

# Report of the 2022 Academic Audit of Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington

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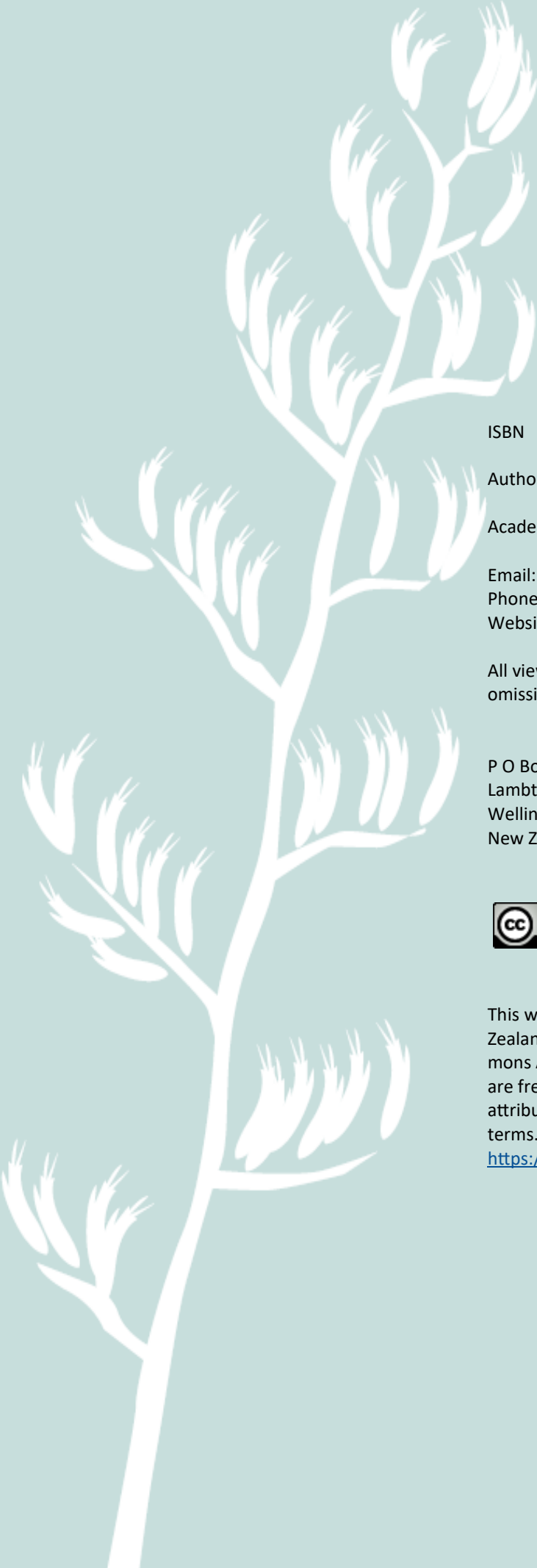
Cycle 6 academic audit undertaken by the Academic Quality  
Agency for New Zealand Universities

March 2023

*Te Pokapū Kōunga Mātauranga  
mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa*

**AQA**

Academic  
**Quality**Agency  
For New Zealand Universities



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# **Report of the 2022 Academic Audit of Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington**

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## He Whakarāpopototanga

He wāhanga ngā arotake ā-kura wānanga o ngā whakaritenga whakaū i te kounga mō ngā whare wānanga i Aotearoa. Koinei anake te hātepe ā-waho hei whakaū i te kounga ka whai i tētahi tirohanga whārahi ki tā tētahi whare wānanga whakaako, ako, tautoko mā ngā tauira me ngā hua ki ngā tauira. He mea pīkau ngā arotaketanga e tētahi paewhiri aropā. Ka whai wāhi ko ngā pūkenga mātāmua, ngā pūkenga hautū rānei i Aotearoa, he mema paewhiri Māori, ā, mēnā e taea ana, he uri nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, tētahi mema paewhiri ā-ao me tētahi tauira, ihuputa rānei.

E whai wāhi ana ngā Whare Wānanga i Aotearoa ki te huringa tuaono o ngā arotake ā-kura wānanga. He arotake hiato te Huringa 6, e rua ngā wāhanga. I te wāhanga tuatahi, i 2017 ki 2020, i whai wāhi ngā whare wānanga ki tētahi kaupapa whakangako i aro nei ki te tomonga, ki ngā hua me ngā arawātea mō ngā tauira Māori me ērā nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa. E wātea ana ētahi whakamārama atu anō ki te pae tukutuku kaupapa whakangako.

Ko te wāhanga tuarua o Huringa 6 he arotaketanga e ai ki tētahi angamahi o ngā tauākī aratohu e 30 i ngā wāhanga e rima: (1) te hautūtanga me whakahaeretanga o ngā whakaakotanga, o ngā akoranga me te kounga ā-kura wānanga; (2) te hurihanga ora, te tautoko me te oranga o te tauira; (3) Te marautanga, ngā aromatawai me te tukunga; (4) Te kounga ā-whakaako; me (5) Te hōmiromirotanga o ngā tauira rangahau paerunga. Ka whai wāhi ngā whare wānanga ki te arotake i a rātou anō e ai ki te angamahi arotake, ka tāpae ai i tētahi pūrongo arotake i a ia anō me tētahi kāhua e kī ana i ngā taunakitanga. Me whakaatu te arotaketanga a te whare wānanga i ngā haepapa o te whare wānanga ki Te Tiriti o Waitangi, te taupuhipuhitanga o ngā rangahau me ngā whakaakoranga a te whare wānanga. Waihoki te wāhi ki te whare wānanga hei arohae, hei arotika hoki i te porihanga, ā, me whai wāhi ki tāna aromatawai ngā tauira katoa, ngā tukunga katoa, me ngā kaimahi katoa anō hoki mēnā he kaiako, he kaihōmiromiro rānei.

He mea tuku e Te Herenga Waka- Victoria University of Wellington, tāna kōpaki arotake i a ia anō i te 23 o Mei 2022, ā, i tuku kōrero atu anō i tonoa nei e te paewhiri i Ākuhata 2022. I whakatau te poari, he whānui te arotakenga, waihoki, i tautokona pai e ngā taunakitanga. E rua ngā hui a te paewhiri (i te ipurangi) i mua i te peka ā-tinana atu ki te Whare Wānanga i te 12-14 o Hepetema 2022. I taua pekanga rā, e 22 ngā uiuinga a te paewhiri, i hui hoki ki ngā kaimahi e 78 me ngā tauira e 35. Ka tautoko ngā kōrero i tīkina i ngā uiuinga i ngā kōrero i te kōpaki arotake, me te aha, ka toro atu te paewhiri ki ngā puna e rua kia puta ai āna whakatau.

I tū te Arotake ā-Kura Wānanga 6 o Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington i te horopaki o ngā pānga mauroa o te mate urutā nei, o KŌWHEORI-19, o ētahi mahi nui ki te whakahou i te tūāhanga matihiko mō te whakaako me te ako, waihoki ētahi atu kaupapa whakaako me te ako nunui, otirā o tētahi Vice-Chancellor e ārahi ana i te Whare Wānanga. He mea whakahohoro e KŌWHEORI-19 ngā nekenga ki te whakaako, ki te ako, ngā aromatawai, me ngā āhua mahi i runga i te mahi tahi ki ngā tauira i whakaterā kētia. E ai ki te paewhiri, i tika ā te Whare Wānanga kāwananga, whakahaerenga anō hoki o ngā motuhaketanga i waenganui i ngā kaupapa nunui, ā, e whakamihia ana āna tūāoma ki te whakaheke i ngā taumahatanga ki ngā kaimahi mā te tahuri, mā te whakapōturi rānei i ētahi kaupapa. Kua whakaawehia ngā āhuatanga ā-horopaki i ngā tūhuratanga a te paewhiri i runga i ngā mihi, ngā whakatūturutanga me ngā tūtohutanga kua tukuna e ia.

I pīkau Te Whare Wānanga (waihoki, e pīkau tonu ana) i ngā mahi nunui kia tū tonu ai ngā mahi whakaako, ako, me te tautoko i ngā taura i te wā o te mate urutā, arā, te KŌWHEORI-19. E whakamihia ana te Paewhiri i ngā mahi a te Centre for Academic Development i tā rātou tautoko i tēnei urupare. He nui te wāhi ki ngā ratonga motuhake i te tautokotanga o ngā taura Māori me ērā nō Te Moananui-a-Kiwa i te wā o te mate urutā, ā, e whakamihia ana te Paewhiri i te whakatūnga o Āwhina me te Pasifika Student Success Team (PSST), waihoki, te aroturuki tonutanga o te whai hua rānei o aua ratonga. Ko tāna ki te Whare Wānanga, kia whakatika i ngā tūtohutanga nō te pūrongo aroturuki mō muri i te whakatinanatanga o te PSST. E tūtohu hoki ana te Paewhiri kia whakawhanake te Whare Wānanga i ētahi mahere mō muri i te whakatinanatanga mō ngā mahi whakaako, ako, aromatawai, me ngā kaupapa hōmiromiro katoa. Nā te mea ka toitū ngā panonitanga i whakahohorohia e KOWHEORI-19, e tūtohu ana te Paewhiri kia tīkina atu e te Whare Wānanga ēnei wheako i āna mahere ā-anamata hei tautoko i ngā akoranga.

He nui ngā mihi, ngā whakatūturutanga me ngā tūtohutanga a te Paewhiri e hāngai ana ki tā te Whare Wānanga hōtaka whakahou i tāna tūāhanga whakaako me te ako ā-matihiko. Ka whai wāhi ki te hōtaka ko tētahi Pūnaha Whakahaere Ako (LMS) hou, tētahi Pūnaha Whakahaere Marau (CMS) me tētahi Pūnaha Whakahaere Hononga Taura (SRM). E taunaki ana te Paewhiri kua tīmata ngā mahi ki te hanga i tētahi taiao pai ake mō te whakaako, te ako anō hoki, waihoki, te taura hei tautoko i ngā kaimahi ka whakaurua ana te LMS. I whakamihia a CAD i tōna tūranga kaiārahi i te hōtaka panoni mō te tūāhanga ako me te whakaako.

Ko te haumitanga ki ngā āheinga ā-raraunga hei whakamōhio i ngā mahi whakaako me te ako, te aroturuki i te pai o ngā mahi me te tautoko mā ngā taura, he wāhanga o tā te Whare Wānanga whakahou i tāna tūāhanga whakaako me te ako ā-matihiko. E taunaki ana te Paewhiri i tēnei ahunga, ā, e tūtohu ana ia kia tautoko te Whare Wānanga i te whakapikinga o te mōhio o ngā kaimahi kia whakamahi pai i ēnei raraunga, tae ana ki te whakamahi atu mō te whanake tonutanga. Ka whai wāhi ki te whakamahinga o ngā raraunga ko te aroturukitanga o ngā tāera whakamahi me te arotake i te whai hua rānei o te tukunga o ngā ratonga e ai ki ngā toronga a ngā huinga taura ki ngā momo tautoko ako huhua.

Ko ētahi atu kaupapa whakaako, ako, tautoko anō hoki kua tīmatahia, kua whakaritehia rānei, ko tētahi kaupapa Anga Marautanga, tētahi kaupapa Kāhua Ihu Puta, tētahi angamahi aromatawai, tētahi taura tohu whārahi me tētahi Angamahi Putanga Oranga. E taunaki ana te Paewhiri i te ahunga o ēnei kaupapa me ngā kaupapa tūroa hei whakangako i te toronga, i ngā putunga, me ngā ara wātea ki ngā taura nō Te Moananui-a-Kiwa. I te wāhi ki ngā kaupapa Angamahi Marautanga me ngā Kāhua Ihu Puta, e whakaaro ana te Paewhiri kei reira ētahi ara wātea hei whakauru i ngā tautoko mō ngā whakawhitinga, te whiwhi mahi, ngā tautoko ako me te whakawhanake i ngā pūkenga kura wānanga i ēnei kaupapa. Waihoki, ka tukuna ētahi tūtohutanga hei whakaaroaro ake mā te Whare Wānanga. E whakamihia ana te Paewhiri i a VicTeach i tāna tautoko i ngā mahi whakaako me te ako auaha, tū tika anō hoki.

