

What is the National Disabled Students' Association



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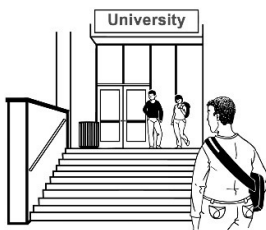
What is the National Disabled Students' Association?



The **National Disabled Students' Association** is a group that **represents** disabled taura / students in **tertiary education** across Aotearoa New Zealand.



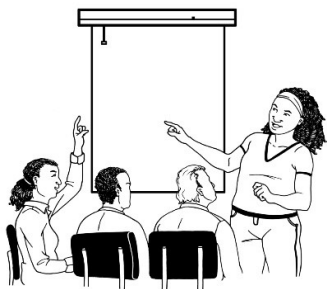
To **represent** disabled taura / students means that we speak up for the things that are important to them.



Tertiary education means studying at places after high school / college like:

- universities
- institutes of technology.





Tertiary education also means places like:

- polytechnics
- industry training organisations
- private training establishments
- wānanga
- government training places.



In this document the National Disabled Students' Association is called **the NDSA**.



The NDSA started in 2021.



NDSA wants tertiary education places to take away the **barriers** that disabled taura / students face in tertiary education.



Barriers are things that make it hard for disabled people to take part in tertiary education.



We believe that all disabilities are a mix of:

- the **impairment** that is experienced by the disabled person
- how the world makes it harder for disabled people to do things.





An **impairment** is when you:

- cannot do something the same way most people can
- find it much harder to do something than most people do.



We represent students who:

- have physical disabilities
- have mental health problems
- have learning disabilities
- have **chronic illnesses**
- are part of the Deaf community
- are **neurodiverse**.





A **chronic illness** is an illness that:

- changes how you live your life
- will last a long time.

Some examples of chronic illnesses are:

- diabetes
- arthritis
- asthma.

Neurodiverse means people who have conditions like:

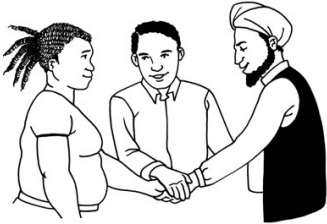
- autism
- ADHD
- dyslexia.



The NDSA are **advocates** for all disabled learners in tertiary education.

To **advocate** for someone means to stand up for them to try and get what they need.

What the NDSA does



The NDSA works with other associations of students in Aotearoa New Zealand like:

- the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations
- Te Mana Ākonga / National Māori Tertiary Students' Association
- Taurira Pasifika / National Pasifika Tertiary Students' Association.



We also work with organisations of disabled students at the different places people learn.

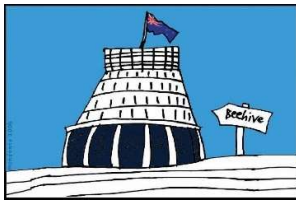


If a tertiary education place does not have an association of disabled students then we will support students to start one.



We want to make sure things are fair for disabled students by:

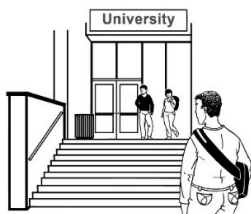
- showing tertiary education places what the needs of disabled students are



- making sure the experiences of disabled students are understood by:



- government agencies
- the media which is like the news on TV or in newspapers



- tertiary education places like universities.

How the NDSA works



The people who run the NDSA are called the **National Executive**.



Some members of the National Executive are voted in by people in the NDSA.



We have a council which is made up of the members of the NDSA.



Our members are the leaders of local groups of disabled students.



Our members bring up issues that are important to their students.

Things we need to do for Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi and Diversity



We want to:

- represent all disabled taura / students
- support all disabled taura / students.



Intersectionality is a big part of our mahi / work.

Intersectionality means that everyone has different experiences because of things like their:

- race
- disability
- gender.





For example the experiences of a Māori disabled tauira / student are different to both:

- a Māori tauira / student who is not disabled
- a disabled tauira / student who is not Māori.



We work with other groups to focus on intersectionality.



The **Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi** is also a big part of our work.



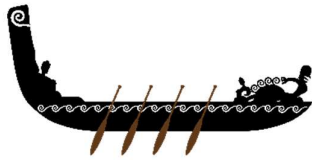
Te Tiriti / the Treaty is about Māori and the New Zealand Government:

- making decisions together
- protecting things that are important to Māori.

The NDSA will:



- work in a way that supports the rights of tāngata whenua / Māori to decide things for themselves



- have tikanga Māori / the Māori way of doing things as part of their work



- work with Te Mana Ākonga to make the voices of disabled tauira / students heard.

What we need to do for the learning disability community



We know that students with learning disability face barriers at tertiary education.



We also know that many student communities do not include students with learning disability well.



We need to make sure that our work:

- includes the learning disability community
- represents things that are important to students with learning disability.





We also need to make sure that our work represents the experiences of the students with learning disability.



We will be doing all this by:

- visiting students in person
- opening up ways for to communicate with the students
- keeping working together with People First New Zealand – Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



How you can be part of the NDSA



If you want to be part of what we do we would love to hear from you.



We are looking for disabled students from different tertiary places all around Aotearoa New Zealand.



We are very interested to hear from students who are enrolled in supported learning programmes.



You can **email** us at:

president@ndsa.org.nz



We want to support you in any way we can.



You can contact us if you want to:

- make a complaint
- tell us about a concern you have
- talk to us about your current tertiary education place.





This information has been written by the National Disabled Students' Association.



It has been translated into Easy Read with advice from the Make It Easy service of People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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