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New Zealand Dyslexia-Friendly Quality Mark

Ako Aotearoa and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) are proud to make available the New Zealand Dyslexia-Friendly Quality Mark (DFQM) – the only mark of its kind in the southern hemisphere.

The Quality Mark recognises organisations that take a strategic approach to creating an inclusive environment for learners, trainees, or clients with dyslexia. It is designed to promote appropriate support measures and practical guidance.

The DFQM is awarded to organisations that measure their practices against a set of DFQM standards in four key areas:

- » leadership and management
- » the quality of teaching and learning
- » the teaching and learning environment provided for learners
- » the quality of the organisation's relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

The Quality Mark is awarded for three years and can be renewed after this period.

The DFQM benefits the sector and learners

Learners, trainees, or clients with dyslexia will be assured that an organisation with the DFQM is a safe place for them, where their needs are understood and met. Here is some feedback from learners who benefit from the DFQM in organisations:

- » It has created a warm, non-judgmental, and friendly environment
- » Learning is consolidating, and my confidence is growing
- » I feel safe to be myself
- » I increased my knowledge of dyslexia which helped my learning
- » Knowing I have dyslexia is a weight off my shoulders



“The Tertiary Education Commission has supported Ako Aotearoa in the development of an exciting new initiative which is part of our wider programme of work around neurodiversity. We encourage all tertiary education organisations to use this opportunity to be accredited as a dyslexia-friendly organisation. Adopting the Mark will promote best practice within organisations and not only build educator capability, but most of all, it will ensure that learners with dyslexia are fully supported in their learning journey and have every opportunity to thrive.” (September, 2021)

Paora Ammunson, Past Deputy Chief Executive
Learner Success Ōritetanga Directorate, Tertiary Education Commission

The DFQM recognises organisations

The DFQM provides an opportunity for an organisation to be recognised for taking the steps to establishing themselves as a dyslexia-friendly organisation.

Several organisations have achieved the DFQM since its inception in 2021. Visit www.ako.ac.nz/organisations-that-have-achieved-the-dfqm to find the full list of organisations.

Here is what some of these organisations had to say about the DFQM process:

“We had been working with ākongā (learners) with diagnosed and potentially undiagnosed dyslexia for a number of years, and working through the DFQM process helped us to formalise stronger pathways for these ākongā.”

Vicie Hodge – People Capability Partner at Otago Polytechnic

“We were so well supported and guided by the DFQM team throughout the entire process, from the application stage to pulling together our portfolio of evidence and creating our action plan.”

Leona van der Heyden – General Manager at Y Education (PTE)

“A key impact of undertaking the DQFM process has been the significant jump in our understanding and responsiveness towards dyslexia – we’re now an organisation that has dyslexia front and centre of our attention to ākongā experience and success.”

Dr Lynne Brice – Manager of Open Polytechnic Learning Delivery

More information and how to apply

Our facilitators will support you in your self-assessment against the standards, the implementation of your action plan, and the preparation of your portfolio of evidence. The process is driven by your own timetable.

Please visit www.dfqm.nz to register your organisation’s interest in the DFQM, or contact Graeme Read at graeme.read@ako.ac.nz for more information.



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