

The Waikato MBA

Where Cultural Values and Business Practices Intersect



The Waikato Management School has redeveloped the Waikato MBA to meet the needs of Maaori – the indigenous people of New Zealand. Together with the Waikato-Tainui College for Research and Development we have achieved an

MBA programme unique in its curriculum, teaching and learning, and the involvement of alumni. Innovations in these areas are essential to contextualise the MBA for future Maaori leaders. This programme prepares future Maaori leaders to lead in an environment of complexity while preserving their unique culture and values.

The MBA programme began in April 2011 with a vision to bring Maaori people, New Zealand, and the world together in order to support and advance Maaori and indigenous aspirations at local, national and international levels.

This programme has several key objectives:

- To develop inspirational Maaori leaders for the private and public sectors who are able to lead value creation and sustainable practices within their organisations;
- To foster indigenous ways of doing business that focus on collective benefit rather than individual benefit;
- To facilitate a waananga (living and learning) environment that fosters cultural values;
- To facilitate participants working collaboratively with each other and with Maaori businesses; and
- To meet the academic and professional requirements of the Waikato MBA.

Achieving this vision has required innovations in the areas of curriculum, teaching and learning, and alumni engagement.

The driver for the development of this programme has been the aspiration for a greater number of Maaori leaders well prepared to grapple with the challenges of global business. These future Maaori leaders (participants) come from various iwi (tribal) organisations engaged in major commercial programmes both domestically and internationally as well as Maaori operated educational, health, social service facilities and small to medium sized businesses. Key leadership skills are being developed building on participants' existing commercial, cultural and professional capabilities. The key challenge is to develop leadership skills by engaging with a curriculum that is culturally responsive, transformational and challenging.



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Prominent Maaori guest speakers have been invited to present alongside the teaching faculty to provide the Maaori indigenous context. Our teaching faculty incorporates Maaori and indigenous based case studies relevant to the skill sets of the participants. There are several unique features in the delivery of this curriculum - the unique live-in environment, the use of technology and our interaction with alumni participants who have completed the MBA.

A feature of this MBA is the International MBA Study Tour. The international MBA study tour sees participants travel to North America to nurture Waikato-Tainui tribal links with other indigenous nations (e.g., Native American tribes) to nurture closer ties with their indigenous business and economic communities. The international MBA study tour achieves international connectedness and highlights the importance of cultural identity in the global business environment.

We are delighted that the Waikato-Tainui MBA programme has been well received by Maaori and business communities as a vibrant and robust programme. This innovative programme combines academic rigour together with a unique indigenous learning environment, and is well suited to support cultural and development aspirations and will impact a new generation of Maaori business leaders.

