

Native Institute of Digital Technology

Disability Action Plan

Supporting Tāngata Whaikaha (Disabled Learners)

2026 to 2029

Large Print version. Body text is set at 18 point.

Provider: Native Tech [7028]

Plan period: 2026 to 2029

Framework basis: Kia Ōrite Toolkit, Enabling Good Lives (EGL), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), WCAG 2.2 AA

Related document: Disability and Accessibility Policy (AQMS)

Status: Working document, reviewed and updated annually

Section 1. Purpose of this Plan

This Disability Action Plan (DAP) sets out Native Tech's objectives for supporting tāngata whaikaha (disabled learners) for the period 2026 to 2029. It is the successor to our founding DAP (2023 to 2026), and records the progress made under that Plan (Section 3) alongside the objectives that now extend it (Section 5). Our practice is grounded in the Kia Ōrite Toolkit, the Enabling Good Lives (EGL) approach and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). This DAP is our operational plan; the governing Disability and Accessibility Policy sits within our Academic Quality Management System (AQMS).

Although developing a DAP is not currently a TEC requirement for a provider of our size, we have chosen to develop one. We are seeing increasing numbers of learners enrolling with us who have a range of disabilities, neurodiversity, and mental-health needs, and we want our response to be intentional, deliberate, consistent, and transparent.

Native Tech also has onsite specialist expertise, including a staff member with a Master's in Education and a background in teaching specialists in special educational needs (SEN). This allows us

to tailor support and keep our teaching strategies inclusive for learners who need additional educational assistance.

Section 2. How We Understand and Approach Disability

2.1 Defining disability

Native Tech adopts the definition of disability in the New Zealand Disability Strategy, which is based on the social model. Disability is not something a person has; it results from the barriers society places in front of people with impairments.

Impairments may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, learning or other, and may be visible or hidden, temporary or permanent.

We also recognise the intersection between disability and being Māori, Pacific, or from a non-English-speaking background, and the additional access barriers this can create.

We use the term *tāngata whaikaha* to refer to disabled learners, consistent with the Enabling Good Lives approach and disability-led language in Aotearoa.

2.2 Kia Ōrite Toolkit

The Kia Ōrite Toolkit is the New Zealand best-practice guide for tertiary providers supporting disabled learners. It anchors our approach: we use it to set objectives, check our practice against current standards, and identify where to extend our capability. The frameworks below sit underneath it as our delivery philosophy.

2.3 Enabling Good Lives (EGL)

Enabling Good Lives (EGL) is a New Zealand approach to disability support built on principles of self-determination, choice and control, and ordinary life outcomes. For Native Tech this means engaging directly with disabled learners to understand their needs and aspirations, and shaping support around the life the learner wants, rather than fitting the learner to a fixed programme.

2.4 Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an evidence-based framework for designing learning so that it works for the widest range of learners from the outset. We apply its three core principles.

Multiple means of representation: presenting material visually, verbally, and through hands-on or

tactile methods.

Multiple means of expression: letting learners demonstrate what they know through writing, kōrero, or creative work.

Multiple means of engagement: clear goals with multiple pathways to reach them.

2.5 Supporting standards and resources

Our staff development also draws on Te Pou and the Blueprint for Learning, which inform disability-confident and mental-health-aware practice. We engage with local disability organisations such as the Disability Resource Centre and Access Aotearoa for referrals and mentorship. Our digital accessibility work is being aligned to the WCAG 2.2 AA standard.

Section 3. What We Have Done

The following actions have been implemented in direct response to learner needs identified through enrolment, day-to-day delivery, and learner feedback.

3.1 Physical environment and accessibility

Sensory and regulation spaces: Created dedicated spaces learners can go to when they become overwhelmed, supporting self-regulation and continued participation.

Bathroom fittings: Added accessibility fittings such as support rails in bathrooms.

Lowered mirrors: Installed lower mirrors to accommodate learners who use wheelchairs.

Clear access routes: Entrances and hallways are kept clear at all times so learners can move through the building safely. Accessibility is treated as a standing operational requirement, not a one-off fix.

3.2 Rangatahi Navigators

We have Rangatahi Navigators in place at Native Tech. Their role is to support our tutors with behaviour and personal student matters, working alongside tutors so that pastoral, wellbeing, and behavioural needs are held by dedicated staff rather than left to the tutor alone. This means a learner whose disability or wellbeing is affecting their participation has someone whose specific role is to support both them and their tutor.

3.3 Equipment and individualised support

Provision of equipment: Provided equipment to learners who would otherwise have been unable to join us because of their disability, removing a barrier to participation.

Early identification: Learners with learning difficulties are identified early, during enrolment, so support can be planned from the start.

Capability check: At enrolment we assess whether our staff are trained and resourced to meet the learner's needs, so that support offered is real rather than nominal.

3.4 Learner voice

Seeking feedback: Actively sought learners' feedback and insights on their disability-related needs, and used this to shape the supports above.

Regular informal feedback: Learner feedback is sought informally at least twice a week during whole-group meetings, typically at Monday morning karakia and afternoon karakia at the end of the day. This gives every learner a low-pressure, routine opportunity to raise needs as they arise.

