



# Taranaki Outdoor Pursuits and Education Centre

## Disability Action Plan

TOPEC is a community focused regional outdoor education centre- A charitable Trust providing life changing opportunities for children, youth and the community.

Scaffolded learning pathways from primary through to tertiary learning programmes empower children, and youth to embrace being in the outdoors learning skills and provide a pathway to a career in the outdoors.

TOPEC is registered Private Training Establishment (PTE), TOPEC employs qualified teachers alongside highly qualified, passionate instructors (N.Z. Outdoor Instructors Association (N.Z.O.I.A.) or equivalent.

Emphasis is on physical and mental wellbeing, enhanced through learning in an outdoor setting; using challenges and adventure to learn safety, risk and self-management messages that empower and connect people to learning, the land, themselves and others

TOPEC fosters resilience, confidence and mental health wellbeing in young people.

Education is paramount for youth, skills learnt at TOPEC are lifelong, vital for employees: team work, managing self, others and problem solving.

Learning reflects the local environment, there is strong sense of place and belonging

### **TOPEC Vision**

To create positive relationships, community and personal change, through lifechanging experiences - learning, adventure and challenge.

### **TOPEC Mission**

Inspire learning, growth and potential for youth and children

### **Objectives**

### ***Tuia – Weaving, to thread***

Connecting people whenua, sense of belonging , education and future aspirations, creating meaningful learning pathways

We are passionate about inspiring as many young people as possible: to do this we will build on and grow whanaungatanga, our partnerships with the community, hapu, iwi and education sector.

### **Hauora**

The wellbeing and safety of all staff, students and community members is paramount, we embrace manaakitanga and the principles of hauora - physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual well-being.

### **Environmental Sustainability/Creating a Sustainable future**

Commitment to improving the natural environment: acting as kaitiaki, educating future kaitiaki to contribute to a sustainable future for Aotearoa

## **TOPEC Commitment to Disability Inclusion / Diversity**

The New Zealand Disability Strategy states that, “disability is not something individuals have. What individuals have are impairments. They may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, learning or other impairments.”

People with impairments are often disabled by their environment. That is, disability is something that happens when people with impairments face barriers in society.

It is TOPECs mission as educators to provide barrier free education for learners with impairments. Facilities are to be accessible and activities modified for inclusive outdoor education. It is TOPECs mission to enable learning for all ākongā.

## **Consultation Process**

Board discussion – Board member works at IDEA services, so we have direct contact and advice

Staff discussions on their needs with respect to working with learners who require support

Conductive Education – discussing options for disabled participants, running days for Conductive Education-tamariki and staff supported through this

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Six monthly review with staff and stakeholders

## **Achievements to Date**

Halberg Training to upskill staff

Conductive Education consultation rebuilding access and working with people with impairments

Four toilets that are wheelchair accessible Three showers wheelchair accessible

Accommodation for 7 wheelchair accessible

Two out of three classrooms of learning are accessible

All dining areas are accessible

Conductive education workshop on accessibility

Small classes and having more staff available to work with ākongā requiring extra learning support

Initial interviews and surveys established early in learning programmes so students learning needs are met

Enrolment forms adjusted to capture data on support required for learning

Lead of Learning having time to work alongside staff to further enhance knowledge and capacities when working with students with impairments

New lodge design fully accessible



## TOPEC DAP Jan 2026 -2029 v 5

This is a living document which will be revised biyearly – action, and outcomes- Staff beginning and end of year, stakeholders end of year, ākongā each term evaluations and one on ones. Evaluations from 2023-202-5 have been taken into account and a new refreshed plan has been developed

**Please note ākongā with an impairment may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, learning or other impairments**

**The actions from this plan will support TOPEC to improve its learning programmes and facilities to become more accessible and inclusive. It aligns with Priority three of the TES “Access and Participation”**