E taunaki ana te Paewhiri i te whai a te Whare Wānanga ki te arotake anō i āna ara toronga mō ngā taura Māori, mō ngā taura nō Te Moananui-a-Kiwa me ngā huinga taura ka aro nei te Whare Wānanga i tāna Angamahi Manaritetanga, Kanorautanga, me te Whai Wāhitanga. Ka tūtohu hoki ia

kia nui ake tā te Whare Wānanga aro ā-rautaki ki te tō i ngā tauria Māori me ngā tauria nō Te Moananui-a-Kiwa ki ngā tohu paerunga, arā, ki te tohu kairangi. Waihoki, i te wāhi ki ngā tauria rangahau tohu paerunga, e tūtohu ana te Paewhiri kia tutuki i te Whare Wānanga tāna arotake i ngā whakangungutanga tūroa mō ngā kaihōmiromiro tohu paerunga me te whakaū i te haepapa kia aroturuki i ngā whakangungutanga, ā, kia mārama, kia whakamana anō hoki i ngā pūrongo kauneketanga.

I tohu te Whare Wānanga i tētahi kaupapa whakangako hei whakawhanake i tētahi angamahi kounga kura wānanga. E tautoko ana te Paewhiri i tēnei kaupapa, waihoki, e tūtohu ana kia whakauru i te tautiakitanga o ngā kaupapahere kura wānanga. Ka hāngai hoki ki ngā kaupapahere kura wānanga me te kounga, e tūtohu ana te Paewhiri kia wawe tā te Whare Wānanga koke i tāna arotakenga o te Kaupapahere Nawe Kura Wānanga me te whakatutuki i te whakahaeretanga o tāna kaupapahere mana kura wānanga hou. Ko te tūtohu a te Paewhiri kia whakaarohia e te Whare Wānanga mēnā e rawaka ana ngā tirohanga a tāna pae arotake hōtaka ki te whakaputa i ngā whakatau arotake. Ka mutu, i te wāhi ki te kounga kura wānanga, e whakamihia ana te Paewhiri i ngā puka Academic Approvals me te Programme and Course Design e tuku nei i ngā āwhina whai hua mā ngā kaimahi ki te whakawhanake i ngā hōtaka me ngā aromatawai.

He nui ngā pīkaunga mahi a te Whare Wānanga i tētahi arotakenga ōna anō e ai ki tāna Te Tiriti o Waitangi Statute, waihoki, i te whakawhanaketanga o tētahi Student Engagement Framework - Ngā Kīwai o te Kete. E whakamihia ana te Paewhiri i te Whare Wānanga i tāna puka Te Tiriti o Waitangi me te arotakenga o Te Tiriti o Waitangi me te taunaki i tā te Whare Wānanga mahere whakauru i ngā tūtohutanga nō te arotakenga o Te Tiriti o Waitangi. E taunaki hoki ana te Paewhiri i te whakawhanaketanga o Ngā Kīwai o te Kete - Student Engagement Framework me te Student Agreement ā-tau me te akiaki hoki i te Whare Wānanga kia koke tonu tāna tuitui i ngā hononga whai hua me ngā tauria. Ko tētahi anō kaupapa whakangakotanga i tohua e te Whare Wānanga ko te whakawhanake i te Fale Malae, ā, kei te taunakitia tērā e te Paewhiri. Ko tā te Fale Malae he whakapiki i te whai wāhitanga ki ngā hapori, ngā tauria, me ngā kura o ngā uri nō Te Moananui-a-Kiwa.

I runga i ngā taunakitanga i wātea mai ki a ia i te wā o te arotakenga, e whakatau ana te Paewhiri kua kapi katoa i te Whare Wānanga ngā hiahia o Huringa 6 o te Angamahi Arotake ā-Kura Wānanga. He nui ngā wā i kapi noa atu te Whare Wānanga i ngā putanga me ngā paerewa i tōna tikanga me whakaatu e tētahi whare wānanga tū tika i te ao. Mēnā i kī te Paewhiri he mahi anō e toe ana, kua tukuna e ia ngā tūtohutanga, kua taunaki rānei i ngā kaupapa whakangako kua tohua kētia e te Whare Wānanga. E whitu ngā whakamihinga a te Paewhiri, e tekau mā tahi ngā whakatūturutanga, ā, e tekau ā rua ngā tūtohutanga e tautoko ana, e akiaki ana hoki i ngā mahi tū tika, waihoki, i tōna tikanga ka āwhina i te Whare Wānanga i a ia ka koke i tōna anō ahunga ā-rautaki.

Me tuku a Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington he pūrongo whai ake hei te kotahi tau nō te whakaputanga o tēnei pūrongo nei. Me kōrero te pūrongo whai ake mō ngā kokenga o ngā whakatūturutanga me ngā tūtohutanga. Kia whakaaetia e te Poari AQA, me whakawātea tūmatanui atu te pūrongo whai ake.

E wātea ana ētahi anō whakamāramatanga e pā ana ki ngā arotake ā-kura wānanga, tae ana ki ngā pūrongo arotake o mua, ki te pae tukutuku AQA.



## Executive Summary

Academic audits are part of the external quality assurance arrangements for universities in Aotearoa New Zealand. They are the only external quality assurance process that takes a whole-of-institution view of a university's teaching, learning, student support and student outcomes. Audits are undertaken by a panel of peers comprising senior academics or academic managers in Aotearoa New Zealand, a Māori panel member, a Pacific panel member (where possible), an international panel member and a student or recent graduate.

Universities in Aotearoa New Zealand are currently engaged in their sixth cycle of academic audit. Cycle 6 is a composite audit with two main phases. In the first phase, from 2017 – 2020, universities engaged in an enhancement theme focusing on access, outcomes and opportunities for Māori students and for Pacific students. Further information is available on the enhancement themes website.<sup>1</sup>

The second phase of Cycle 6 is an audit against a framework of 30 guideline statements in five sections: (1) Leadership and management of teaching and learning, and academic quality; (2) Student life cycle, support and wellbeing; (3) Curriculum, assessment and delivery; (4) Teaching quality; and (5) Supervision of postgraduate research students. Universities undertake a self-assessment against the audit framework and present a self-review report and portfolio of supporting evidence. The university's self-review should also reflect the university's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the interdependence of university research and teaching, and universities' role as critic and conscience of society. Its assessment should encompass all students, all delivery and all staff who undertake or support teaching or supervision.

Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington submitted its self-review portfolio on 23 May 2022 and provided further information requested by the Panel in August 2022. The Panel found the self-review to be comprehensive and well-supported by evidence. The Panel met twice (online) before undertaking an in-person site visit to the University from 12-14 September 2022. During the site visit, the Panel held 22 interview sessions and met with 78 members of staff and 35 students. Information gained through the interviews supplements that contained in the self-review portfolio and the Panel draws on both sources to reach its findings.

The Cycle 6 Academic Audit of Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington took place in the context of the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, a substantial programme of work renewing the digital infrastructure for teaching and learning plus other major teaching and learning projects, and an acting Vice-Chancellor leading the University. COVID-19 has accelerated shifts in teaching, learning, assessment and ways of working in partnership with students that were already underway. The Panel considers the University had appropriate governance and management of the interdependencies between major projects and acknowledges that it had taken steps to reduce the load on staff by deferring or slowing some projects. Contextual factors have influenced the Panel's findings in the pattern of commendations, affirmations and recommendations it has made.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.enhanceunz.com/>

The University undertook (and continues to undertake) significant work to maintain teaching, learning and support for students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Panel commends the work of the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) in supporting this response. Dedicated services were instrumental in supporting Māori students and Pasifika students during the pandemic and the Panel commends the establishment of Āwhina and the Pasifika Student Success Team (PSST) and the ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of these services. It recommends the University address remaining recommendations from the post-implementation monitoring report of the PSST. The Panel also recommends the University develop post-implementation plans for all teaching, learning, assessment and supervision initiatives. As changes accelerated by COVID-19 will be ongoing, the Panel suggests the University draw on this experience in its plans for learning support.

The Panel has made several commendations, affirmations and recommendations related to the University's renewal programme for its digital teaching and learning infrastructure. The programme includes a new Learning Management System (LMS), a Curriculum Management System (CMS) and a Student Relationship Management System (SRM). The Panel affirms work underway to create an enhanced teaching and learning environment and the model for supporting staff as the new LMS is implemented. CAD is commended for its leadership role in the change programme for learning and teaching infrastructure.

Investment in data capability to inform teaching and learning, performance monitoring and support for students is a component of the University's renewal of its digital teaching and learning infrastructure. The Panel affirms this direction and suggests the University support capability building for staff to make best use of this data, including its use for ongoing improvement. Use of data includes monitoring utilisation trends and evaluating the efficacy of service provision for student cohort access to various forms of learning support.

Other teaching, learning and support initiatives underway or planned include a Curriculum Framework project, a Graduate Profile project, an assessment framework, a holistic advising model and a Wellbeing Outcomes Framework. The Panel affirms the direction of these initiatives and ongoing initiatives to enhance access, outcomes and opportunities for Pasifika students. In terms of the Curriculum Framework and Graduate Profile projects, the Panel considers there are opportunities to embed support for transitions, employability, learning support and academic skills development in these projects and makes recommendations for the University to consider. The Panel commends VicTeach for its support for innovative and good practice teaching and learning.

The Panel affirms the University's intention to review access pathways for Māori students, Pasifika students and student groups the University focuses on in its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework. It also recommends the University give greater strategic focus to attracting Māori students and Pasifika students to postgraduate, particularly doctoral, study. The Panel also recommends the University complete its review of ongoing training for postgraduate supervisors and ensure that responsibilities for monitoring training and progress reporting are clear and enforced.

The University identified an enhancement initiative to develop an academic quality framework. The Panel supports this initiative and recommends that it include maintaining currency of academic policies. Also associated with academic policy and quality, the Panel recommends that the University urgently progress its review of the Academic Grievance Policy and complete the operationalisation

of its new academic integrity policy. The Panel recommends the University consider whether the composition of its programme review panels provides sufficient breadth of perspectives in reaching evaluative conclusions. Finally with respect to academic quality, the Panel commends the Academic Approvals and the Programme and Course Design handbooks that provide useful guidance for staff in developing programmes and assessment.

The University has undertaken significant pieces of work in a self-audit against its Te Tiriti o Waitangi Statute and in the development of a Ngā Kīwai o te Kete – Student Engagement Framework. The Panel commends the University for its Te Tiriti o Waitangi Handbook and Te Tiriti o Waitangi audit and affirms the University’s implementation plan for recommendations from the Te Tiriti o Waitangi audit. The Panel also affirms the development of the Ngā Kīwai o te Kete – Student Engagement Framework and annual Student Agreement and encourages the University to keep progressing its work on building productive partnerships with students. A further enhancement initiative identified by the University to develop the Fale Malae is also affirmed by the Panel. The Fale Malae is intended to increase the engagement with Pasifika communities, students and schools.

On the basis of the evidence available to it at the time of the audit, the Panel considers the University meets the expectations of the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework. In several instances the University exceeds the outcomes and standards a university of good international standing would be expected to demonstrate. Where it considers further work is required, the Panel has made recommendations or affirmed enhancement initiatives already identified by the University. The Panel has made seven commendations, eleven affirmations and twelve recommendations that support and encourage good practices and are intended to assist the University as it progresses its own strategic direction.

Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington should provide a follow-up report one year after the release of this report. The follow-up report should address progress on both affirmations and recommendations. Once it has been accepted by the AQA Board, the follow-up report should be made publicly available.