Ākonga Advisory Group: Each class has student representatives who take learner feedback to the Ākonga Advisory Group, which meets quarterly. This provides a more structured channel for learner voice to reach decision-making.

Outcome observed: Learner feedback through these channels has directly shaped the supports described above, and completion outcomes for disabled learners (Section 3.5) indicate that our everyday, universally designed supports are meeting most presenting needs. We continue to monitor disclosure rates and support requests so that emerging needs are picked up early.

3.5 Outcomes for disabled learners

Where a learner is identified with a disability or access need, we plan support around them and monitor their progress. Across 2023 to 2025, 33 of 42 disabled-learner enrolments completed their programme (79 percent). Because a learner can enrol across more than one level as they progress, these figures are counted as enrolments rather than as distinct people.

Disabled-learner enrolments and completions by programme level, 2023 to 2025: Level 1, 17

identified, 14 completed. Level 2, 16 identified, 12 completed. Level 3, 9 identified, 7 completed. These are internal class-level counts of learners identified with disabilities or access needs, and they exceed our formally recorded disability data, as explained in Section 4. 2026 data will be added at the end of the academic year.

Section 4. Current Limitations and How We Address Them

We want this plan to be transparent about where our current capability ends, because that is where our roadmap begins.

Beyond the actions described in Section 3, our recorded disability data reflects only what learners disclose, and very few formally record a disability. Neurodiversity is largely unrecorded, because most of our learners have never been clinically assessed or given a diagnosis. At enrolment our staff identify likely learning difficulties and access needs and note these so that support can be planned, but these are practical observations to guide support, not clinical diagnoses, which we are not qualified to make. The number of learners we support with access needs is therefore higher than our formal

data shows.

We record this plainly. The forward look in Section 5 sets out how we intend to extend our capability over time so that learners who need support can access it, consistent with the EGL principle that disabled people should have the same opportunities as anyone else. In the meantime, our enrolment observations and Rangatahi Navigator support mean learners still receive practical help and learner notes are updated accordingly.

Section 5. Looking Forward: Our Action Plan

Our forward objectives for 2026 to 2029 are set out below. These objectives give practical effect to the Disability and Accessibility Policy and form Native Tech's measurable action plan for improving accessibility, learner support, staff capability, learner voice, and disability-related systems. Progress against these objectives will be monitored through quarterly SLT dashboards and summarised in an annual public report.

Objective 1: Embed learner voice (Ākonga Advisory Group; disabled-learner representation). Owner: Rangatahi Navigator. Due: Quarter 1, 2026. Status:

Done.

Objective 2: Create an admissions disclosure and disclosure-support pathway. Owner: Education Operations and Systems Manager. Due: Quarter 2, 2026. Status: Done.

Objective 3: Appoint new Disability Access Lead (DAL). Owner: Education Operations and Systems Manager. Due: Quarter 1, 2027. Status: Planned.

Objective 4: Establish an assistive technology (AT) pool. Owner: Education Operations and Systems Manager. Due: Quarter 1, 2027. Status: Planned.

Objective 5: Roll out staff disability-confidence training (Te Pou, Blueprint for Learning). Owner: Chief Academic Officer. Due: Quarter 2, 2027. Status: Planned.

Objective 6: Establish quarterly SLT dashboard and annual public report. Owner: Education Operations and Systems Manager. Due: Quarter 2, 2027. Status: Planned.

Objective 7: Establish an Accessibility Working Group (AWG) with a regular meeting cycle. Owner: Disability Access Lead. Due: Quarter 3, 2027. Status: Planned.

Objective 8: Formalise external partnerships and referral pathways (Disability Resource Centre, Access Aotearoa). Owner: Transitions Navigator and Student Support Lead. Due: Quarter 3, 2027. Status: Planned.

Objective 9: Complete a digital accessibility audit against WCAG 2.2 AA. Owner: CEO. Due: Quarter 4, 2027. Status: Planned.

Objective 10: Develop accessible templates and materials (UDL-aligned) including captioning, visual-first materials and NZSL interpretation, informed by audit findings. Owner: Education Operations and Systems Manager. Due: Quarter 2, 2028. Status: Planned.

Objective 11: Introduce personal learning budgets and disabled-professional mentorship. Owner: Disability Access Lead. Due: Quarter 2, 2029. Status: Planned.

Objective 12: Complete full review of this Plan and publish the successor DAP for 2030 onwards. Owner: CEO and DAL. Due: Quarter 4, 2029. Status: Planned.

Section 6. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

We treat our disability practice as a living commitment. Monitoring will be led through this DAP and the governing policy within our AQMS. It currently includes regular informal learner feedback (twice weekly at karakia) and quarterly Ākonga Advisory Group meetings, including disabled-learner representation, and ongoing review of our policies and digital materials against WCAG 2.2 AA and UDL. From Quarter 2, 2027 this will be strengthened by quarterly SLT dashboards tracking progress against the objectives in the policy, and an annual public report on disability and accessibility.

Section 7. Review and Sign-off

Plan owner: Education Operations and Systems Manager

Date adopted: January 2026

Next review date: January 2027

End of document.