



New Zealand Health Education Association

Newsletter

February, 2026

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Tēnā koutou katoa

Welcome back.

Reflecting on past term one newsletters from this decade there seems to be a concerning trend to the way we start each year – either returning to school in the midst or immediate aftermath of destructive and traumatic weather-related events and/or ongoing concerns about changes to/impacts on the education sector. This year is an ‘and’ year. Our thoughts are with those communities still feeling and dealing with the effects of the January rain-related tragedies in various parts of the North Island.

We’re looking ahead to another ‘interesting’ and challenging year in education – perhaps with caution and hesitancy more than enthusiasm given the amount of change still to happen.

For those of you in secondary schools we trust that many of your students have been successful in NCEA and that some have received well deserved reward for their HPE Scholarship submission.

This newsletter is dominated by news and updates, some of which are expanded in more detail in the body of the newsletter.

All the best for the year that lies ahead and please keep supporting each other – which we know you will!

Ngā mihi

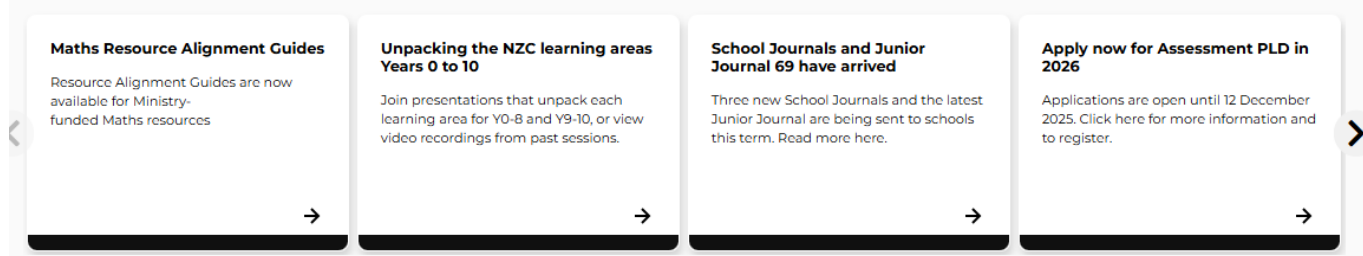
Leigh Morgan (chair), Jenny Robertson, Shelley Hunt, Annie Macfarlane & Vicki Nicolson (executive)

News and updates

Curriculum matters

- All communications to date suggest this is the final year of year 0-10 Health and Physical Education based on the New Zealand Curriculum (2007). From 2027 onwards, all schools should be using the finalised curriculum due later in 2026.
- Teachers of year 9 students *in particular* are encouraged to trial (some aspects of) the new curriculum this year as this cohort will be the first to encounter the new assessment system beginning in 2028. We are waiting on a Ministry of Education developed example of a sample year plan – these are being provided for all learning areas. We understand this is just an example and it is not what teachers are expected to follow. See item about NZHEA curriculum resources in this newsletter.
- More and more is being added to the new curriculum website so it is worth keeping an eye on the “Latest news” section – that’s the ‘tiles’ that run across the centre of the screen of the [NZC](#) and [TMoA](#) landing pages shown below. See for example the recordings of the learning area webinars from late 2025. Note that while a lot of this material is primary school focused, an increasing amount of secondary material will become available as Phase 5 is developed.

Latest News



Giving feedback on the draft curriculum

- **Feedback is due in by Friday, 24 April 2026.** We would encourage all departments to give feedback on the draft curriculum. The consultation feedback form is quite comprehensive, and it is advised that you prepare your feedback prior to entering it into the form. You might like to think about submitting your Health Education and Physical Education specific feedback separately given the different issues emerging. You can give feedback about the Purpose Statement, Learning Area Structure, Introduction, and then each of Phases 1-4 (separately) - you only need to complete the phases you wish to comment on. Find all information for HPE [here](#).

Phase 5 – years 11-13

- The senior secondary Phase 5 (years 11-13) [senior subjects list](#) was notified in September 2025, and the [subject descriptors](#) were released in early December for all New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa subjects – over 80 in total. *Some brief commentary is provided later in this newsletter.*
- Expressions of Interest were sought from the sector in December for people with subject expertise to contribute to this development. This work got underway in January. As yet it is too early to provide any information, and it is expected that there will be material for teachers to review in term two.
- Please note that VET (industry led) subjects are in addition to these curriculum subjects and that ‘Health and Wellbeing Services’ will be developed by a relevant industry provider (and likely require sector accreditation to teach and assess). This is separate to NZC and TMoA Health Education and Waiora courses taught by teachers who are only trained and certificated to teach the national school curriculum.

