

Using te reo Māori in your papers and more: incorporating Treaty and te ao Māori analysis in your policy advice

Last year we released this Masterclass on using te reo Māori in your papers. We also suggested you should take the next step and consider Māori frameworks in your policy analysis.

Things have moved on a bit from there – there is now considerable push to make sure the Crown is a better Treaty partner. This means making sure the implications for Te Tiriti and for Māori are considered in policy advice. So we've added some material to this Masterclass.

Te reo Māori became one of the official languages of New Zealand in 1989

A number of agencies asked us for advice on using te reo in policy advice papers. We've put together this Masterclass based on the best practice we've seen, and some expert advice from people in a variety of different agencies. It also contains practical tips and references to help you up your game in te reo.

But of course, it's been around for centuries.

We're starting to see te reo Māori used more often in policy papers, just as we are on the internet, in print media, and on radio and TV. And we'd expect to see more in future.

Parliament allows the use of te reo in all its dealings, e.g. speeches in the House, Parliamentary questions and submissions to Select Committee.

Now, we have more Ministers of Māori descent than ever. And, advising should be about writing for your audience.

There are other jurisdictions which regularly use multiple languages. For example, in OECD documents summaries are usually published in French if the document is written in English and vice-versa. In Wales, government publications in English also have a Welsh language version. Or have both English and Welsh in the same document – one language on one page, and then the content repeated on the next page in the other language. Canada is the other obvious example.

Our approach here, as usual, is to advocate for writing for your audience, and to make sure papers are clear and accurate.

We've seen six main uses in your papers

- **Proper nouns** – including names for places, strategies or documents, e.g. Hei Korowai Oranga: the Māori Health Strategy, organisations, e.g. Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa (NZ Police), plants and birds, and of course people.
- **Greetings** at the beginning of letters, emails, documents, and speech notes. Some special phrases that might be useful for introductions to emails, letters etc. can be found here.
<http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/maori-language/for-special-occasions/>
Of course, there are more formal mihi used at meetings and events. Often agencies are asked to provide Ministers or senior management with some advice on an appropriate mihi. You'll have people in your organisation expert in this – ask them.
- **Mihi or whakataukī** in documents to be published – which are often attachments to advice papers. Again, these will have had input from an expert. Consultation documents or material targeted to Māori are likely to include more te reo.
- **Words in everyday use** – and the list is growing. E.g. iwi, hapū, whānau, kaimoana, whenua, kuia, rangatira, mahi.
- **Headings** – we've seen paper templates with bi-lingual headings.
- **Responses to letters to the Minister** – if written to in te reo, Ministers who are fluent often have their reply written in te reo too.

Agencies dealing specifically with Māori issues, or individual papers on Māori issues tend to have many more of the “words in everyday use”. It depends on the topic and who the paper is going to – the audience.

You may be asked for talking points in te reo if your Minister is featuring in the Māori media on an issue. No doubt you’ll have te reo Māori speakers that can help with this.

A good guide to the basics can be found in this publication on the Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori website (the Māori Language Commission).

<http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Corporate-docs/Orthographic-conventions/Guidelines-for-Maori-Language-Orthography.pdf>

There are, however, some things to watch out for:

Take care to spell correctly

In more recent versions of Microsoft Word, you can update the language to include te reo and well as New Zealand English, so that you can use spell-checker.

In Microsoft Word go to:

File > Options > Language and select Māori¹

If you don’t yet have this functionality then use the autocorrect function by adding the correctly spelt words to the autocorrect function:

File > Options > Proofing > AutoCorrect Options

Or use the on-line Māori Dictionary – Te Aka <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/> or Learning Media’s tool at www.learningmedia.co.nz/ngata.

There are no plurals

So, don’t put an “s” on the end of Māori words. The plural of “marae” is “marae”.

There can be different spellings of words

Place names and nouns can be spelt differently by different iwi or hapū, e.g. wānanga and wānaka² for a university; or Whakatauākī or Whakataukī for a proverb or saying.

Whatever you choose, make spellings consistent throughout your paper.

If you think people might not understand a spelling that is different from what they usually see – then use a footnote to explain.

¹ If Māori is not available to be added you may need to get assistance from your IT department.

Macrons make words sound and mean different things

So, use them. You may have noticed that Stuff has very recently begun to use macrons in all its on-line content.

There is a useful introduction on the Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori website. See <http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/assets/LanguageResources/KIA-ORA-Pronunciation.pdf>

If your system can’t add te reo into the spell checker (which will pick up macrons), you can add macrons in Microsoft Word by:

- Highlighting the letter that needs correcting
- Click ‘Insert’ tab
- Click ‘Symbol’ icon on far right
- Find the letter you need with the right accent/macron
- Click ‘Insert’ button.

You may also be able to enable your keyboard for macrons – check with your IT experts.

This is something to watch out for in your QA process.

Check your organisation’s style guide

Most agencies have style guides. They may well include suggestions and rules for the use of te reo in your agency’s official communications or references to other helpful material. If not in the style guide yet, then why not try and get it included.