Further information about academic audits, including previous audit reports, is available on the AQA website.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [www.aqa.ac.nz](http://www.aqa.ac.nz)

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## List of Key Terms and Acronyms

<b>ACF</b>	Academic Career Framework
<b>AMR</b>	Academic Misconduct Register
<b>AQA</b>	Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities – Te Pokapū Kōunga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa
<b>AVC</b>	Assistant Vice-Chancellor
<b>CAD</b>	Centre for Academic Development
<b>CMS</b>	Curriculum Management System
<b>the Code</b>	Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice (2021)
<b>CUAP</b>	Universities New Zealand Committee on University Academic Programmes
<b>DVC</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
<b>EDI</b>	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
<b>EFTS</b>	Equivalent Full-Time Student(s)
<b>FE</b>	Further Evidence
<b>FGR</b>	Faculty of Graduate Research
<b>FTE</b>	Full-time Equivalent (staff)
<b>KD</b>	Key (supporting) document (forms part of the University’s self-review portfolio)
<b>LMS</b>	Learning Management System (Canvas is the new LMS)
<b>Panel</b>	The Academic Audit Panel engaged by AQA to conduct the Cycle 6 academic audit of Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington
<b>PDCP</b>	Performance Development and Career Planning
<b>PSSP</b>	Pasifika Student Success Plan
<b>PSST</b>	Pasifika Student Success Team
<b>PVC</b>	Pro-Vice-Chancellor
<b>RAfTS</b>	Resource Agreement for Thesis Students
<b>SD</b>	Supporting document (forms part of the University’s self-review portfolio)
<b>SLT</b>	Senior Leadership Team
<b>SICR</b>	Student Interest and Conflict Resolution
<b>SRM</b>	Student Relationship Management system
<b>SRR</b>	Self-review report
<b>SRP</b>	Self-review portfolio (comprising the SRR, KDs and SDs)
<b>VECAP</b>	Victoria Early Career Academic Programme
<b>VP(A)</b>	Vice-Provost (Academic)
<b>WIL</b>	Work-Integrated Learning

## Introduction

Academic audits for universities in Aotearoa New Zealand are undertaken by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities – Te Pokapū Kounga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa (AQA). AQA is an operationally independent external quality assurance agency, recognised as being fully aligned with the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) Guidelines of Good Practice (GGP).<sup>3</sup> Further information about AQA can be found in Appendix 1 and on the AQA website.<sup>4</sup>

The sixth cycle of academic audits for universities in Aotearoa New Zealand is a composite cycle with two main phases. In phase one, from 2017 to 2020, universities engaged collectively in an enhancement theme with the title “Access, outcomes and opportunities for Māori students and for Pasifika students”.<sup>5</sup> The start of phase two was deferred by twelve months in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Phase two is an academic audit utilising an audit framework of 30 guideline statements in five sections: (1) Leadership and management of teaching and learning and academic quality; (2) Student life cycle, support and wellbeing; (3) Curriculum, assessment and delivery; (4) Teaching quality; (5) Supervision of postgraduate research students. The audit framework has three underpinning components—Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations, interdependence of university research and teaching, universities’ role as critic and conscience of society—that should be reflected in a self-review portfolio (SRP) and self-review report (SRR). The scope of the audit framework extends to all students, all delivery and all staff who undertake or support teaching or supervision.

The Cycle 6 audit framework was co-developed with universities and confirmed following consultation in 2018.<sup>6</sup> The objectives of the audit framework are:

1. to provide a set of guideline statements that a university will gain value from evaluating itself against and from the assessment made by the audit panel, leading to enhancement; and
2. to provide assurance of the quality of New Zealand universities.

The guideline statements set out expectations of outcomes and standards that a university of good international standing would be expected to demonstrate. They are not fixed, minimum standards but are relative and dynamic.

Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington submitted its SRP on 23 May 2022. The SRR and key documents (KD) were provided both in hard copy and loaded onto an AQA OneDrive site. Supporting documents (SD) were provided electronically only, in line with the technical

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.inqaahe.org/ggp-aligned-agencies>. (Accessed 23 February 2022).

<sup>4</sup> [www.aqa.ac.nz](http://www.aqa.ac.nz)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.enhanceunz.com/> (Accessed 4 August 2022).

<sup>6</sup> For a summary of the development of Cycle 6, see Matear, S.M. (2018), “Evolving Quality”, 10th Higher Education Conference on Innovation and developments in Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance; 20 – 22 November 2018; Macao Polytechnic Institute, Macao, China. Available at <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/node/340>. (Accessed 5 August 2022).

specifications for audit portfolios.<sup>7</sup> Further information requested by the Panel was provided in August 2022. The Panel found the SRR and supporting portfolio to be comprehensive. The SRR was well-supported by evidence. The Panel was appreciative of the provision of further information they had requested.

Once the University had uploaded its SRP to AQA, university access to OneDrive was removed and the Panel was given access. A separate OneDrive site for shared planning between AQA and the University was created. The Panel held two online meetings before the site visit to the University from 12 – 14 September 2022.

During the site visit the Panel held 22 interview sessions and met with 78 members of staff and 35 students.<sup>8</sup> Staff the Panel spoke with were drawn from university management, teaching staff and professional staff, including professional staff providing learning and other student support. The Panel met separately with Māori staff, Pasifika staff and early career academic staff. The student groups the Panel met with were members of students' associations, Māori students, Pasifika students and postgraduate research students.<sup>9</sup> Most interviewees were able to attend face-to-face meetings, with a very small number attending via Zoom. All interviewees were prepared to engage constructively and candidly with the Panel and to provide helpful insights into the audit areas.

### About the University

Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington was founded in 1897, marking its 125<sup>th</sup> year in 2022.<sup>10</sup> The name Te Herenga Waka, which is also the name of the University's marae, was adopted in 2019.<sup>11</sup>

In 2021, the University enrolled 23,090 students (18, 241 EFTS)<sup>12</sup> and employed 1,321 academic staff (882.95 FTE) and 3,362 staff (2,329.03 FTE) in total.<sup>13</sup> Further comment is made on student and staff profiles at the start of sections B and D, respectively.

The University operates from three campuses in Wellington—Kelburn, Pipitea and Te Aro—plus other sites in Wellington, a site in Auckland and a student learning centre in Beijing (opened 2021). The University's first-year experience is concentrated on the University's Kelburn site.<sup>14</sup> The Pipitea campus hosts the Wellington School of Business and Government and the Faculty of Law, and the Te

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<sup>7</sup> Guide to Cycle 6 Academic Audit, p. 28.

<sup>8</sup> The New Zealand Government's COVID-19 Protection Framework ended during the site visit (<https://covid19.govt.nz/about-our-covid-19-response/history-of-the-covid-19-protection-framework-traffic-lights/#timeline-of-important-events> (accessed 23 September 2022)). However, Panel members and interviewees continued to wear masks in interview sessions.

<sup>9</sup> This report follows the University's usage of Pasifika in referring to both domestic students and staff with Pacific Islands whakapapa and international students who have come to the University directly from their homes in Pacific Islands. If a supporting document or other evidence uses a different term such as Pacific People, this report will also use that term.

<sup>10</sup> <https://125.wgtn.ac.nz/timeline/> (Accessed 24 September 2022.)

<sup>11</sup> SRR, p. vi.

<sup>12</sup> SRR, p. vii.

<sup>13</sup> FE, 2021 Universities Workforce Questionnaire.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/about/campuses-facilities/campuses/kelburn> (Accessed 23 September 2022.)



Aro campus hosts the Faculty of Architecture and Design Innovation.<sup>15</sup> A fourth Wellington campus (Karori) was closed in 2017.

Organisationally, the University is structured into ten faculties, including Toihuarewa and the Faculty of Graduate Research.<sup>16</sup> Schools make up the teaching faculties.<sup>17</sup> Toihuarewa is a sub-committee of Academic Board and “the forum and vehicle for Māori academic issues at the University”.<sup>18</sup> The DVC (Māori) convenes Toihuarewa and is the senior manager with responsibility for Āwhina—the University’s stand-alone, university-wide, Māori student support team.<sup>19</sup>

The teaching faculties are led by Deans and three Pro-Vice-Chancellors lead groups of faculties. The Pro-Vice-Chancellors report to the Vice-Chancellor, as does the Provost and DVC Māori.<sup>20</sup> Two Vice-Provosts—Academic and Research—report to the Provost. The Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Pasifika), Titoko – Centre for Student Success, and the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) also report to the Provost.<sup>21</sup>

The Academic Board is a sub-committee of Council and Faculty Boards are sub-committees of Academic Board. An Academic Programmes sub-committee of Academic Board is responsible for, *inter alia*, making recommendations to Academic Board on matters to do with academic programmes and qualifications and “obligations arising under Te Tiriti o Waitangi in relation to academic programme quality”.<sup>22</sup> Another sub-committee of Academic Board, the Learning and Teaching Committee, provides advice on “learning, teaching, the student learning experience and delivery of curricula”<sup>23</sup> and was responsible for the 2017 – 2020 Learning and Teaching Strategy.<sup>24</sup>

The University is placed in the top two per cent of universities worldwide by international rankings and in the top one per cent for 20 subjects.<sup>25</sup> Part of the University’s vision is to be ranked within the top one per cent of universities worldwide.<sup>26</sup>

### Context for this audit

The Panel recognises that understanding the context in which a university has prepared its SRP and in which the audit site visit occurs is important. In common with other universities, both in Aotearoa New Zealand and worldwide, COVID-19 has had and continues to have a significant impact on Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington. A second contextual factor is the major programme of teaching and learning IT system redevelopment and implementation together with other major projects in which the University was engaged at the time of the Cycle 6 Academic Audit.

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<sup>15</sup> SRR, p. iii.

<sup>16</sup> SRR, p. iii.

<sup>17</sup> App. 3, SRR, p. 70.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/maori-hub/mo-matou/rangatiranga/toihuarewa> (Accessed 23 September 2022.)

<sup>19</sup> SRR, p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> See <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/about/governance/senior-leadership/senior-leadership-team.pdf> for the full membership of the Senior Leadership Team and organisational structure. (Accessed 23 September 2022.)

<sup>21</sup> App. 3, SRR, p. 70.

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/2048607/academic-programmes-committee-terms-of-reference.pdf](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2048607/academic-programmes-committee-terms-of-reference.pdf) (Accessed 6 December 2022.)

<sup>23</sup> FE, Appendix 1 Learning and Teaching TOR FINAL Approved.

<sup>24</sup> KD 2.

<sup>25</sup> SRR, p. iii.

<sup>26</sup> KD 1, p. 7.

Thirdly, an Acting Vice-Chancellor was in place at the time of the audit, with a new Vice-Chancellor due to commence their role in January 2023.<sup>27</sup>

The Panel will comment throughout this report on the impacts of COVID-19 with respect to particular guideline statements. Overall however, the University consolidated its initial response to COVID-19 in a “Good Practice Assessment” of its rapid shift to online delivery and established a resilience programme “to enhance the University’s ability to respond, adapt, and recover in times of challenge and change”.<sup>28</sup> The University also initiated a deficit-reduction programme in response to financial pressures created by COVID-19.<sup>29</sup>

The Panel heard many examples of how staff had made additional efforts to support students’ continued engagement with their studies over COVID-19. These efforts included one-on-one follow-up with students to check if they had the resources and environments to be able to study, and taking steps to provide equipment where possible. Such efforts were appreciated by students. The Panel will comment on the work of the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) in supporting staff to transition first to online and later to dual delivery in their teaching and assessment.

The University had a substantial work programme underway at the time of the audit. This includes a series of organisational change initiatives with significant IT components (see GS 3), various working parties and policy revisions, plus planned projects including a new Curriculum Framework and Graduate Profile. COVID-19 has accelerated shifts in teaching, learning, assessment and ways of working in partnership with students that were already underway. It has also prompted development of transnational education for the University. The Panel heard discussion of how to capitalise on these shifts and a recognition that a return to pre-COVID-19 approaches was neither desirable nor feasible.

The Panel considered the fact that the Vice-Chancellor’s role was an acting one at the time of the audit but this did not appear to have affected the audit. The Acting Vice-Chancellor explained how their role provided a “bridge” to the incoming Vice-Chancellor. The Acting Vice-Chancellor was conscious of the combined demands being placed on staff from COVID-19, change programmes and deficit-reduction initiatives and had taken steps to alleviate workload by slowing or deferring some projects including the Curriculum Framework and Graduate Profile projects. The Panel heard that 2023 was expected to have a focus on embedding the work currently underway. The Panel agrees with this focus and suggests that it explicitly include work signalled for major teaching, learning and supervision initiatives including the Curriculum Framework, Graduate Profile, good practice in supervision for postgraduate research students and policy development. Further comment will be made on these initiatives in this report. The University will need to continue to actively manage the interdependencies between initiatives.

The University’s location in the capital city is an important aspect of its strategic direction. It also presents challenges, however, in terms of staff recruitment and retention, with significant

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/news/2022/06/new-vice-chancellor-appointed-at-te-herenga-wakavictoria-university-of-wellington> (Accessed 26 October 2022.)

<sup>28</sup> KD 8; SRR, p. ix.

<sup>29</sup> SRR, p. ix.

competition from the public service for qualified and skilled staff, particularly for Māori staff, and high costs of living for students (and staff).

### **This report**

This report presents the Panel’s findings based on the evidence it has considered.

The Panel has commended areas of effective or good practice, affirmed practice that should result in enhancements to the quality assurance system for Aotearoa New Zealand universities and made recommendations where it considers attention needs to be paid to enhancing practice.