NCEA matters

- Things remain business as usual with NCEA and Scholarship for now, noting that only the smallest of changes were made to NCEA materials or assessments. Assessment specifications for NCEA and [Scholarship](#) remain unchanged. See *item later in this newsletter*

- RAMP (Review and Maintenance Programme) changes to standards and assessments were notified last year and are [officially online](#) (replacing older versions). The changes for Health Education are minimal but [see the item in this newsletter as a reminder](#).
- Moderators reports are available for 2026. [Level 1 Health Studies](#) contains comprehensive commentary on each of 92008 (1.1 - hauora) and 92009 (1.2 decision making). The [Level 2&3 Health](#) report provides feedback on 91236 (2.2 – managing change) and 91464 (3.4 – ethical issues).
- External examination assessment reports are expected later in term one and our communications will alert you to those.
- There have been some personnel changes at NZQA, and it would appear there will also be some different ways of working. These changes may not be visible to teachers in schools, but it is expected that the role of subject associations will feature in a minor way among these shifts in practice – particularly around communicating subject specific information.
- Thank you to those few of you who responded to the NZQA-requested survey about the external examinations. We will forward that summary to NZQA.

Conference

- 2026 is a [Tuia ki Tawhiti](#) combined HPE conference year. It is being held at Mount Albert Grammar School in Auckland Monday 6th - Tuesday 7th July (first week of the school holidays). The call for abstracts is now open as is registration. We are looking at securing some inexpensive accommodation in the MAGS school hostel. Please be aware that if you select this accommodation option will need to observe similar regulations to the students who use these facilities during term time e.g. no alcohol or other substance use and gender segregated facilities (bathroom related) – see the website for further information. [See also the item later in this newsletter](#).

Networks of Expertise (NEX) PLD in 2026

- Subject associations – including NZHEA - have been (re)contracted by the Ministry of Education to deliver Networks of Expertise PLD for the next three years. The funding is a little less than we've had before and the PLD provision is specifically targeted for the new curriculum and assessment system, once it is developed.
- This means making a distinction between the PLD and resourcing your NZHEA membership pays for, and what we provide under NEX. The bottom line is that we can still be providing PLD as much as we have, although we will need to limit how many cluster visits we can do around the regions and the focus for these will need to prioritise the new curriculum. [See item later in this newsletter](#).

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa

- The year 0-10 [TMOA](#) documents were published on January 28th. Find **Te Waioira** wāhanga ako material [here](#). As previously notified, the name of this HPE equivalent wāhanga ako changed its name from Hauora to Wairoa. For those of you with some te reo Māori proficiency, check out the different approach to this knowledge – *note that the year 0-10 document is 74 pages long if you are thinking of printing it!*

NZHEA Resources

- Through our cluster workshops in term four last year we alerted you to a new (another!) Google folder of materials to support some initial sense making around the new year 0-10 curriculum. We'll temporarily keep this material in a Google folder until the curriculum is finalised and the material is (re)developed, in consideration of ongoing changes. [See item later in this newsletter](#).
- We will revise the Level 1-3 teacher handbooks in February, and these will be available under the [2026 resources on the NZHEA website](#) – although the changes will be very minimal. The HPE Scholarship resource will be updated after the assessment report is published as the changes made to the specification in 2025 may highlight some further ideas needing to be included in the 2026 document.

NZHEA membership

- In late January our ever-efficient administrator sent invoices to current member schools for membership renewal. If you have changed schools, can you please check your new school's NZHEA

membership status and to make sure your HOD/HOF passes on the newsletter (although they are open access through the website). This is particularly important if you are a new middle leader in charge of Health Education as the email was likely sent to the previous HOD/HOF.

- As noted above, our NEX funding only covers new curriculum PLD. While we're in transition between the old and new curriculum your NZHEA membership funds will in part be used to support you through the final years of the NZC 2007 and NCEA. This means your membership is now *really important*. To help manage our NZHEA time and resources, requests made to the Kaikōtuitui Arataki Oranga requiring more than a few minutes (e.g. support and guidance around moderation, NCEA learning programmes and assessment) will only be provided for paid members.
- Membership continues to give you access to the NZHEA developed practice exams – please note this is something NZHEA produce as an association and NOT part of our NEX PLD provision.
- If you are not an NZHEA member and want to be please use [this link](#). At present the annual membership fee is \$115 for a school (or another organisation) or individual

NZHEA and Networks of Expertise PLD provision 2026

As we noted in the news and updates at the beginning of this newsletter, we are now running on somewhat reduced funding and what we receive from the Ministry of Education to deliver Networks of Expertise is specifically targeted for new curriculum support. It means that support for NCEA (and the NZC (2007) in conjunction with this) needs to be covered by membership fees which, for now, remain modest. We will review this again later this year.