² E.g. Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki – for Lincoln University.

Treaty and te ao Māori analysis is critical

Government has clear policy goals. To quote Our Plan:³

“...we want to build a new, enduring relationship between Māori and the Government. That means listening, working together, and committing to improve services and outcomes for tangata whenua through:

- Working to settle all historical Treaty settlements by 2020
- Building new partnerships with Māori for the future
- Upholding Treaty Settlement commitments
- Improving how the public sector responds to Māori issues”

We also know that according to the Living Standard Framework, Māori aren’t doing so well in many areas, compared to the population as a whole.⁴

Policy advice, as the forerunner to action is a key mechanism to ensure progress toward these goals, and to keep the underlying concerns in the minds of policy makers.

Requirements are included in the new Policy Project Quality Standards

The new policy quality framework requires consideration of Treaty and te ao Māori analysis in a number of areas. Most specifically in the following piece

Incorporates Treaty and te ao Māori analysis

Where relevant, the analysis:

- explains Māori concepts in an informed and understandable way
- identifies approaches to the issue or opportunity that are based on te ao Māori or would benefit Māori
- identifies how the problem or opportunity and policy options could affect Māori, uphold the Treaty of Waitangi and its principles, and affect Māori Crown relationships
- highlights relevant Treaty claims, settlement negotiations and commitments, Treaty jurisprudence and any litigation risks.

It’s also noted in the following sections:

- Uses relevant analytical frameworks and methodologies.
- Reveals diverse views, experiences and insights and engagement processes.
- Reflects diverse perspectives.
- Enables effective implementation.

You can see more on this at the following link.

<https://dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-06/FINAL%20full%20Policy%20Quality%20Framework.pdf>

We think it should have also been explicitly mentioned in the standard relating to data, research and evidence too! Good data can help to hone down the problem definition, the options analysis and to consider the impacts of policies. Remember, they can have different impacts for different people.

Te Arawhiti has a role in helping other agencies to up their game in this area. They have some useful guidelines on engagement.

<https://www.tearawhiti.govt.nz/te-kahui-hikina-maori-crown-relations/engagement/>

But watch this space, we’re sure there will be more work done in this area. We know various agencies are gearing up to develop their own tools. The important take away is that it is going to be crucial and that it is going to be around for a while – so investing in relevant skills is savvy.

There are useful analytical frameworks which have been around for some time

We’ve seen frameworks developed and applied to look at policy issues from a Māori perspective or world view. This can be useful as a different language and set of concepts can lead to people thinking about an issue in a different way.

Some notable examples are:

Professor Sir Mason Durie’s **Te Whare Tapa Whā** framework for Māori health – this was first used in the 1980s and is still employed.

Here’s a link on the Ministry of Health website www.health.govt.nz/our-work/populations/maori-health/maori-health-models/maori-health-models-te-whare-tapa-wha.

This framework has been applied, and modified by others many time, e.g. the Ministry for Women’s work on preventing violence against Māori women <http://women.govt.nz/documents/w%C4%81hine-m%C4%81ori-w%C4%81hine-ora-w%C4%81hine-kaha-preventing-violence-against-m%C4%81ori-women-2015>.

³ <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/feature/our-plan-modern-new-zealand-we-can-all-be-proud>

⁴ <https://treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-11/ap18-04.pdf>

The **Ministry of Health** also commissioned some work on this back in 1995. It usefully refers to other checklist in operation at that time too.

[http://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/BA3C0AE52317BF954C25678300111FCD/\\$file/Maori%20Policy%20analysis%20framework%201995.pdf](http://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/BA3C0AE52317BF954C25678300111FCD/$file/Maori%20Policy%20analysis%20framework%201995.pdf) **Te Puni Kōkiri's work on the Whānau Ora Framework** - <https://www.tpk.govt.nz/docs/tpk-wo-outcomesframework-aug2016.pdf>

From Landcare Research – Garth Halmsworth's **Framework for Cultural Sustainability** <https://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/about/sustainability/voices/matauranga-maori/what-is-matauranga-maori/framework>

Many organisations have their own Māori strategic plans or frameworks which set the agenda for action and provide a basis for the analysis of relevant policy issues.

Remember the Living Standards Framework

Treasury's wellbeing framework is being used to underpin budget processes, and is referred to in other policy analysis.

Treasury and Te Puni Kōkiri have developed a discussion paper which looks at how it can be applied with a Māori worldview.

<https://treasury.govt.nz/publications/media-statement/providing-maori-perspective-wellbeing>

[You'll need relevant data too, to make the best of this sort of analysis.](#)

Keep at it

There are plenty of other resources and guidance on the Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori website <http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/>.

There are plenty of opportunities to learn te reo Māori. Many people are taking these up. A number of agencies are organising in-house programmes too.

Learning the language can help you better understand some of these frameworks and Māori concepts. Not everything is easy to translate directly and thinking differently can help find different solutions.

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