



# Draft Arts Curriculum: Whakaari Aotearoa Drama NZ Summary

This information sheet has been compiled by Whakaari Aotearoa Drama NZ to support people to submit on the draft curriculum for the Arts.

The draft arts curriculum marks a shift to a "knowledge" focus framework  
This is in contrast to what we have now: an achievement outcomes framework.

## **Present Curriculum:**

- Drama is a discipline/subject throughout the curriculum from years 0-13
- Drama is a University Entrance approved subject
- Allows for Dramatic inquiry/Applied Theatre as well as performance drama
- Allows for the creation of learning by combining parts of other subjects/standards - eg Production courses at High School, (using events and entertainment technologies) Drama and English, Drama and Social Sciences, and at Primary working across learning areas. eg Dramatic Inquiry
- Has four 'Achievement Objectives':
  - Understanding drama in context
  - Developing practical knowledge
  - Developing Ideas
  - Communicating and Interpreting

## **The Proposed Draft Curriculum:**

- Drama has been merged with Dance into 'Performing Arts' at 0-8
- Drama is a stand alone subject from year 9 and in the 'academic pathway at 11-13
- Creates time allocations for the Arts:
  - 1 hour per week for the Arts 0-8years : 20mins per week for 'Performing Arts' (Dance, Drama) nil for te Ao Haka
  - 1.5 hours a week at year 9 for the ARTS -
- Performing Arts has two 'strands'
  - Making and Creating
  - Observing and Responding
- ABSENT: Events and Entertainment Technologies (lighting, set costume, properties, sound)  
Sound is a stand alone subject in Music 12 and 13) is not included as a subject in the academic OR the vocational pathway

## Key Considerations:

- The draft places Drama and Dance within a singular "Performing Arts" framework (specifically for Years 0–8). Showing a lack of understanding of the distinct disciplinary practices of Drama and Dance. This narrows the disciplines of Dance and Drama and confirms a hierarchy of the Arts subjects.
- Doesn't acknowledge/allow for Dramatic Inquiry/ Applied Theatre aspects of Drama in Education
- The draft assumes the sole role of drama is to prepare students to be performers. The draft prioritises performance and skills in performance, even at young levels This ignores the established use of Drama in dramatic inquiry and applied theatre (Te Rito Toi, Te Rakau, Mantle of the Expert, Dramatic Inquiry)
- Tokenistic use of Toi Māori as examples rather than embedded in the curriculum - This is inconsistent across learning areas eg Visual Art is stronger in indigenous 'knowledge' than 'Performing Arts'.and levels. Eg. In phase 4 - year7/ 8 there is:“ Respectful integration of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga are essential to creative practice” yet these safe aspects of drama creation in NZ are not mentioned in earlier levels.
- No provision for Te Ao Haka - apart from examples - which becomes a subject at year 11 - where is the coherence and knowledge for Te Ao Haka in the 0-10 Arts Curriculum?
- With 1 hour afforded the Arts a week this affords 'Performing Arts' (Dance and Drama 20mins a week - Vis Art and Music get 20mins each. Te Ao Haka - nil
- At year 9 ARTS subjects are allocated 1.5hours total. (most schools would offer 3 hours a week for an arts subject at year 9 often in rotation of the arts

## Critical Questions

- Does the title: "Performing Arts" reflect Drama in Education in New Zealand?
- Why does the draft prioritise the *product* (performance) over the *process* of drama (inquiry, role-play, and meaning-making)?
- Does the curriculum reflect indigenous Arts knowledge and does it reflect Te Tiriti as promised in the preamble to the curriculum? “ To support equity and excellence, reflecting the Treaty of Waitangi, the New Zealand Curriculum/Te Mātaiaho provides clarity about what all students should know, understand and be able to do as they progress through their schooling”.  
(<https://newzealandcurriculum.tahurangi.education.govt.nz/5637303584.p#M%C4%81tairangi>)
- How does this draft Arts curriculum reflect the capabilities of the new curriculum?:
  - Communication
  - Relating to Others
  - Self- Management and Self Regulation
  - Problem Solving
  - Creativity
- Is the knowledge coherent with Drama terminology and practice, and does it build on prior knowledge through the levels?
- Does the curriculum reflect national and international research and evidence on Drama in Education?