Area	Action required	Indicators of commitment and improvement	Responsibility	Timeframe	Outcome/Impact of improvement Action Plan YTD
<p><b>System wide approach to support disabled learners</b></p> <p><b>Staff taking responsibility for providing learning support for disabled learners</b></p> <p><b>Building the Infrastructure so staff are disability confident/planning ahead</b></p>	<p>Board and Senior leadership commit to being able to provide the necessary support</p> <p>TOPEC provide training or support to ensure staff have confidence and capabilities to work alongside ākongā with impairments and are aware of non-discriminatory practices Support for ākongā is known in advance to ensure they feel supported</p>	<p>Board acknowledges support through providing the resources required to ensure we can support disabled learners Staff confident to teach ākongā with impairments Increased engagement of ākongā with impairment High completion rate for ākongā with impairments</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Lead of Learning and Director</p> <p>Lead of Learning and Director</p>	<p>Board meeting initial meeting <b>January</b> and budget commitment <b>Dec 2025</b></p> <p>Resourcing of all classes to have a second teacher to work alongside ākongā with special needs <b>done at the beginning of every term, once all class members set</b></p> <p>Initial interviews done <b>prior to course starting</b>, initial surveys done first week for micro credentials, <b>second week</b> for year long programmes</p>	<p>Accessible resources, specifically YTD two new computers for students Securing 1.7million dollars for a new lodge which is all accessible and resourced for every learner, build begins July 2026 YTD, all classes have staff resourcing required</p> <p>YTD tutors fee I well prepared and resourced</p>

Area	Action required	Indicators of commitment and improvement	Responsibility	Timeframe	Outcome/Impact of improvement Action Plan YTD
		Staff having time to prepare for ākongā Staff asking for assistance when required			
	Enrolment forms to have an extra support question to ensure appropriate information is known prior to them start Interview with tutor prior to enrolling to determine any extra support required Schools contacted for information regarding ākongā needs	Students with impairments feel supported and confident to learn at TOPEC Retention rate of ākongā	Director Lead of Education Lead tutor	Continue preprogramme interviews – <b>ongoing</b> Enrolment form has extra support question	Questionnaires have questions, data being captured and relationships with schools and whānau are set up to ensure clear communication and awareness of needs
<b>Providing resources to support DSS staff to assist teaching and other staff to implement inclusive practices</b>	Continuous consultation and connection with DSS staff and other teaching staff	Initial meeting and ongoing meetings to ensure resources are appropriate	Director Lead of Education Lead tutor in charge of learning programme	<b>Two weeks</b> before programme or earlier, initial visit, then during the programme	YTD initial visits scheduled and orientation if required
<b>Building partnerships with disabled learners, allowing them input into, establish representative</b>	Approaching students with impairment asking if they would like to contribute and have a group of representatives	Staff discussing and giving opportunity	Director Lead of Education Lead tutor in charge of learning	<b>Ongoing</b> for 2026	YTD no learner at this stage has taken up the offer, however they have chosen to have regular one on ones with their tutors

groups if students would like to planning and design			programme		
<b>Area</b>	<b>Action required</b>	<b>Indicators of commitment and improvement</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Outcome/Impact of improvement Action Plan YTD</b>
<b>Using the Principles of Universal Design in Education (UDL) consider all ākongā impairments and allow them to achieve their potential</b>	Innovative course content and delivery, adaptations where necessary and practically possible to accommodate ākongā Assessments are accessible and enabling for everyone	Student evaluations High completion rate Students satisfied with support Stakeholder evaluations	Director Lead of Education Lead tutor	<b>Ongoing</b> as on demand	
<b>Establish positive working relationships for advice and consultative purpose to continually improve learner programmes, facilities</b>	Consult with learners- one on one interviews/catch ups Consult with Conductive education and other stakeholders (schools)	Positive working relationships	Director	<b>Ongoing</b>	
<b>Area</b>	<b>Action required</b>	<b>Indicators of commitment and improvement</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Outcome/Impact of improvement Action Plan YTD</b>
<b>Review our policy on student and employment of staff</b>	A reviewed Disability Policy This will be a consultative	Reviewed Policy complete	Director, Lead of Education	Complete by Aug 30 <sup>th</sup> 2026	

<p><b>with disabilities and ensure we have a robust policy in place that mirrors the updates of our DAP</b></p>	<p>approach involving students, staff, stakeholders and specialists</p>				
<p><b>Address barrier s for Maori, Pacific and non-English speaking disabled people.</b></p>	<p>TOPEC has a commitment to ensure we have the technology and or people on hand if we require interpreters and can provide the support required could be in any form and commits to being culturally and linguistically responsive for each individual</p>	<p>Maori, Pacific and non-English speaking disabled people. Are able to participate, learn and access assessment</p>	<p>Director, Lead of Education</p>	<p>Be prepared for enrolments as they come in and have access to required specialists</p>	
<p><b>Review Reporting of progress of DAP and policy reviews to be more formalised to BOT</b></p>	<p>Review outcomes and response midway through short micro credentials/termly through yearlong at the end of each programme Director report to inform BOT twice termly</p>	<p>Staff engaged in review Outcomes analysed and actions implemented</p>	<p>Director</p>	<p>End of each semester</p>	

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