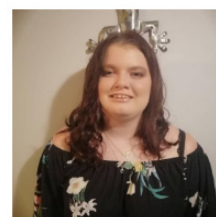


Unitec & MIT Disability Strategy 2022 - 2024

“Nothing about us without us.”

National Disabled Students Association forum in Wellington.



Avalon Yansen
Bachelor of Social Practice



Kenzie Mccrady
Bachelor of Social Practice

Congratulations to Kenzie McCrady and Avalon Yansen who will represent Unitec Disabled Learners at the National Disabled Students Association Hui in Wellington in November. They will have the opportunity to meet up with tertiary Ākonga from all over Aotearoa. They will return to Unitec brimming with ideas and ready to start the mahi to develop a Unitec Disabled Students Association.



Digital Accessibility Leaders



The Digital Accessibility Leader Project commenced in Semester 2. The project used a Tuakana-Teina model. Six Ākonga (learners) from diverse backgrounds were trained by Hamish Cosford, Assistive Technology Advisor and Ash Basnyat, Access Advisor to showcase Digital Tools and Assistive Technology to their peers. They hosted booths at Waitakere and Mt Albert campuses.

Expert group ensures learner voices are heard.



Creating a strong partnership and providing a platform for disabled learners to speak up is Objective One of the Unitec Disability Action Plan.



This semester disabled learners attended three Hui. The participants agreed that Unitec should have a Disabled Students Association. Alice Mander, Co-President of the National DSA, facilitated the meetings.



Unitec takes up the dyslexia-friendly quality mark challenge

Dyslexia is one of the most prevalent learning differences in tertiary education. In 2021, Ako Aotearoa and the Tertiary Education commission launched the Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark and Unitec has signed up! This is an opportunity for Unitec to make a meaningful difference in the lives of neurodiverse learners and others, to demonstrate how we currently support neurodiverse learners and to create new and inclusive processes.

Building Disability confidence in kaimahi

Building disability confidence and competence of all Kaimahi has consistently been identified as a key need, in surveys and focus groups. In 2021, one of the top themes from the Unitec/MIT Disability & Inclusion survey, was the desire for further disability education and training.

In response, the Unitec Disability Action Plan states upskilling Kaimahi in disability confidence as a key objective.

TEC has developed a short tutorial which Unitec has reviewed. This will be available from 2023 as part of performance partnering, watch this space!

TEC provides links to practical information on ADHD and ASD

Sue Tullett and the Bridgepoint team have recently shared some practical information on ADHD. TEC has developed a Neurodiversity resource page with helpful links to organisations such as ADHD NZ and Altogether Autism NZ. Sue highly recommends that you check it out.

[TEC Neurodiversity Resources](#)

Ākonga Profile - Vincent Harris

My name is Vincent Harris. I am 43 years old and Maori. I come from Waiuku, my Marae is Reretewhioi. I am studying a Bachelor of Construction, majoring in Construction Management and Property development.

The main reason I chose to study at Unitec was because the reputation for the level of training and the industry leaders teaching at Unitec caught my attention.

Making new connections with other students and achieving the Diploma in Construction gave me some self-confidence. Being part of the student expert panel for the Disability Strategy Project was a nice way to give back to Unitec.

I faced some challenges along the way. It was difficult physically to do desk top research and sitting for long periods of time. Access4Success provided me with a stand-up desk for exams. It made a big difference knowing I had support early on from them. Learning new technology and academic skills was an experience I will never forget, and I used the support from Maia, Learning Advisors and Subject Librarians.



Outside of my studies, family and friends are important and spending time outdoors with my family is right up there. I enjoy playing music on my old guitar, and I relax through meditation and daily exercise. My dream job in the future is to build accessible housing for both disabled and aging communities whether it be in urban centres or close to whanau and Marae.

Kaimahi Profile - Ruth Laing

Ruth Laing has worked tirelessly supporting students with complex needs. Ruth employs a respectful, enquiry based approach working together with the students to find the best way to support their individual challenges and support needs.

Ruth has seen over 100 students each semester and often works solidly throughout the day advising students and liaising closely with the Access4Success team to ensure that a seamless, joined up approach is provided for the students who may have multiple specific learning needs.

Ruth has been a powerful advocate for the rights and needs of our disabled learners and the impact of her practice is immeasurable. Last year she gave a joint presentation with a student with dyslexia at Te Puna Aurei (LearnFest).



Whaikaha mahia te mahi

[Disability in Action - Share your stories of access and inclusion](#)

Learning Advisors

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