A draft of this report was submitted to the Board of the Academic Quality Agency for a quality assurance check on 3 November 2022 and to the University to identify any matters of factual inaccuracy on 21 November 2022.

This report is released under the authorisation of the AQA Board. All enquiries regarding the report should be directed to [comms@aqa.ac.nz](mailto:comms@aqa.ac.nz).

### **Cycle 5 academic audit**

The University’s Cycle 5 academic audit report was published in December 2014.<sup>30</sup> The University then provided a one-year follow-up report in 2016 and an inter-cycle report in 2018.<sup>31</sup> The inter-cycle report from the University indicated that recommendations addressing course information and academic advice (R2), benchmarking of academic programmes, curricula and assessment (R3), development of an academic integrity strategy (R6) and a protocol for confidential management of issues arising in postgraduate supervision (R8) were partially implemented, with further work underway. In response to the inter-cycle report, the AQA board noted that the Cycle 6 academic audit would follow up on the recommendations the University acknowledged were not complete at that time.

The University provided a further update on its response to Cycle 5 recommendations in its SRR.<sup>32</sup> This assessed Recommendation 2 (course information project and review of academic advice) and Recommendation 3 (benchmarking) as being “reviewed and enhanced” with a further assessment that R2 was “working towards implementation”. Recommendations 6 (academic integrity) and 8 (protocol for reporting issues in postgraduate supervision) were assessed as being implemented.

The Panel acknowledges that considerable work has been undertaken in response to Recommendation 2—“the University give priority to completing the Course Information Project and the review of academic advice in order to enhance the quality, reliability, and consistency of academic advising across the University”. This work expanded the scope of the original recommendation and contributed to developments that the Panel sees as positive (for example, the establishment of Titoko). However, the Panel disagrees with the University’s assessment of progress on the key issue of the Course Information Project, as aspects of this had been transferred to the Student Services Transformation Project and subsequently the Student Success Project. Neither was the Panel convinced that Recommendations 6 and 8 could be assessed as implemented, as the

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/victoriacycle5> (Accessed 23 September 2022.)

<sup>31</sup> KD 7.

<sup>32</sup> App. 2, SRR, pp. 65 – 69.

academic integrity strategy was yet to be fully implemented at the time of the audit and reporting postgraduate issues confidentially still seemed to be a work-in-progress. Further comment will be made on these in GS 20 and GS 29, respectively.

Recommendation 1 in the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University was “that the University gives priority to the systematic implementation of the Action Plan within its Vision and Strategy for Digital Learning and Teaching at Victoria 2012–2017, including development of feasible timelines, responsibilities, and target objectives or stages”. The University’s self-assessment was that this recommendation had been implemented.<sup>33</sup> The Panel appreciates that teaching and learning technology continues to evolve. However, it considers that the University still has further work to do to implement a digital teaching and learning strategy. This recommendation remains relevant in Cycle 6 and will be guided by the University’s Digital Roadmap.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> SRR, p. 65.

<sup>34</sup> SRR, p. 7.

## Section A: Leadership and management of teaching, learning and academic quality

This section of the audit framework examines the university-level systems and processes for ensuring academic quality, and how the University assures itself that the outcomes of these processes are adequate and appropriate. It also includes two guideline statements to assess progress on the University's enhancement theme plan from the first phase of Cycle 6.<sup>35</sup>

The University's strategic plan (2020 – 2024) sets out a vision of being a “world-leading capital city university and one of the great global–civic universities” and articulates an iho (essence) of “a global–civic university with our marae at our heart” with unique attributes stemming from “our values and our capital city location”. A “commitment to being a values-based university, to sustainability, and to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi, te Reo Māori, Mātauranga Māori, and our relationships with iwi and iwi-related organisations” is seen as central to the University's vision.<sup>36</sup>

A Māori Strategic Outcomes Framework—*Mai i te Iho ki te Pae* (2020 – 2040)—is aligned with the University's strategic plan and has a key objective of providing the DVC (Māori) “and the wider university with a means to monitor and make progress towards the Māori dimensions of the University's Strategic Plan”. *Mai i te Iho ki te Pae* articulates “Māori-related outcomes for each of the [six] strategies” in the University's strategic plan.<sup>37</sup>

A Pasifika Strategy and Operational Plan 2021 – 2025 has three sub-plans: (1) to grow the University's Pasifika identity; (2) Pasifika student success; and (3) Pasifika staff success.<sup>38</sup> The Panel appreciated having access to this confidential document but thought it would be useful if a publicly accessible version could be made available. The Panel also noted a possible lack of coherence between the University's strategic plan and Pasifika Strategy and Operational Plan. The former refers to ‘Asia-Pacific’, while acknowledging links to the wider Pacific as part of the University's ‘iho’, and the latter focuses on the Pacific region. The AVC (Pasifika) is responsible for the Pasifika Strategy and Operational Plan.

The University's aspirations and goals for equity, diversity and inclusion are set out in a 2018 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Framework. The EDI Framework identifies attraction and retention, participation, influence and engagement, and retention goals for student and staff groups.<sup>39</sup>

Work undertaken as part of the University's resilience programme, *He moana pukepuke e ekengia e te waka*—*Navigating choppy waters: Te Herenga Waka to 2025*,<sup>40</sup> developed a series of design principles (ngā Herenga) to guide “how the University should approach developing specific

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<sup>35</sup> AQA (2020). Guide to Cycle 6 Academic Audit. p. 3.

<sup>36</sup> KD 1.

<sup>37</sup> KD 4.

<sup>38</sup> KD 5.

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/academic/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-framework.pdf> (Accessed 27 October 2022.)

<sup>40</sup> [https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/1908157/he-moana-pukepuke-e-ekengia-e-te-waka.pdf](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1908157/he-moana-pukepuke-e-ekengia-e-te-waka.pdf) (Accessed 24 September 2022.)

responses to the future”.<sup>41</sup> The design principles reflect the existing strategic direction (the importance of place, creativity) and values (kaitiakitanga, rangatiratanga, whanaungatanga, inclusivity) but also amplify or develop additional themes (wellbeing, integration, agility, flexibility).

Teaching and learning in the period leading up to the Cycle 6 academic audit was guided by the Learning and Teaching Strategy, Te Rautaki Manuako, 2017 – 2020. This set out a series of teaching and learning goals, grouped under six Māori values, plus an implementation plan with responsibilities and timelines for actions.<sup>42</sup>

The strategic direction for teaching and learning (Te Korou: Learning and Teaching Plan 2022 – 2025) was in draft form at the time of the audit and is a plan rather than a strategy. The strategic direction for teaching and learning is considered to be set out in other documents, including the University’s strategic plan, and principles and priorities developed in He moana pukepuke e ekengia e te waka— Navigating choppy waters: Te Herenga Waka to 2025. The intent of the plan is to connect key teaching and learning projects already underway and the scope of the plan identifies seventeen such projects. The draft plan outlines actions for supporting the University’s Māori values. Progress on the plan will be reported to the University’s Learning and Teaching Committee.<sup>43</sup>

#### **GS 1 Planning and reporting**

The university gathers and uses appropriate and valid data and information to establish objectives, plan, assess progress and make improvements in its teaching and learning activities.

In addition to the key plans outlined above, the University has a multi-year strategic roadmap that includes “metrics and targets for monitoring progress” on the strategies in the strategic plan and an annual management plan. The University reports on progress in its Annual Report with quarterly interim reporting to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Council. The Annual Report includes progress on Education Performance Indicators (EPIs) established by the Tertiary Education Commission and used in Investment Plan decisions and funding. Reporting to Council on strategic projects was refined in 2021 to focus on core projects.<sup>44</sup>

The University outlined a series of data sources and sets it uses for planning and reporting. These include assessing teaching and learning metrics in the TEC’s Ngā Kete data toolkit and data available through the University’s own Enterprise Data Warehouse and Power BI reporting. Bespoke Power BI reports are developed for SLT, and the University has been developing Power BI dashboards for wider audiences, including Heads of School. Further dashboards, incorporating other datasets, are planned. Data from student surveys is readily available on the University’s website.

The Panel heard positive comment on access to data and the ability of key users to be involved in the development of dashboards so that their data needs were included. However, the Panel also

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<sup>41</sup> SRR, p. ix.

<sup>42</sup> KD 2.

<sup>43</sup> FE, GS 15 Draft L&T Plan, July 2022.

<sup>44</sup> SRR, p. 1.

heard that the dashboard rollout had not yet reached Heads of School and that other users would appreciate dashboards designed for their specific needs.

The University is increasing its data capabilities further with the development of predictive and learning analytics. These are contingent on other projects but, when complete, will enhance the University's ability for segmented and real-time decision-making, particularly in providing timely support for students. The Panel heard a great deal of comment reflecting high expectations for learning analytics. It cautions that some management of expectations may be needed to guide what analytics can and cannot (and should not) do. The Panel therefore supports the University's enhancement initiative to develop data governance protocols around the use of analytics and the recommendation from the University's review of compliance with its Te Tiriti o Waitangi Statute that "provision for culturally safe handling of Māori data be included in relevant university policies and processes".<sup>45</sup>

The University holds much data and is developing its capabilities further. The Panel, however, gained the sense that data were mainly reported through management channels. Less use was made of it in teaching and learning for iterative enhancement (continuous improvement) or to monitor and analyse student performance to understand underlying patterns and areas for specific cohort improvement. For example, the Panel did not hear of data being discussed in academic committees. Similarly, while data might be used to inform change and for some monitoring, the Panel did not hear how interventions based on data were reported and then how data was interrogated and iterated for further interventions and improvements. The Panel endorses the University's work on developing data for planning and reporting to date but considers there is further work to do in using data to inform teaching and learning developments, to monitor student performance, and to provide support for staff and students to interrogate and iterate data to examine the impact of interventions.

**Affirmation:** *The Panel affirms the University's investment in data capability to inform teaching and learning, performance monitoring and support for students, and suggests that further work provide support for staff to interrogate data for iterative enhancement.*

Associated with the above affirmation—and recognising the number of projects the University has underway—the Panel recommends that evaluation plans are developed for all initiatives. Data required for evaluation should be identified in tandem with the relevant success measures at the outset of the initiative.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends that evaluation plans are developed for all teaching, learning and supervision initiatives.*

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<sup>45</sup> FE, GS06 b.

## **GS 2 Student voice**

Improved outcomes for students are enabled through engaging with the student voice in quality assurance processes at all levels, and this is communicated to students.

The University considers working in partnership with students to be part of its iho and distinctiveness<sup>46</sup> and sets out on its Learning partnership webpage ways to make sure student voices are heard.<sup>47</sup> The Learning partnership page provides links to ways in which student feedback is sought, including feedback on courses and teaching, class representatives, student surveys and the role of the Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association – Te Rōpū Taurira o Te Whare Wānanga o Te Upoko Ō Te Ika a Māui (VUWSA)<sup>48</sup> and informal processes. Summary reports from student surveys are also available on this page. Another webpage provides access to course evaluation data for all courses. Course outlines also link to this page and include comment on changes that have been made in response to feedback.<sup>49</sup>

The Panel considered the class representative system was generally working well and is an example of joint activity between the University and the students' association. However, the Panel also considered that further attention to closing feedback loops could strengthen the class representative system and the system itself might play a greater role in closing feedback loops.

University committees—including Council, Academic Board and its sub-committees—have student members. The University acknowledges diversity in student voices and the numbers of student members of committees have increased slightly. Students are involved in strategic initiatives through consultation, through membership of working groups, and as members of governance groups for teaching and teaching initiatives. The Panel heard that the University was seeking to embed student voice in projects at the outset rather relying on later consultation. The Vice-Provost (Academic) convenes a regular meeting with student representatives and there are other regular meetings between student leaders and senior managers including the Vice-Chancellor.

In July 2020, in response to a paper to Council that outlined the range of student engagement activities and made recommendations for improvement, VUWSA presented a paper on Student Communication and Representation on behalf of the Student Assembly. The Student Assembly is a consultative body that includes student representation from VUWSA, Ngāi Taurira, the Pasifika Students' Council, V-ISA International Students' Association, Victoria University Feminist Organisation, UniQ, the Disabled Students' Association, Vic Without Barriers (refugee background students), faculties, University Council, residential advisors and student tutors.<sup>50</sup> The Student Communication and Representation paper outlined the student experience with working in

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<sup>46</sup> SRR, p. 4; KD 1, p. 13.