This is our PLD support plan for 2026, bearing in mind this is a transition year from the old to the new curriculum for years 0-10 and the Phase 5 material will not be available until mid to late term two. It is also a combined association conference year (Tuia ki Tawhiti).

Forms of PLD support	NZHEA funded (ie from school membership)	NEX PLD – new curriculum and assessment
In person PLD events – clusters, workshops etc	<p>No current funds for this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can add NCEA items (for example) to NEX PLD events where required Some local school visits can be accommodated where no additional travel costs are incurred or in exceptional circumstances. <i>Please contact us if your school situation is particularly problematic around the delivery of your Health Education teaching and assessment programme.</i> Schools can contract our services on a (travel-only) cost recovery basis if they still need substantial in-school support for NCEA. In person primary and intermediate PLD events are currently problematic with no clear indication yet about MoE priorities for this part of the sector and we have very few primary or intermediate school members 	<p>In person cluster workshop events with dates arranged in negotiation with each region – 2 per region or 3 if we can manage travel economically.</p> <p>In-person events must include PLD for the new curriculum Phase 4 (and Phase 5 when ready) and be multiple school events (ie regional clusters/workshops).</p> <p>We are currently awaiting the release of some new materials so it is likely that cluster workshops will feature more across terms 2-4. However, if a region wants to look at Year 9&10 planning earlier than that please contact Leigh about this as we still plan to hold some regional clusters in term one.</p> <p>If you/your school are not part of a regional cluster, please contact us.</p>
Online (email, Zoom etc)	<p>Support for NCEA – still needed until 2029, as well as primary and intermediate school support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick responses to anyone (less than 5 min) Teachers requesting support that requires an extended period of time MUST be NZHEA members (e.g. moderation and related NCEA matters) 	<p>Phase 4&5 queries and requests for individual school support need to be online – in person visits to individual schools can only be accommodated in exceptional circumstances given our reduced funds. See above.</p>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice exams are members only. Any/all existing NZHEA resources that are open access will remain so. 	Any resources developed as a part of 2026 NEX contract must be available to ALL teachers.
Conference 6-7 July	Participant paid for event	

For all NEX queries about NZHEA PLD support email us at kaiarahi@healtheducation.org.nz

Events: Tuia ki Tawhiti 2026 – call for abstracts



[Tuia ki Tawhiti website](#) for 2026 is now live and registrations are open.

The priority for us this term is the **call for abstracts**. It would be great to have a range of Health Education teachers present on an aspect of their practice.

Primary, Intermediate, Secondary and Tertiary Educators! We invite you to consider presenting at Tuia ki Tawhiti 2026

Tuia Ki Tawhiti brings educators together to share practice, explore ideas, and strengthen our collective capability across Health Education, Physical Education, and Outdoor Education. We invite abstracts that highlight effective teaching and learning, thoughtful programme design, research, professional inquiry, and reflective practice that support meaningful learning across diverse contexts.

Remarkable things are happening every day in our schools, tertiary institutions, and learning spaces, so let's share these. This conference provides space for professional dialogue, where educators learn from one another, share what is working, critically examine challenges, and contribute to the ongoing shaping of our learning area.

The Tuia ki Tawhiti audience will be a range of Primary, Intermediate, and Secondary educators across Health Education, Physical Education, and Outdoor Education, alongside researchers, tertiary educators, those involved in initial teacher education, and organisations providing educational services and resources within these fields.

Potential topics could include, but are not limited to:

- Redeveloping year 0-10 programmes
- Inclusive pedagogical approaches
- Integrating mātauranga Māori and local knowledge in genuine ways
- Subject-specific knowledge, approaches, and resources
- Place based approaches to learning
- Connecting the curriculum
- Innovations in teaching, learning and assessment
- Recent research
- AI and technology

Presentation length: You can select either 45 minutes or 90 minutes. Presenters are required to register for the conference.

- We are particularly keen to hear from Health Education teachers who have started planning for the new curriculum: how you went about this, how your school supported this development, what your planning looks like so far, and perhaps the challenges you overcame or are still navigating – it doesn't have to be a final finished product! If you don't want to fill a whole slot by yourself, reach out to us and we'll see if there's another teacher who can share a time slot with you.

