather than an ethnic term.
Tāngata whenua	- the indigenous Māori people of a particular area of New Zealand or of the country as a whole.
Taonga	- something that is highly valued, a treasure.
Te Ohu Māori o Aotearoa: Speech Language Therapy	- A special interest group (SIG) is open to all Māori speech-language therapists and students, regardless of membership status within the NZSTA.

Te reo Māori	- Māori language
Tikanga	- is a Māori concept incorporating practices and values from mātauranga Māori, Māori knowledge. Tikanga is translated into English with a wide range of meanings— culture, custom, ethic, etiquette, fashion, formality, lore, manner, meaning, mechanism, method, protocol, style, and customary law.
Tino rangatiratanga	- is a Māori language term that translates literally to “highest Chieftainship” or “unqualified chieftainship”. Also translated as "self-determination", "sovereignty" and "absolute sovereignty".
Tuakana-teina	- is a concept from te ao Māori and refers to the relationship between an older (tuakana) person and a younger (teina) person. Within teaching and learning contexts, this can take a variety of forms, such as peer-to-peer, younger to older, older to younger, or able/expert to less able/expert.
Wairua	- spirit of a person who exists beyond death. It is the non-physical spirit, distinct from the body.
Wairuatanga	- The essence of wairuatanga is distinctive to Māori spirituality; it is the holistic wellbeing of an individual and the spiritual synergy of the collective with which an individual identifies. Wairuatanga is an essential requirement for the identity and wellbeing of Māori.
Whānau	- family group
Whenua	- land