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/learning-teaching/partnership> (Accessed 27 September 2022.)

<sup>48</sup> Te Whare Wānanga o Te Upoko Ō Te Ika a Māui was the te reo Māori name of the University between 1994 and 2019. <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/about/our-story/our-identity/information-for-alumni/te-herenga-waka> (Accessed 27 October 2022.)

<sup>49</sup> SRR, p. 4.

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.vuwsa.org.nz/student-assembly> (Accessed 27 September 2022.)



partnership, the challenges they had encountered and offered suggestions for more meaningful partnership.<sup>51</sup>

In response to this paper, the Ngā Kīwai o te Kete – Student Engagement Framework was co-developed by VUWSA and the University.<sup>52</sup> This “provides an overarching, principle-based framework for the University’s commitment to students as partners. This framework builds upon the University’s Strategic Plan, and is guided by [its] Te Tiriti Statute, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Framework, and other statutes and important documents.”<sup>53</sup> An annual agreement between student representatives and the University is based on the Student Engagement Framework.<sup>54</sup>

Students the Panel met with were supportive of the Student Engagement Framework and associated agreement but felt that the Framework was not a panacea for other issues they wished to progress with the University. These include increasing the diversity of and respect for student voices in university decision-making; the persistence of an “us vs them” narrative; lack of acknowledgement of (and compensation for) power imbalances in relationships (despite stated commitments to partnership); a lack of expectations about staff conduct; training for staff in engaging with student representatives; lack of transparency in resource allocation; and lack of access to and engagement with senior leadership. The Panel heard differing views of committee membership and how consultation reflected partnership from students and university staff.

Paradoxically, the structures of an engagement framework and annual agreement may be impeding open and transparent dialogue between a wider set of student representatives and senior leaders outside positions identified in the University’s various plans and policies. Challenges can arise if no, or few, other channels is/are available through which to address issues in the specified relationship, or if capacity in a specified relationship is limited. Nonetheless, the development of such partnership agreements is in line with international good practice and both students and staff acknowledged that it was too early to assess their longer-term impact. The first annual agreement under the Framework was signed in June 2022 and training for the Student Assembly was signalled for completion in September 2022. The Panel suggests that efforts be made to enable future annual agreements to be decided early in the academic year.

The University and students both raised the issue of how students are remunerated or otherwise compensated for their contributions. The 2022 Annual Student Agreement includes work on developing parameters for recognition and guidelines for the future. The Panel considers this to be important work that may have implications for the sector more broadly.

The Panel considers the Ngā Kīwai o te Kete – Student Engagement Framework and annual agreements to be a positive development and suggests there is a need for ongoing relationship and partnership building. The Panel suggests the University keeps urgently pursuing this work on building

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<sup>51</sup> SD 11.

<sup>52</sup> SD 12; [https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/2026590/Nga-kiwai-o-te-kete-Student-engagement-framework.pdf](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/2026590/Nga-kiwai-o-te-kete-Student-engagement-framework.pdf) (Accessed 29 September 2022.)

<sup>53</sup> SD 12, p. 2.

<sup>54</sup> FE GS02.

productive partnerships with both undergraduate and postgraduate students, including closing the loop with students on changes and developments.

**Affirmations** *The Panel affirms the development of the Ngā Kīwai o te Kete – Student Engagement Framework and annual Student Agreement and encourages the University to keep progressing its work on building productive partnerships with students.*

### **GS 3 Teaching and learning environments**

Teaching and learning activities are supported by appropriate learning environments (infrastructure, spaces, media, facilities and resources).

One consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and government response measures, including the use of lockdowns, has been that universities have paid greater attention to their digital learning environments. Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington is no exception, and the University acknowledges that COVID-19 highlighted both points of resilience and weakness in its teaching and learning infrastructure. The Cycle 5 academic audit report recommended the University give priority to the systematic implementation of an action plan within its vision and strategy for digital teaching and learning, and in its inter-cycle report the University reported that this work was broadly completed.<sup>55</sup>

The University has updated its vision and strategy and developed an action plan operationalised through a digital roadmap. The roadmap included 36 projects to be implemented over three to five years.<sup>56</sup> Major projects of relevance to this academic audit include the implementation of a new Learning Management System (LMS)—Canvas—(and, under its auspices, learning analytics and ePortfolio), a Curriculum Management System (CMS) and an upgrade to the Student Relationship Management System (SRM).<sup>57</sup> The University characterises these as organisational change initiatives rather than ICT projects *per se*, although they do have significant IT components. The LMS and SRM will both contribute to the development of learning, learner and predictive analytics. Other projects include online examinations, inclusive learning tools, further work on the student portal and a new complaints management system.

The Panel was concerned about the workload associated with the number of projects underway and how interdependencies between projects were being identified and mitigated. It was reassured that the University did have adequate governance in place and the ability to manage interdependencies.

The Panel also explored the inter-relationship between the teaching and learning strategic direction, pedagogy and technology in the implementation of organisational change projects. It heard that the projects were led by teaching and learning, with IT playing an enabling role. Evidence of the primacy

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<sup>55</sup> Inter-cycle report.

<sup>56</sup> SRR, p. 7.

<sup>57</sup> SD 18.

of teaching and learning was seen in the development of threshold standards for students' online learning experiences<sup>58</sup> and (re-)design of courses to generate meaningful analytics.

The Panel was impressed with the attention the University was paying to developing user support and capability building in the LMS project. Learning and Teaching Advisors have been embedded in faculties and schools to be easily accessible to academic staff and avoid a 'service desk' model for support (following the successful 'HIVE' model utilised during the University's response to COVID-19 – see GS 24). Learning design skillsets and pathways for progression have been clearly mapped for these critical enablers of the LMS implementation and the University intends to extend this model to professional administrative staff within faculties and schools to enable support to be scaled.

**Affirmation:** *The Panel affirms the model for supporting staff in implementing the new Learning Management System.*

The shift to enterprise planning and system design shown in the implementation of the LMS will also have positive impacts for teaching and learning. Common good practice course design elements can be included as default options. It will be more difficult to make local changes that could affect the overall experience for students.

The University's attention to teaching and learning environments has not been solely focused on the digital environment, and its commitment to place—including the University's location in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington itself—is clear in strategic documents. The Panel was provided with a draft of the University's Strategic Asset Management Plan<sup>59</sup> and viewed a document that examined the sorts of teaching spaces anticipated for the future.<sup>60</sup> The Panel also explored the availability of spaces for different student groups.

The University completed a science teaching and research building—Te Toki a Rata—in 2017 and a Hub associated with the refurbishment of the library in 2014. Other developments of the physical teaching and learning environment have been in response to student feedback, utilisation studies and the need to address resilience to earthquakes.<sup>61</sup> The University is currently undertaking major physical projects with the development of a Living Pā, a Fale Malae and a national music centre. The lack of access to the University marae while the Living Pā is being developed was felt as a loss by students with whom the Panel met.

The Panel heard that dedicated and appropriate physical spaces, including dedicated space in the library, are available for student groups on campus. These spaces include Āwhina rooms, Pasifika Haus and a Rainbow room. The Panel heard of some Māori students feeling reluctant (whakamā) to use Āwhina rooms as they did not speak te reo Māori or felt they were "not Māori enough". While disabled students did have access to dedicated space and equipment, other spaces, including some teaching spaces and spaces for postgraduate research students, were inaccessible to wheelchair

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<sup>58</sup> Document provided at site visit.

<sup>59</sup> FE, GS03.

<sup>60</sup> SD 14, SD 16.

<sup>61</sup> SRR, p. 8; <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/news/2014/hub-wins-architecture-award> (Accessed 28 October 2022.)

users. No dedicated space was available to international students, apart from the international, offshore study centre.

It is evident that senior leadership and staff recognise that the physical and digital environments need to be fit for purpose, integrated and well supported. The Panel affirms the extensive work underway to create an enhanced (digital) learning environment for students with the implementation of the LMS (Canvas), which will be integrated with other digital platforms such as the new SRM. While, as previously noted (GS1), it is important to manage heightened staff expectations about the move to the new LMS, the Panel thinks the move will enable the University to progress important and much needed initiatives such as predictive and learning analytics.

**Affirmation:** *The Panel affirms work underway across a portfolio of interdependent physical, but especially digital projects, to create an enhanced teaching and learning environment, with attention particularly focused on the building of staff capability.*

#### **GS 4 Academic delegations**

Academic delegations support consistent and effective decision making and accountability for teaching and learning quality and research supervision.

The University has made significant progress in developing and managing delegations since the Cycle 5 academic audit. The Panel was impressed that, in addition to creating a Delegations Schedule, this is now an online searchable database which is available on the University's website.

Discussion with staff, however, suggested that many are still unaware of the Delegations Schedule and that they can find and search (using 'authority', 'category' or 'subcategory') online. The Panel encourages the University to complete the final piece of work on the Delegations Statute by developing and implementing a plan to increase staff awareness and use of the Schedule. More sophisticated monitoring of visits to the site (beyond page views) would provide important evidence that it is being well-used and found to be useful.

The Panel examined delegations for Heads of School as these roles are important for staff development and the experience of students. It was provided with an update on a review of the Head of School role. This review had recommended further work on Head of School accountabilities. The update indicated that this work had not yet been scoped. However, the Panel heard that the balance of responsibilities in the Head of School role had shifted towards management and support of people and away from budget responsibilities. This shift of responsibilities was felt, to some extent, to have contributed to the Head of School role becoming transactional rather than transformative.

#### **GS 5 Academic risk management**

Potential disruption to the quality and continuity of teaching and learning at the university, including risks to infrastructure, is mitigated through effective risk management processes.

The University has a risk management policy, a business continuity plan, emergency response plan, crisis management plan and guide, and risk management toolkit to mitigate risk and potential disruption to the quality and continuity of teaching and learning. This includes disruption not only to the physical infrastructure but also the information technology infrastructure. The risk management policy is very overdue for review. However, the suite of risk management and mitigation tools served the University well over the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2016 Kaikoura earthquake and the public demonstration and occupation of Parliament grounds next to University campuses in early 2022 also tested the University's ability to mitigate disruption to the continuity of teaching and learning. The Panel considers the University does have robust academic risk management plans to mitigate potential disruption to the quality and continuity of teaching and learning.

Having a robust academic risk management framework is particularly important given the current risk profile of the University. The ongoing impacts of COVID-19, the need to rebuild the pipeline of international students, moving to a new LMS and having multiple other projects underway with a stretched resource all contribute to this risk profile.

The University examined its teaching resilience as part of the Te Herenga Waka Resilience Programme. The outputs of the teaching resilience workstream included a (draft) staff capability framework and (draft) guidelines for evaluating programme structures to ensure students can complete programmes "in a timely fashion despite major disruption during their study".<sup>62</sup> Another part of the Resilience Programme examined potential scenarios for the futures the University may face.<sup>63</sup> This work recognised that although the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the University, it was one of a number of major societal, economic, environmental and technological issues and trends that universities face. The Panel also heard awareness of risks associated with the future role of universities in society reflected in discussions on this guideline statement.

The Panel explored three other areas of potential risk to the quality and continuity of teaching and learning. These were academic integrity (see GS 20), staff fatigue, and policy review and updating. It heard comments about staff workload and fatigue. The specific risk associated with academic integrity was not well addressed in the SSR under either this GS or GS 20. Risks associated with cyber-security were also raised in interviews.

As previously mentioned, risk associated with the wellbeing of staff (given workload and change fatigue) has been recognised by slowing or deferring some major projects, which has been appreciated. However, the Panel notes that this could generate further risks, including a reduced ability for the IT components of organisational change initiatives, such as the Curriculum Framework and Graduate Profile, to be informed by pedagogical drivers.

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<sup>62</sup> SRR, p. 11; SD 35, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> FE, GS05.

The Panel considered that the slow pace of updating key policies—academic integrity, grievance processes, the risk management policy itself (dated 2008)—constituted a further academic risk. While it acknowledges that the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to delay in some policy renewal, the Panel recommends that maintaining currency of policies be included in the University’s suggested Enhancement Initiative 7 to develop an academic quality framework that embeds a systematic approach.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends that academic policy be included in the academic quality framework anticipated in Enhancement Initiative 7.*

#### **GS 6 Progress on the Enhancement Theme (Māori students)**

The university has achieved the objectives in its enhancement theme plan with respect to Māori students and successful practice has been embedded and is sustainable.

