

3.4 Recognise the lived experiences and support considerations of people with learning disabilities

Kaupae Level	3
Whiwhinga Credit	5
Whāinga Purpose	<p>This skill standard is for learners working in a support setting. Learners will be able to describe learning disabilities and how they may have an impact on a person's life, recognise a range of key support considerations, and identify ways to promote access, social inclusion, and wellbeing for a person with specific learning disability.</p> <p>This skill standard aligns with the outcomes of the New Zealand Certificate in Disability Support (Level 3).</p>

Hua o te ako me Paearu aromatawai | Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Hua o te ako Learning outcomes	Paearu aromatawai Assessment criteria
1. Describe learning disabilities and how they may have an impact on a person's life.	a. Define learning disability using inclusive, strengths-based, and current terminology.
	b. Identify how learning disability can present for a person.
	c. Examine how learning disabilities can present for a person.
	d. Identify conditions that can co-occur with learning disability.
2. Recognise a range of key support considerations for a person with learning disabilities.	a. Identify person-centred approaches that support a person's holistic needs.
	b. Describe support strategies that enhance access, independence, and wellbeing.
	c. Examine how mana-enhancing and culturally responsive approaches can support a person's identity, preferences, and self-determination.
3. Identify ways to promote access, social inclusion, and wellbeing for a person with specific learning disability.	a. Acknowledge societal and environmental barriers that can affect access, inclusion, and wellbeing.
	b. Identify services, supports, and networks that promote access, inclusion, and wellbeing.

	c. Examine how relationships, networks, and community connectedness support access, inclusion, and wellbeing.
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Pārongo aromatawai me te taumata paearu | Assessment information and grade criteria

Assessment specifications:

For assessment purposes evidence provided for the assessment of this skill standard must be gathered:

- in a disability support setting.
- in accordance with workplace or organisational policies and procedures.

Definitions:

- *Disability support setting* – any environment where a disabled person receives support to meet their needs and goals. This may include, but is not limited to, residential support, home-based support, day services or centre-based support, community-based services, or through individualised funding models that enable the person to direct their own support.
- *Mana* - a Māori concept that refers to a person's inherent dignity, authority, and spiritual power. Mana comes from whakapapa (genealogy), personal integrity, and how a person is treated by others. In disability support, upholding a person's mana means recognising their value, supporting their autonomy, and promoting respect in all interactions.
- *Organisational policies and procedures* – are the policies, procedures, and methodologies of an organisation. They include legislative and regulatory requirements which may apply across an organisation, a specific site, or a workplace. Requirements are documented in organisational health and safety plans, contract work programmes, quality assurance programmes, policies and procedural documents.
- *Person* – a person accessing disability support services. Depending on the context, other terms that may be used include disabled person, tāngata whaikaha, tāngata whai ora, client, consumer, resident, patient, tūrora, or individual. Wherever possible, terminology should reflect the person's identity, preferences, and the principles of the social model of disability.
- *Learning disabilities* – refers to a neurological difference that can affect how a person processes, understands, or expresses information. It may influence skills such as reading, writing, spelling, mathematics, organisation, or coordination. Learning disabilities is distinct from intellectual disability, but may co-occur, along with other neurodivergent experiences such as ADHD, autism, or anxiety. Common types of learning disabilities include dyslexia (reading and language), dyscalculia (mathematics), dysgraphia (written expression), and dyspraxia (motor coordination and planning).
- *Support* – should aim to maximise a person's independence by utilising existing strengths and appropriate resources; but may include providing assistance to enable a person's health and wellbeing needs to be met.

Ngā momo whiwhinga | Grades available

Achieved.

Ihirangi waitohu | Indicative content

Understanding specific learning disabilities (LEARNING DISABILITIES)

- Definitions of learning disabilities using inclusive, strengths-based, and current terminology.
- Common types of learning disabilities:

- **Dyslexia** – difficulties with reading, spelling, and language processing.
- **Dyscalculia** – challenges with understanding numbers and mathematical concepts.
- **Dysgraphia** – difficulties with handwriting, spelling, and written expression.
- **Dyspraxia** (Developmental Coordination Disorder) – challenges with motor coordination and planning.
- Characteristics and diversity of experience:
 - Variability in how learning disabilities presents across individuals.
 - Strengths-based perspectives and recognising individual capabilities.
 - Differences between learning disabilities, intellectual disability, and neurodivergence.
- Co-occurring conditions and experiences:
 - ADHD, autism, anxiety, sensory processing differences, and mental health conditions.
- The impact of learning disabilities on:
 - Learning and academic achievement.
 - Communication and expression.
 - Organisation, time management, and executive functioning.
 - Confidence, self-esteem, and social participation.
 - Access to education, employment, and community life.

