## Identification of gifted Māori students

| **Identification approach** | **Advantages** | **Points to consider** | **Suggestions to enhance implementation** |
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| Culturally responsive environment approach | * Māori students’ culture is valued, affirmed, and developed * Responsive, challenging environment allows giftedness to ‘surface’ | * Reliant on teacher knowledge of Māori culture, opportunities to incorporate cultural input and school/centre-wide support | * Use te reo Māori in the classroom * Include culturally appropriate materials whenever possible * Overtly show that Māori students’ cultural heritage is valued and appreciated in the classroom |
| Classroom observations | * Allows observation of ability over time * Provides multiple opportunities for assessment of ability * Rate of progress as well as achievement can be assessed | * Teachers require sound knowledge of Māori culture and Māori perspectives of giftedness * Teachers need to “look beyond” any misbehaviour * Students will have experienced varying opportunities and encouragement to display gifts and talents so need to be alert to **potential** giftedness | * Ensure culturally responsive classroom environment where Māori culture is understood and valued * Focus on qualities, e.g. manaakitanga, mana, courage, perseverance, as well as abilities, e.g. academic, musical, physical. * Provide suitably challenging, culturally relevant tasks |
| Checklists and rating scales | * Students identified using common characteristics of giftedness | * Checklists can encourage cultural stereotyping * Generic lists tend to focus on a narrow range of characteristics * May not be culturally appropriate * Expertise in some checklist items needed to accurately gauge student’s ability level, e.g. in te reo * Be aware of your own cultural lens when assessing attributes, e.g. humour will be expressed differently in different cultures. | * Check scales cover all areas of giftedness recognised by Māori - add any that are missing * Ensure items include Māori perspectives of each characteristic e.g. does leadership characteristic include different styles of Māori leadership? * Include people with cultural expertise when a Māori perspective is required to help make an accurate judgment |
| Products, processes, performances | * Can provide measure of both potential and performance * Portfolio approach may allow measure of rate of progress * Provides tangible evidence of ability | * Students may not share cultural knowledge if they feel it is not valued * Cultural perspective needed to appreciate Māori-specific attributes and abilities | * Evaluate holistically – pay attention to vision, understanding, motivation, purpose and process * Include people with cultural expertise when a Māori perspective is required to help make an accurate judgment |
| Teacher nomination | * Utilises teachers’ knowledge of student | * Potential for low &/or inaccurate identification because many teachers are white, middle class, monocultural with limited knowledge of Māori culture and Māori concepts of giftedness * Many teachers have low expectations of Māori students. | * Have high expectations for students and understand and appreciate Māori culture. * Improved by use of specifically developed lists of culturally appropriate characteristics and behaviours and consultation with cultural experts if/when needed |
| Parent nomination | * Utilises parents’ in depth knowledge of their child. | * Parents may see nomination as whakahihi (boasting) so not suggest their child. * Poor/minimal relationship with teacher will negatively affect parents’ responses. | * Ask parents about their child’s strengths, interests and out-of-school involvements. * Establish positive relationship with parents before asking for nominations |
| Whanau and Māori community/group nomination | * Whanau will have valuable information about children’s strengths, talents and precocious development. * Community members may identify child’s cultural abilities and qualities. * Particularly helpful where teachers have limited cultural and reo knowledge. | * Effectiveness dependent on positive existing relationship between whanau or community and teacher. | * Best sought within context of culturally appropriate and welcoming activities, such as a school powhiri or kapa haka concert. |
| Peer nomination | * Māori students recognise their peers’ strengths and talents and are willing to share this information to trusted teachers. * Particularly useful for gifts exhibited outside the school environment | * Effectiveness dependent on a culturally responsive environment where there is a trusting relationship between students and teacher | * Use range of ways to collect information, including formal/informal, written/oral. Take note of who students go to for assistance and support, and who appears to have mana amongst their peers – they may be gifted |
| Self nomination | * Provides opportunities for students to share their strengths, some of which may not be evident within the normal school environment. | * Students may feel as if they are being boastful, and so not want to nominate themselves. Effectiveness dependent on trusting pupil-teacher relationship | * Effective if handled sensitively in culturally responsive, nurturing environment. * Students are more likely to share their interests and aspirations with someone who is genuinely interested in them and the outcome of this nomination is known and acceptable to them |
| Tests | * Culturally appropriate, relevant written tests give students an opportunity to exhibit their cultural expertise * Non-verbal tests have potential as they are not reliant on language and their content is less prone to cultural bias | * Potential for cultural bias of test norms and content in standardised tests. Recognise high scores but interpret average or low scores with caution * Pen and paper tests may disadvantage children uncomfortable or unfamiliar with this format. In these circumstances oral tests may be more useful | * Teacher made tests that incorporate cultural perspectives and include open ended and divergent thinking items may be more effective than standardised tests |

Practical strategies and ideas that complement this checklist can be found in [this article](http://www.giftedchildren.org.nz/apex/pdfs15/Bevan-Brown%20J.pdf) on which it is based and other Māori-relevant readings on this website.