The University established six objectives relevant to Māori students in its enhancement theme plan and reported on progress at the end of the enhancement phase of Cycle 6.<sup>64</sup> The University’s self-assessment was that it had achieved its enhancement theme objectives and the Panel broadly agrees with this assessment. It has further comment to make on the pathways objective below.

The University’s first enhancement theme objective was to monitor implementation of recommendations from a review of targeted student interventions. This review led to the establishment of Āwhina: a single, university-wide support team for Māori students, including postgraduate students. Āwhina offers academic support, peer mentoring, study spaces and social and cultural connections to help Māori students navigate the University.<sup>65</sup> Āwhina has staff embedded in faculties and located centrally. The unit reports to the Office of the DVC Māori. The Panel heard positive comment from staff and students about the development and activities of Āwhina. It also viewed a post-implementation review of Āwhina.<sup>66</sup> The Panel considered the University has taken an evidence-based approach to a whole-of-university model of support for Māori students. It encourages the University to ensure that planned staffing levels within Āwhina are maintained.

**Commendation:** *The Panel commends the establishment of Āwhina and the University’s ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of this initiative.*

The University’s second enhancement theme objective was “to raise the visibility and presence of [the University] as a place to study for Māori students”.<sup>67</sup> The University cited the development of the Living Pā project, having a second Māori student recruitment staff member, development of a Te Tiriti o Waitangi handbook and undertaking a Tiriti audit against a framework developed by a sub-committee of Te Kāhui Amokura (Universities NZ committee on Māori) and New Zealand Vice-

<sup>64</sup> KD 9.

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/maori-hub/tautoko/whanau/awhina> (Accessed 30 September 2022.)

<sup>66</sup> FE, GS06a, Āwhina Evaluation 2022.

<sup>67</sup> KD 9, pp. 2-3.

Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) members as evidence of achieving this objective. The Panel agrees and would add the establishment of Associate Dean Māori roles in faculties as further contributing to the visibility and presence of Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington as a place to study for Māori students.<sup>68</sup> The Panel will comment further on the visibility and presence of Mātauranga Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi in academic programmes and curricula in Section C as these also contribute to Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University being a place to study for Māori students.

The Panel considers Te Tiriti o Waitangi Handbook and Te Tiriti o Waitangi audit to be examples of good practice. The handbook and audit rely on Te Tiriti o Waitangi Statute. The Panel is also impressed with the Statute as an example of good practice but wishes to highlight the operationalisation of the Statute through the handbook and audit as commendable practice.

**Commendation:** *The Panel commends the University for its Te Tiriti o Waitangi Handbook and Te Tiriti o Waitangi audit.*

The University has identified an enhancement initiative to implement accepted recommendations of Te Tiriti o Waitangi review related to teaching and learning. Further components of this enhancement initiative are to advance the University's Te Reo Māori plan (see GS 21), the Taihonoa programme (see GS 9) and the Iho Project. The Panel supports this enhancement initiative.<sup>69</sup>

**Affirmation:** *The Panel affirms the University's implementation plan for recommendations arising from its Te Tiriti o Waitangi audit.*

The University developed a pathway programme (Tohu Māoritanga) for Māori students who do not have a university entrance qualification (enhancement theme objective 3). It has also made scholarships available for students who complete this programme so that their first year free-fees allowance is not consumed by gaining access to university.<sup>70</sup> The Tohu Māoritanga programme has yet to achieve its objectives, either in terms of the range of programmes that students gain access to or the numbers in the programme overall. The Panel heard mixed views as to whether the Tohu Māoritanga programme would be included in other planned reviews of admission pathways (GS 8). The Panel's view is that the Tohu Māoritanga programme should be included in the review.

The University's fourth enhancement theme initiative was to monitor and analyse enrolment, retention and achievement data for Māori students.<sup>71</sup> The Panel heard that staff used Power BI tools and dashboards to monitor student progress. The Panel agrees with comments made that the University's development of learner analytics will improve monitoring of Māori student progress.

The University provided its 2021 Educational Performance Indicators (EPIs) which show that while first-year retention rates for Māori students in Bachelor's degree-level qualifications were better than the university sector overall, course completion rates at all levels were slightly lower. The

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<sup>68</sup> SRR, pp. 12 – 13.

<sup>69</sup> SRR, p. 14.

<sup>70</sup> SRR, p. 13.

<sup>71</sup> SRR, p. 12.

proportion of Bachelor's degree-funded EFTS who are Māori has increased over the last three years from 12.5% to 13.1% but was below the University's 2021 target of 13.4%.<sup>72</sup> Titoko also has an important role to play in supporting success for Māori students and works closely with Āwhina to ensure an integrated, student-centred approach. Cultural competence is included in training for Titoko staff to enable them to provide this support.

The SRR does not comment on the fifth enhancement theme objective, which was to contribute to the development of good practice in relation to the national enhancement theme. However, staff and students from Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington contributed to the national enhancement theme steering group, participated in symposia and contributed to the development of reports.<sup>73</sup>

The sixth enhancement theme objective was to increase opportunities for Māori student voices. The Panel has already commented on the diversity of student voices in GS 2. However, it also explored why an apparently well-received hui fono had not been repeated. The Panel assumed that other work on student voices and engagement may have overtaken this initiative.

#### **GS 7 Progress on the Enhancement Theme (Pasifika students)**

The university has achieved the objectives in its enhancement theme plan with respect to Pasifika students and successful practice has been embedded and is sustainable.

The University's enhancement theme objectives for Pasifika students follow those for Māori students, although the approaches to addressing the objectives differ, with the enhancement theme for Pasifika students being led by the AVC (Pasifika) and guided by the University's Pasifika Strategic and Operational Plan.<sup>74</sup>

The University's first enhancement theme objective for Pasifika students was to monitor the implementation of the Pasifika Student Success Plan (PSSP) and recommendations from a 2017 review of targeted interventions. A Pasifika Student Success Team (PSST) was formed following the review of interventions.<sup>75</sup> The PSST reports to the Office of the AVC (Pasifika) and (similar to Āwhina in GS 6) helps Pasifika students navigate transition into university and university study. The PSST also operates as a hub-and-spoke model and provides access to Pasifika spaces, schools outreach, academic mentoring and pastoral support. Support for postgraduate students is also available.<sup>76</sup> A (confidential) evaluation of the PSST (SD 44) considered the hub-and-spoke model to be working well but that relationships between the hub and the spokes and between the PSST and other parts of the University needed to be managed actively and that management, mentoring and professional development for the team could be improved.<sup>77</sup> The Panel heard many positive comments about the PSST, including their engagement with students using social media, but also acknowledges that

<sup>72</sup> FE, 2021 EPIs final summary.

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.enhanceunz.com/> (Accessed 30 September 2022.)

<sup>74</sup> SRR, p. 14; KD 5.

<sup>75</sup> SRR, p. 14.

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/pasifika/our-community/pasifika-student-success> (Accessed 1 October 2022.)

<sup>77</sup> SD 44.



post-implementation challenges identified by a post-implementation review of the PSST need attention.

**Commendation:** *The Panel commends the establishment of Pasifika Student Success Team and its commitment to supporting success for Pasifika students.*

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends the University address remaining recommendations in the post-implementation of the Pasifika Student Success Team.*

The second enhancement theme objective for Pasifika students was about raising the visibility of the University as a place for Pasifika students to study. The SRR commented on recruitment initiatives, including use of targeted communications channels and outreach activities with schools. The Panel heard an emphasis was being placed on working with Pasifika students and their families to enable them to become more familiar with the university environment and through on-campus outreach days.<sup>78</sup> The Panel also heard of novel initiatives such as summer camps to increase visibility and build familiarity and thought these sounded promising.

Numbers of Pasifika academic staff, curriculum content (see Section C) and strategic reporting relationships are further aspects of visibility of Pasifika at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington. The University does have targets in its strategic plan for increasing (tripling) the number of Pasifika academics and the Panel will comment further in GS 22.<sup>79</sup> Some staff and students the Panel heard from felt that the AVC (Pasifika) not being a member of SLT contributed to a disempowering of Pasifika voices and perspectives in strategic planning and decision-making. The Panel encourages the University to keep these matters under review to support embedding and sustaining good practice for Pasifika students and staff.

The development of the Fale Malae project will make a further contribution to the visibility of Pasifika at the University and the University has identified an enhancement initiative to progress the development of the Fale Malae. The enhancement initiative indicates the Fale Malae will increase engagement with Pasifika communities. The Panel sought to explore the sorts of activities and services that would occur and be available at the Fale Malae. While these are still under discussion with other partners in the project, there is an expectation the University will be able to utilise the Fale to support access and academic success for Pasifika students.

**Affirmation:** *The Panel affirms the University's Enhancement Initiative 7 that it "progress the development of the Fale Malae to increase the engagement with Pasifika communities, students, and schools in university life and to enhance Pasifika students entering university and achieving academic success".*

Establishing a pre-degree pathway for Pasifika students is the third enhancement theme initiative for Pasifika students. A Diploma in University Studies (Pasifika Pathways) that allows cross-crediting of 60 credits into a Bachelor's degree has been established. However, the University reports that pass

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<sup>78</sup> SRR, p. 15.

<sup>79</sup> KD 1, p. 27.

rates in the programmes are a concern, as are pass rates for Pasifika students in other pathways programmes. The Panel agrees with the University's suggestion that there is a review of pathways that allows for a focus on Pasifika student success and will comment further on this with respect to GS 8.<sup>80</sup>

The University's fourth enhancement theme objective for Pasifika students was to monitor and analyse enrolment, retention and achievement data for Pasifika students.<sup>81</sup> Data presented in the SRP and comments made in interviews showed this was happening. A comprehensive report on Pasifika students' participation and achievement and the growth of Pasifika youth in Aotearoa New Zealand was included in the University's SRP.<sup>82</sup> However, the Panel also heard comment that dedicated Power BI dashboards had not yet been developed for Pasifika students. The Panel encourages the University to make such dashboards available to staff monitoring Pasifika students' progress and provide training in their access and utilisation.

Enhancement theme objectives five and six for Pasifika students were to contribute to good practice in the national enhancement theme and to increase opportunities for Pasifika student voices to be heard.<sup>83</sup> Again, staff and students from Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University contributed to the national enhancement theme steering group and activities, including contributing a keynote address at the second enhancement theme symposium.<sup>84</sup> The University provided evidence that Pasifika students felt their voices were heard.<sup>85</sup> However, the Panel also heard that these voices felt disempowered at times and disconnected from the SLT more broadly (see GS 2).

Overall, the Panel considers the University is making progress on its enhancement theme objectives for Pasifika students although considerable improvement in EPIs for Pasifika students is needed. Titoko again has an important role to play in supporting Pasifika student success and will work with the PSST. The Panel agrees with the University's assessment that addressing challenges in access to university for Pasifika students is a national challenge and would benefit from greater engagement with schools and communities.

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<sup>80</sup> SRR, p. 16.

<sup>81</sup> SRR, p. 14.

<sup>82</sup> SD 49.

<sup>83</sup> SRR, p. 14.

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.enhanceunz.com/copy-of-symposium-2019> (accessed 1 October 2022.)

<sup>85</sup> SD 45.

## Section B: Student life cycle, support and wellbeing

This section of the audit framework focuses on students, their entry to university, successful transitions through and beyond university, and advice and support to enable successful transitions.

The University provided a succinct description of its student body in its SRR and this is not reported in aggregate in the University's Annual Report. The University does provide data on numbers and percentages of Māori students, Pasifika students and students with disabilities and these are referred to below. More detailed data for some groups of students were available in specific reports. For example, the Pasifika Student Success Plan Annual Report contains details of enrolments by Faculty.<sup>86</sup>

In 2021, 14% of EFTS were from international students.<sup>87</sup> Fifty-eight per cent of students in 2021 were female and 1% were gender diverse.<sup>88</sup> Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University has a slightly younger age profile than the university sector nationally with 18% of students aged 18-19 years and 52% aged 20-24 in 2021.<sup>89</sup>

### **GS 8 Access**

Access to university, including through recognition of prior learning and credit transfer pathways, is consistent, equitable and transparent for students.