- Alternatively, if there is an aspect of knowledge you consider yourself to be particularly expert in (perhaps you've done a university paper or taken the time to do a range of professional reading) offer a workshop/discussion around that topic to teach other teachers some new knowledge as well as consider how you would develop the knowledge with students.
- Another approach for those of you who are happy to 'facilitate' a discussion (without necessarily knowing everything about a topic) is to curate some resource material about a concept or topic, bring it along and engage your group in a discussion to deepen knowledge and discuss how it could be used with a class. Think particularly about some of the more newly emerged or emerging issues about how you would approach this is a learning programme. You may even have time for some initial resource development that the groups can share.
- If you're confident enough, and are prepared to do it, think about hosting an impromptu debate-like activity about some 'hot' Health Education topics you'd like to thrash out with colleagues – perhaps using a modified debating process like those used in health education classrooms.
- With NCEA Achievement Standards still needing to carry on for another 3-4 years, we know some of you have developed/are developing some new topics for your learning programmes that then feature in students' assessments. If you would like to share your new unit, what you needed to think about when redesigning the learning, resources that were useful, activities that were particularly useful for developing students understanding, your successes with the learning and assessment (etc), consider a presentation that provides an overview of your process with a sample of an activity.

For any Health Education specific enquiries about the conference contact Leigh Morgan at kaiarahi@healtheducation.org.nz.

NCEA Updates

Although these have been previously notified, this is just a reminder and to say that all revised and finalised documents are now online. [See the communication from 21 January 2026.](#)

RAMP – Review and Maintenance Programme changes – repeated from November newsletter as a reminder

Level 1 Health Studies

What's changed?

Conditions of Assessment across all internal standards: Updated to provide clearer guidance around authenticity. *Please note this latest statement as it includes commentary around the use of AI.*

AS1.1 (92008) Internal Assessment Activities: Student activities and teacher guidance updated to make 'key areas of learning' more visible.

[NZHEA COMMENT: Note that this fails to address the broader concerns and issues of this standard. The changes to the activities for 1a, and especially 1b, still haven't clarified the KAL connections – although the KAL to focus on is mentioned in the 'getting started' and 'teacher guidance' sections, there is no guidance for the students in the activity around what this comes to mean as they present their evidence, or for the teacher to indicate how students will need to view the cultural activity as a form of mental health promotion. 1b will still fail moderation unless a clear mental health focus is used to understand the cultural activity and, therefore, how it affects hauora. 1c goal setting has been changed from the skill of goal setting to a personal or interpersonal skill.]

AS1.4 (92011) Unpacking: Clarification of wording for higher levels of achievement.

"At higher levels of achievement, ākonga will discuss how the strategies they have suggested work together to enhance hauora. They will draw conclusions about the anticipated effectiveness of these strategies to enhance hauora. This could include examining the broader contexts that influence the strategies and their outcomes, to show whether the strategies worked together or conflicted with each other in their impact on enhancing hauora. Ākonga will draw on examples from the given scenario throughout their discussion, and any conclusions will draw from relevant information from the scenario."

Level 3 (no changes are indicated for L2)

AS 3.2 (91462)

Explanatory Note 2: Updated to create more consistency between 3.1 and 3.2, using 'factors' instead of 'determinants of health'.