Person-centred support considerations

- Principles of rights-based and person-directed support.
- Recognising holistic needs: cognitive, emotional, cultural, social, and spiritual.
- Supporting identity, communication preferences, and autonomy.
- Enabling Good Lives principles.
- Common adaptations and supports, such as:
 - Assistive technology (e.g., text-to-speech, speech-to-text, audiobooks).
 - Visual aids, plain language, and structured routines.
 - Supported decision-making and active listening strategies.
 - Universal design for learning (UDL) and inclusive teaching practices.
- Strategies that uphold dignity, independence, and self-determination.
- Risk and safety – supporting informed choice and dignity of risk while enabling participation.
- Understanding and respecting tāngata whaikaha perspectives and cultural approaches to learning and disability.

Promoting access, inclusion, and wellbeing

- Social and environmental barriers to access and inclusion:
 - Stigma, ableism, inaccessible systems, and lack of understanding.
- Impacts of exclusion on mental health, confidence, and sense of belonging.
- Role of social networks, peer support, and trusted relationships in wellbeing.
- Importance of community participation, whānau involvement, and culturally safe environments.
- Rights, legislation, and protections:
 - NZ Disability Strategy 2016–2026
 - Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights
 - UNCRPD
 - Human Rights Act
 - Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Services and supports available in Aotearoa New Zealand:
 - Learning support services and advocacy organisations (e.g., SPELD NZ, LDANZ)
 - NASC organisations
 - Peer-led and culturally responsive services
 - Legal and education support services.
- Inclusive and mana-enhancing communication
 - Cultural responsiveness
 - Use of plain language and supported communication
 - Respecting communication choices and accessibility preferences.

Rauemi | Resources

Recommended resources:

- Enabling Good Lives. *Enabling Good Lives*. <https://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz/>. Retrieved July 25, 2025.
- Health and Disability Commissioner. (1996). *Health and Disability Commissioner (Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights) Regulations 1996*. <https://www.hdc.org.nz/your-rights/about-the-code/code-of-health-and-disability-services-consumers-rights/>. Retrieved July 25, 2025.
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- New Zealand Ministry of Justice. *Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*. <https://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/constitutional-issues-and-human-rights/human-rights/international-human-rights/crpd/>. Retrieved July 25, 2025.
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- Skills for Health. (2019). *Learning disability framework: Supporting the development of the health and care workforce to meet the needs of people with learning disabilities*. <https://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Learning-Disability-Framework-Oct-2019.pdf>. Retrieved July 25, 2025.
- SPELD NZ. (n.d.). *Specific learning disability definitions*. Retrieved June 19, 2025, from <https://www.speld.org.nz/specific-learning-disability-definitions>. Retrieved July 25, 2025.
- Waitangi Tribunal. (n.d.). *Māori and English versions of the Treaty*. Retrieved May 28, 2025, from <https://www.waitangitribunal.govt.nz/en/about/the-treaty/maori-and-english-versions>. Retrieved July 25, 2025.

Pārongo Whakaū Kouna | Quality assurance information

Ngā rōpū whakatau-paerewa Standard Setting Body	Toitū te Waiora Community, Health, Education, and Social Services Workforce Development Council
Whakaritenga Rārangi Paetae Aromatawai DASS classification	Community and Social Services > Health, Disability, and Aged Support > Supporting People with Disabilities

Ko te tohutoro ki ngā Whakaritenga i te Whakamanatanga me te Whakaōritenga CMR	0121
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Hātepe Process	Putanga Version	Rā whakaputa Review Date	Rā whakamutunga mō te aromatawai Last date for assessment
Rēhitatanga Registration	1	[dd mm yyyy]	N/A
Kōrero whakakapinga Replacement information	N/A		
Rā arotake Planned review date	31 December 2029		

Please contact Toitū te Waiora Community, Health, Education, and Social Services Workforce Development Council at qualifications@toitutewaiora.nz to suggest changes to the content of this skill standard.