The University's targets for the future composition of its student body—that by 2025 “the composition of our university students .... will fully reflect the gender, ethnic and cultural diversity of Aotearoa New Zealand”—are guided by its Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024, its EDI Framework and Investment Plan.<sup>90</sup> The EDI Framework identifies focus groups of students as Māori students, Pasifika students, students with disabilities, students from refugee backgrounds, students studying in disciplines where there are significant gender disparities and/or issues of gender equity, LGBTQIA+ and Takatāpui students and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Scholarship support is aligned with EDI focus groups.<sup>91</sup>

A 2021 analysis of equity, diversity and inclusion noted that the number of students identifying as having a disability was representative of the population with a disability in Aotearoa New Zealand.<sup>92</sup> The University reports on access for Māori students and for Pasifika students in its Annual Report.<sup>93</sup> Māori commencing EFTS grew by 16% in 2021 but fell short of the University's target. Overall Māori

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<sup>86</sup> SD 49.

<sup>87</sup> KD 6, p. 15.

<sup>88</sup> KD 6, p. 9.

<sup>89</sup> Provider-based enrolments updated May 2022. (Accessed from <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/tertiary-participation> 7 October 2022).

<sup>90</sup> KD 1, p. 27; SRR, p. 18; <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/academic/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-framework.pdf> (Accessed 1 October 2022.); SD 2.

<sup>91</sup> SRR, p. 19.

<sup>92</sup> FE, EDI Current State Analysis December 2021.

<sup>93</sup> KD 6, p. 15.

EFTS were 11.9% of the University's domestic student population (against 17.1% of the national population)<sup>94</sup> and Pasifika EFTS increased to 6.5% (against 8% of the national population in 2020).<sup>95</sup> However, the University does not seem to report comprehensively or systematically on its EDI objectives for access.<sup>96</sup>

While overall the percentages of Māori students and Pasifika students studying at the University have been moving closer to wider population percentages, the Panel noted greater gaps between the percentage of postgraduate Māori students and postgraduate Pasifika students and the wider populations.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends the University give greater strategic focus to attracting Māori students and Pasifika students to postgraduate, particularly doctoral study.*

The Panel does recognise that supervision capacity will be a constraining factor and will comment further in GS 22.

Entry to the University is guided by Admission and Enrolment Regulations.<sup>97</sup> These have been recently reviewed and include admission requirements and pathways for domestic and international students. The University seeks feedback on students' experience pre-admission in its Getting Started survey. The latest summary of survey results available on the University website is for Trimester 2 2020.<sup>98</sup> This indicates that students had access to useful information in deciding what to study. Advice is also available from the Future Student Team at the University. This team includes Māori advisors and Pasifika advisors.<sup>99</sup>

Admission pathways include access via credit transfer. However, the University does not report on the use of credit transfer for access to the University.<sup>100</sup> The University increased use of Discretionary Entrance and Provisional Admission pathways for students impacted by COVID-19.<sup>101</sup>

The University foreshadowed a review of pathway programmes with respect to GS 6 and 7. The Panel supports this intention and suggests that the review explicitly assess and make recommendations for improving access for EDI focus group students and that future reporting on access is systematic and comprehensive.

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<sup>94</sup> <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/maori-population-estimates-at-30-june-2021#:~:text=At%2030%20June%202021%3A,males%20and%20439%2C300%20M%C4%81ori%20females.> (Accessed 1 October 2022.)

<sup>95</sup> <https://www.mpp.govt.nz/assets/Reports/Pacific-Peoples-in-Aotearoa-Report.pdf>, p. 10. (Accessed 1 October 2022.)

<sup>96</sup> FE, EDI Current State Analysis December 2021, p.20.

<sup>97</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/academic/admission-and-enrolment-regulations.pdf> (Accessed 1 October 2022.)

<sup>98</sup> [https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/1905015/2020-student-voice-getting-started-topline-report-august.pdf](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1905015/2020-student-voice-getting-started-topline-report-august.pdf) (Accessed 1 October 2022.)

<sup>99</sup> SRR, p. 18.

<sup>100</sup> FE, p. 12.

<sup>101</sup> KD 6, p. 14; SD 54.

**Affirmation:** *The Panel affirms the University’s intention to review access pathways for EDI focus group students and suggests that this include specification for future reporting that is comprehensive and systematic.*

The Panel suggests that this review of access pathways should be comprehensive and include Discretionary Entrance, Provisional Admission and credit transfer pathways. The review should also include the Tohu Māoritanga programme (GS 6) and the Pasifika Pathways Diploma.

#### **GS 9 Transitions**

Transitions for students are supported at all levels of university study, including transitions beyond study and/or to employment, and students are well-equipped to contribute in their chosen fields, and more broadly to the economy and society.

The University’s model for transitions is set out in Paerangi, the student success framework.<sup>102</sup> According to the SRR, Paerangi is “a holistic advising model that supports students at key transition points”.<sup>103</sup> Paerangi is a high-level outcomes framework, aligned with the University’s values and strategic plan. Its guiding principles are that it is student-centred, whole-of-institution, inclusive and sustainable in that it supports delivery and continuous improvement. It does not contain targets, but the outcomes sought for the University are improved retention at key points of a student’s life cycle, including retention (or transition) into postgraduate study or employment.

The SRR sets out a series of transition initiatives and support programmes available to students. These include orientation events for new students, with a specific orientation for international students,<sup>104</sup> work-integrated-learning (WIL) opportunities, alumni mentoring and co-curricular programmes including Wellington Plus. The University has also taken a transition pedagogy<sup>105</sup> approach to pilot studies and developed resources for staff and students.<sup>106</sup> Resources have been developed for teaching staff to support first-year transitions, WIL and career planning.<sup>107</sup>

Survey data indicate that students find the new student orientation valuable.<sup>108</sup> Three-quarters of students using Careers and Employment services were satisfied with the service. However, the service was used by less than 30% of students. Feedback is also available for specific initiatives, but the Panel did not gain a sense that the University sought overall feedback on satisfaction with support for transitions. First-year degree-level retention rates for Māori students have improved from 2019 to 2021 but still lag behind those for non-Māori, non-Pasifika students. The same rates for

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<sup>102</sup> SD 55.

<sup>103</sup> SRR, p. 21.

<sup>104</sup> [https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/1905015/2020-student-voice-getting-started-topline-report-august.pdf](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1905015/2020-student-voice-getting-started-topline-report-august.pdf), p. 4. (Accessed 2 October 2022.)

<sup>105</sup> <https://transitionpedagogy.com.au/> (Accessed 2 October 2022.)

<sup>106</sup> SRR, p. 21.

<sup>107</sup> SD 56; SD 60; <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/careers/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree> (Accessed 2 October 2022.)

<sup>108</sup> [https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/1905015/2020-student-voice-getting-started-topline-report-august.pdf](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1905015/2020-student-voice-getting-started-topline-report-august.pdf), p. 5. (Accessed 2 October 2022).

Pasifika students have also improved slightly from 2019 to 2021 although they experienced a drop in 2020 and lag behind first-year retention rates for Māori students.<sup>109</sup>

The Panel explored how transitions were supported for EDI focus groups of students. It heard that Āwhina and the PSST provided good support for Māori students and for Pasifika students but that connections and employability support for Māori students and for Pasifika students could be improved. The proportions of Māori students and Pasifika students responding to the University's Graduate Destinations Survey are lower than the University population percentages.<sup>110</sup> The Panel notes that the Taihonoa Māori Engagement Programme, which lists 60 partners, could be a valuable contributor to careers and employability support for Māori students.<sup>111</sup> However, the Panel heard anecdotally that Māori graduates are in high demand in the employment market.

The Panel also heard that attention was paid to careers support for LGBTQI+ Takatāpui students and for refugee background students. While the Panel heard of good support for disabled students in terms of access and learning, it was not clear that careers support for these students also received dedicated attention, and encourages the University to clarify this.

The Panel agrees that transition points and the first-year experience are important but considers that support for transitions needs to be ongoing and embedded in curricula. The Panel heard that the University recognises the need for a co-ordinated approach to transitions. It supports the University's enhancement initiative (5) that it "extend the current orientation and transition model to develop a whole-of-university approach that enables students to build a solid foundation of skills, knowledge, and capability that will help foster early and ongoing engagement, resilience, retention, and success". However, the Panel recommends that this enhancement initiative focus on embedding support for transitions in curricula so that students do not need to seek additional support for transitions. The Curriculum Framework, Graduate Profile, Curriculum Management System, e-portfolios available in the new LMS, and learning analytics project will support work on this recommendation.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends the University focus its enhancement initiative to embed support for transitions and particularly for employability in the curriculum.*

Successful transitions into, through and out of university, and attaining competencies that support transition to employment, are critical academic matters that also support student mental wellbeing. The Panel therefore suggests further work on transitions should have clear academic oversight, be evidence-based and informed by data at key transition points, and be reported to and critiqued by academic committees.

The Panel also strongly suggests the University consider upscaling WIL opportunities and providing careers and employability curriculum support for postgraduate students, including doctoral students.

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<sup>109</sup> FE 2021 EPIs Final Summary.

<sup>110</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/careers/pdf-resources/2020-2021-graduate-destinations-report-pdf>, p. 5. (Accessed 2 October 2022)

<sup>111</sup> SRR, p. 14.

#### **GS 10 Academic advice**

Student achievement is supported through consistent and clear academic advice, including course/paper information and programme planning, and guidance for students on completion of requirements.

The University has undertaken considerable work, including developing IT systems, to improve academic advising.<sup>112</sup> This ultimately led to the establishment of Tītoko – the Centre for Student Success in 2022. Tītoko is operationalised using the hub-and-spoke model also seen in Āwhina and the PSST and the relationships between these units are important. The Panel understands Tītoko will work closely with Āwhina, the PSST and other units that provide support services for students. The relationship between these services should be articulated clearly and communicated with equal clarity to both students and staff.

Tītoko will operate a holistic advising model with students having a dedicated student success advisor at the ratio of 1:600.<sup>113</sup> The model relies heavily on the investment the University is making in ITR systems, particularly the LMS but also the student portal, the transition to a new SRM system to capture all student interactions and the new CMS. Together, these will also enable the development of analytics that will allow academic advice to be targeted and proactive.

**Affirmation:** *The Panel affirms the development of the holistic advising model and the establishment of Tītoko to support it.*

Tītoko represents a significant investment and shift in practice. The University has indicated it will continue to monitor its new approach to advising. The Panel suggests that this monitoring is strengthened and an evaluation plan (see GS 1) with measures and metrics developed.

#### **GS 11 Academic complaints appeals and grievances**

Academic complaints, appeals and grievances are addressed consistently and equitably. Where appropriate, outcomes of these processes inform improvements.

The University's Academic Grievance Policy (including academic complaints) has been in place since 2014. According to the SRR, several policies and statutes that apply to students have provisions for complaints.<sup>114</sup> A lack of a single, easily accessible complaints policy is an issue commonly identified by students.<sup>115</sup>

A review of the Academic Grievance Policy was initiated in 2019 but has been deferred due to other pressures arising from COVID-19 and also to ensure alignment with the Education (Pastoral Care of

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<sup>112</sup> SRR, p. 23.

<sup>113</sup> SRR, p. 24; SD 71.

<sup>114</sup> SRR, p. 24.

<sup>115</sup> SRR, p. 25.

Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice (2021) (the Code).<sup>116</sup> This deferral was noted as a potential risk in GS 5 and the lack of a single, clear system for addressing complaints was a source of frustration among students the Panel met with and is negatively impacting the quality of the student experience.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends the University progress with urgency its work on reviewing the Academic Grievance Policy and developing clear guidance for students and staff in raising and resolving complaints.*

The University is encouraged to work with students as partners in addressing this recommendation and to ensure that processes for raising and resolving complaints are culturally safe and consistent with the recommendation from the University's self-review of its Te Te Titriti o Waitangi Statute.<sup>117</sup> The availability of independent support for students should also be included.

The Panel sought information about the University's collection and analysis of complaints. It was advised that centralised reporting of complaints does not currently occur but is being developed as part of the University's work in relation to the Code. Information provided to the Panel included reference to scoping a new complaints management IT system.<sup>118</sup>

The University advised that it does not benchmark the number and nature of grievances with peer institutions as numbers of grievances are relatively low. The Panel considers this response somewhat misses the point. If peer universities were receiving higher numbers of grievances or grievances of a particular nature this could be an indication that Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington's processes were less enabling of complaints and grievances. Conversely it could provide additional confidence in the quality of the experience of students at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington.

The Panel was left with some confusion about the current and future relationships between academic complaints and grievances, work being undertaken on complaints in response to the Code, and the work of the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team (SICR). It noted that some cases handled by SICR were categorised as "academic issues".<sup>119</sup> The Panel also encourages the University to make clear any differences in responsibilities and processes, including complaints and grievances, with respect to postgraduate supervision (see GS 27).