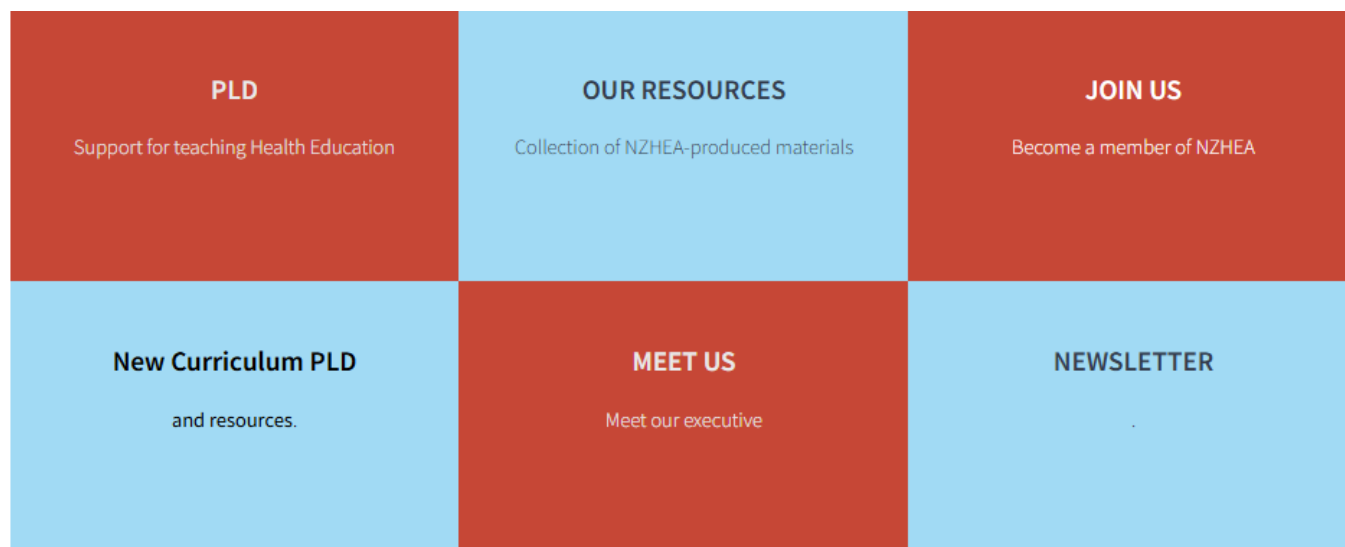
[NZHEA COMMENT: This doesn't fundamentally change anything for learning purposes as the DoH are all 'factors' but this removes that all-important conceptual lens and research and evidence base brought to an international issue. We have no idea why this change has been made and the rationale for 'consistency' with 3.1 doesn't actually stack up. You will still need to teach about the DoH as these ARE the factors that cause international large scale population health issues.]

The 2026 assessment specifications for Levels 1-3 and Scholarship

These can be accessed [via this link](#) (scroll down the page to find **Level 2&3 Health and Scholarship** links). No changes of any consequence were noted for the current year. **Level 1 Health Studies** is at a [different link](#).

NZHEA new curriculum resources

From the landing page of our (very basic but functional) [website](#) there is now a link to **New Curriculum PLD**.



Clicking on this link brings up another page of links. Down the bottom is a link to a temporary Google folder. The aim is to put finalised versions of resources on the website once the curriculum – and therefore our resources – are finalised.

Folder A. This contains a PPT presentation that provides a big picture overview of the Year 0-10 curriculum – the PPT has a slides-only or voiceover recorded option and there is a pdf of the presentation containing the text and extended notes.

Folder B. This is the PLD activities folder. Word docs containing the text for each year level is organised in different ways to aid planning e.g. a table of all Knowledge and Practice statements that can be cut up and reorganised.

Folder E. *This is still in development and awaiting an MoE example with the view that our resourcing can use a similar format and approach – or not.*



A. Overview of the Health Education aspects of HPE Oct 2025



B. Unpacking Health Education across years 1-10



C. Unpacking knowledge strand topics







D. Discussion topics - bigger picture issues







E. Sample learning programmes for years 1-10 (in development 2026)



Folder C. This contains some initial discussion about the **Knowledge** of the curriculum as it appears in the elements and especially the **sub-elements**. We have temporarily added our NZHEA topic specific resources here as well, noting we will be revising these once the curriculum is finalised. This list is not yet complete with some areas of the curriculum still to consider. A key purpose of this material was to link primary school teachers with some resources as well as highlight how some topics go across contexts – like identity, consent, relationships, and being safe online.



-  0. ABOUT THE FILES IN THIS FOLDER.pdf 



-  1. SEXUALITY EDUCATION learning in HEALTH EDUCATION.pdf 



-  1a. Sex Education_Sexuality Education_Relationships and sexuality education.pdf 



-  2. IDENTITY as a context for learning in Health Education.pdf 



-  3. CONSENT in nonsexual and sexual relationships learning in Health Education.pdf 



-  3a. Learning about CONSENT in Health Education 2022 - for revision in 2026.pdf 



-  4. STAYING SAFE ONLINE Learning in Health Education.pdf 



-  5. SUBSTANCE USE including AoD learning in Health Education.pdf 

-  5a. NZHEA_Alcohol and Other Drugs_NZC Levels 4_8_2021 TO BE REVISED.pdf 

-  6. FRIENDSHIPS and nonsexual RELATIONSHIPS learning in Health Education.pdf 



-  7. MENTAL HEALTH learning in Health Education.pdf 



-  7a. NZHEA Mental Health Resilience_2nd_ed_2021-TO BE REVISED.pdf 



-  8. NUTRITION as a learning context within Health Education.pdf 



Folder D. These pdfs give focus to some bigger picture considerations. For the moment these are only pdfs but as legislation changes and curriculum documentation is finalised, we will look at turning some of them into presentations.



Some of you may be interested in the one on hauora – it (tries to) track the use of the term hauora leading up to its inclusion in the 1999 curriculum, although the story stops there for now. It will be interesting to see how Phase 5 Wairoa in Te Marautanga o Aotearoa is developed.

-  i. Disciplining Health Education (A3).pdf 

-  ii. Section 91 Informing the community about Health Education changes in 2026.pdf 

-  ii(a) NZHEA Health Education Community Consultation_advice and guidance _2024.pdf 

-  iii. Tracking the development of hauora and TWTW.pdf 

-  iv. HEd vs HP and the opportunities for a whole school approach.pdf 

Phase 5 (year 11-13) developments – 2026

The senior secondary Phase 5 (years 11-13) [senior subjects list](#) was notified in September 2025, and the [subject descriptors](#) were released in early December for all New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa subjects – over 80 in total.

Our Health Education descriptor contains much that is familiar.

Health Education (Y11, 12 & 13)

Description: Students are taught about the complex factors that influence personal and community health and wellbeing. Students are taught how to examine health-related issues, such as nutrition, mental health, global health challenges, online safety, and relationships, considering how these intersect across diverse communities and contexts. They are taught how to apply critical and ethical decision-making to explore health practices, policies, and systems, developing capabilities to respond to health needs at personal, community, and societal levels. Health Education leads to pathways in health and related areas such as, science, health promotion, education, sport or community development, and health.

It was also interesting to read the Waiora subject descriptor from Te Waiora wāhanga ako (learning area) in Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and to note the inclusion of hauora and mention of te whare tapa whā here.

Waiora (Tau 11, 12 & 13)

Description: Mokopuna are taught about wellbeing grounded in Māori knowledge and enriched by global perspectives. Through the teaching of whakapapa, tikanga, and collective responsibility to nurture belonging and interconnectedness. Mokopuna are taught how to examine hauora as a holistic concept through Te Whare Tapa Wha (taha tinana, wairua, whānau, and hinengaro) and other models of hauora shaped by identity, relationships, and movement. Waiora leads to pathways in health, medicine, education, social services, hauora promotion and community including hapū and iwi wellbeing.

As this development is only just beginning, we haven't anything to share beyond what is online.

Our recommendation at this time is to have a browse across a range of subject descriptors and consider the ways knowledge will continue to connect across senior levels – but with each subject contributing its unique disciplinary knowledge. See **social science** subjects like civics, politics and philosophy, sociology, psychology, geography, economics, Te Mātai I o Ao Māori, and Pacific studies, as well as science - biology, and technology - food and processing technology.

Food and Processing Technology

Description: Students are taught the scientific, nutritional and technical knowledge and skills to develop food products. Students are taught about the performance properties of ingredients, scientific principles, and ethical considerations to make informed decisions about nutritional and meal planning, kitchen equipment, processes, and sustainable practices. They are taught how to apply processing methods and techniques such as cooking methods, hygiene and safety, food science, preservation, and quality control, using creative problem-solving and technological thinking to produce fit-for-purpose outcomes. Food and Processing Technology leads to pathways in food science, biotechnology, and health.

Professional reading

Dr Rachael Dixon (University of Canterbury), who spent many years on the NZHEA executive, is able to keep her eye out for new and useful academic articles for us.

She shared this link to an **open access journal** about the importance of critical thinking. Ignore the fact it's got a biological science focus as a lot of the focus on critical thinking applies across multiple subjects (noting also that a lot of Health Education knowledge has its roots in health science, so the relevance is still there). You can download the pdf for ease of reading (or printing).

As you read, note the high level of relevance these ideas have for Health Education, identify which ideas you already use, and think about what could do in future.

<https://enviromicro-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1751-7915.70270>



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Scientists' Warning to Humanity: The Need to Begin Teaching Critical and Systems Thinking Early in Life

[Kenneth Timmis](#) , [Fernando Baquero](#), [Rup Lal](#), [Lara Raquel Pinto Amorim](#), [Pablo Ivan Nikel](#), [Jasvinder Kaur](#), [Utkarsh Sood](#), [Pushp Lata](#), [Shalini Singh](#), [Jake M. Robinson](#) ... [See all authors](#) 

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