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<sup>116</sup> SRR, p. 25.

<sup>117</sup> FE, GS06, R 32.

<sup>118</sup> FE, p. 13.

<sup>119</sup> FE GS11 b.



## **GS 12 Learning support**

Students have timely and equitable access to appropriate learning support services.

The University provides a range of learning support services and has focused on flexible availability of services to meet changing student needs, including over the COVID-19 period. Learning support for EDI focus groups is provided by Āwhina, the PSST and Te Amaru-Disability Services.<sup>120</sup> Thirteen per cent of students accessed Student Learning in 2020.<sup>121</sup>

COVID-19 provided impetus for improving accessibility for disabled students. An assessment outreach pilot that sought to mitigate assessment stress factors has been maintained as business-as-usual practice.<sup>122</sup>

Also in response to COVID-19, the University developed an offshore Student Learning Centre in Beijing.<sup>123</sup> Te Taiako Student Learning also worked with the Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) to support offshore thesis students. Changes to the Peer Assisted Student Support (PASS) programme enabled offshore students to participate.<sup>124</sup> The Panel suggests that the University reflect on its COVID-19 experience in continuing to refine its provision of learning support and the times (including after-hours) and forms (including off-campus) during which it is available. This should include assuring learning support provision meets the needs of Māori students, Pasifika students, offshore students, distance and online students, and EDI focus group students.

The Panel anticipates that, with the implementation of the LMS and the SRM, the development of analytics and roll-out of Titoko's holistic and proactive advising model, the pattern of referrals to student learning services will change. The LMS is also likely to be used to make some learning support resources available earlier. Learner analytics will also provide greater ability to evaluate the effectiveness of learning support (and other) interventions for cohort groups of students in terms of, for example, uplift in retention, improved academic performance and increased satisfaction.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends that data regarding student cohort access to various forms of learning support be collected for monitoring utilisation trends and evaluating the efficacy of service provision.*

As improved data on usage and effectiveness of learning support interventions becomes available, the Panel suggests the University consider embedding learning support and academic skills development in a contextualised and scaffolded way in core curriculum under the auspices of the new Curriculum Framework. Embedding support makes it equitably available to all students in a just-in-time curriculum-focused approach and reduces the cognitive load on students who do not need to seek additional support outside the curriculum. It also offers opportunities for resource efficiencies. The Panel understands the University has begun to explore these opportunities with

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<sup>120</sup> SRR, p. 26.

<sup>121</sup> SRR, p. 27.

<sup>122</sup> SRR, p. 27.

<sup>123</sup> SRR, p. viii.

<sup>124</sup> FE GS12 a.

respect to the first-year experience for students and recommends that it be considered further as the University undertakes its Curriculum Framework project.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends the University consider embedding learning support and academic skills development in the curriculum.*

### **GS 13 Safety and wellbeing**

Student wellbeing is supported through the provision of appropriate pastoral and social support services in safe and inclusive environments.

Te Pūrengi – Student Experience and Wellbeing Directorate is responsible for wellbeing, pastoral and social support services. It again claims to take an holistic approach and to connect to other support including Āwhina and PSST to develop culturally appropriate services.<sup>125</sup> As mentioned above, given the re-organisation of student support and service provision available at the University, it would be useful for there to be a clear articulation for the benefit of both students and staff as to how Te Pūrengi – Student Experience and Wellbeing Directorate fits into the holistic support and service provision matrix.

Increased emphasis on student safety and wellbeing has been generated by COVID-19 and the Code. The SSR recorded some relatively high levels of student mental ill-health over COVID-19 and referred to a ‘report-builder’ that might be used by different units to assess responses from different student cohorts, though there is no data collected on its current utilisation.<sup>126</sup> The University has conducted substantial self-reviews of their practices with respect to both COVID-19 and the Code. For COVID-19, this was in the form of the Good Practice Assessment submitted to AQA as part of a whole-of-sector approach to learn from the Universities’ responses<sup>127</sup> and in the case of the Code a self-review against the interim Code in place at the time.<sup>128</sup>

The University monitors student wellbeing in its student surveys but does not have an “organisation-wide wellbeing strategic action plan”.<sup>129</sup> It intends to address the lack of such a plan through an enhancement initiative (6) to “Develop and implement a Wellbeing Outcomes Framework drawing on the requirements under the new Pastoral Care Code to support a whole-of-provider approach to wellbeing and safety”.<sup>130</sup> The Panel anticipates that this work will leverage off recent work in the development of an Intimate and Close Personal Relationships Policy<sup>131</sup> and the next review of the Sexual Harassment Policy.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> SRR, p. 28.

<sup>126</sup> SRR, p. 29.

<sup>127</sup> KD 8.

<sup>128</sup> SD 82.

<sup>129</sup> SRR, p. 29.

<sup>130</sup> SRR, p. 31.

<sup>131</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/intimate-and-close-personal-relationships-policy.pdf> (Accessed 9 December 2022.)

<sup>132</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/sexual-harassment-response-policy.pdf> (Accessed 9 December 2022.)

**Affirmation:** *The Panel affirms the University's initiative to develop a Wellbeing Outcomes Framework.*

In affirming this enhancement initiative, the Panel also suggests that the University develops a plan to monitor and evaluate the achievement of outcomes and that it considers staff as well as student wellbeing. It heard comment from staff about challenges to wellbeing from COVID-19, workload and change fatigue. The Panel also suggests that the wellbeing framework and plan be developed in partnership with students and that it be explicit about cultural wellbeing and safety. The need to address cultural safety was reinforced in comments the Panel heard about some students feeling the University was not inclusive and did not provide a safe space for them outside of dedicated spaces and services such as Āwhina.

## Section C: Curriculum, assessment and delivery

The guideline statements in this section of the audit framework consider the life cycle and key components of curricula and academic delivery, including assessment and academic integrity.

The New Zealand Qualification Framework lists 238 current qualifications for Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington.<sup>133</sup> The University’s portfolio of programmes includes law, architecture and education. Bachelor’s degrees are offered in arts, commerce, health and science, among other subjects. Nineteen professional bodies accredit programmes at the University.<sup>134</sup>

This report has already referred to a Curriculum Framework project signalled by the University. Although the Curriculum Framework project has been deferred, it is also relevant for guideline statements in this section of the audit framework.

The Curriculum Framework has both structural and pedagogical components. Structurally, it will provide guidance for how academic programmes relate to one another across the University. Pedagogically, the Curriculum Framework will embed the development of Graduate Profile attributes in the curriculum. The Panel commented on how it might be utilised to support transitions and learning support and how this should reflect transitions and learning support for Māori students, Pasifika students and EDI focus group students in Section B of this report.

### GS 14 Programme approval

Programme standards and relevance are maintained through internal course and programme approval processes that meet national (CUAP/NZQF) expectations and, where appropriate, expectations for other jurisdictions.

The University’s processes for programme approval are set out in an Academic Approvals handbook.<sup>135</sup> The Panel found this and the Programme and Course Design handbook to be examples of good practice.<sup>136</sup>

**Commendation:** *The Panel commends the Academic Approvals and the Programme and Course Design handbooks that provide useful guidance for staff in developing programmes and assessment.*

Evidence of programme standards being met is provided by a record of the Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) approvals of proposals from the University and accreditation by professional bodies.

<sup>133</sup> <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/nzqf/search/results.do?org=700493001> (accessed 3 October 2022.)

<sup>134</sup> SRR, App. 8, p. 83.

<sup>135</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/governance/academic-approvals-handbook.pdf> (Accessed 3 October 2022.)

<sup>136</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/governance/programme-and-course-design-handbook.pdf> (accessed 3 October 2022.)

Relevance of programmes is also indicated by professional body accreditation. Students may also contribute evidence of relevance in the programme approval process. Students are members of academic committees. However, the Panel heard that students felt their voices were minimised at times. The Panel has commented on student voices with respect to GS 2, but again encourages the University to be mindful of and seek to mitigate the power imbalances that student members of academic committees may experience.

The University has introduced a micro-credentials policy that outlines the development, quality assurance and award of these offerings. Micro-credentials provide further evidence of relevance as the University seeks to respond to demand for this type of academic programme.<sup>137</sup>

The Panel explored the University's approval of programmes that contain Mātauranga Māori content. It understands that the AVC Mātauranga Māori plays a significant role with respect to such programmes; Āwhina members of faculty teaching and learning committees provide advice; and Toihuarewa (which is a sub-Committee of Academic Board) also considers academic matters. The appointment of Associate Deans (Māori) in faculties will add capacity and capability to develop and approve programmes with Mātauranga Māori.

The Panel also heard challenges associated with including Mātauranga Māori in curricula and examples of it being treated as additional or historical rather than embedded and current practice. However, the Panel recognises that embedding Mātauranga Māori in curricula will require more Māori academic staff and that the University is aware of and seeking to address this requirement.

The CMS project will support further process improvement in programme approval processes through digitising approval processes and integrating with other University systems to ensure programme and course information is always current.<sup>138</sup>

#### **GS 15 Course/paper and programme monitoring**

The quality of academic programmes and courses/papers is assured and enhanced through ongoing monitoring and academic management.

The University outlines the ways in which aspects of the quality of academic programmes and courses are monitored. Monitoring occurs at university, faculty, school, programme and course levels.

The University's investment in data and Power BI tools has facilitated improved monitoring. Power BI reports have been developed to allow monitoring of qualifications, major subjects, minor subjects and courses. The data include gender, ethnicity, international/domestic fee paying, study level, student feedback, GPA, grade distribution, headcount, EFTS and course completion rates.<sup>139</sup> The

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<sup>137</sup> SRR, p. 33.

<sup>138</sup> FE, p. 4.

<sup>139</sup> SD 100.

Panel did see evidence of improvements being made in response to student feedback and has made comment on this in GS 2.

Data-based monitoring is complemented by ongoing monitoring by academic committees, Boards of Studies and, in some cases, advisory boards with external members. As the use of Power BI tools and analytics develops, the Panel anticipates that these committees and boards will also have access to improved data to assist in discharging their responsibilities for monitoring quality of programmes and courses, and the SRR comments that reporting of teaching and learning data is becoming more frequent.<sup>140</sup> The Panel has previously commented that it supports the University's enhancement initiative to develop data governance protocols around the use of analytics. It further suggests those protocols address the use of student data in monitoring the quality of courses and programmes more broadly.

Specific arrangements exist for monitoring the quality of offshore programmes.<sup>141</sup> Each programme has an International Course Supervisor. The Panel reviewed the position description for these roles.<sup>142</sup>

The University includes Graduating Year Reviews (GYRs) as part of its monitoring activities. All GYRs submitted by the University since its Cycle 5 Academic Audit have been accepted by CUAP.<sup>143</sup>

#### **GS 16 Review**

Curriculum relevance and quality is assured and enhanced through regular reviews of programmes and courses/papers and which include input from students, staff and other stakeholders.

Requirements for reviews of academic programmes are set out in the University's Academic Reviews and Monitoring Policy.<sup>144</sup> An appendix to the Policy sets out terms of reference for academic programme reviews. A 3-year schedule of planned reviews is submitted to the Academic Board.

Programme reviews examine the connection between research and teaching.<sup>145</sup> However, the Panel heard that that some staff experienced tensions between teaching what was specified in the curriculum and teaching based on their research.

The Panel explored the membership of programme review panels, which are specified as a convenor (from within the University) and two external panel members, one of whom should be from an overseas university. Although it was advised that review panels could include additional members,

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<sup>140</sup> SRR, p. 33.

<sup>141</sup> SRR, pp. 37 – 38.

<sup>142</sup> SD 112.

<sup>143</sup> SRR, p. 34.

<sup>144</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/academic/academic-reviews-monitoring-policy.pdf> (Accessed 3 October 2022.)

<sup>145</sup> SRR, p. 37.

the Panel was not convinced that neither the policy setting nor operationalisation would consistently provide adequate breadth of perspectives across panel members for a robust review. In particular, the Panel considered that perspectives from Māori and from students were lacking in programme reviews. It appreciates that these perspectives would be included as part of the process. However, this is not the same as contributing to the evaluative aspects of the review.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends the University consider whether the composition of its programme review panels provides sufficient breadth of perspectives in reaching evaluative conclusions.*

In addition to reconsidering the composition of programme review panels, the Panel also suggests that the University explore whether students feel they are receiving adequate feedback about the outcomes of programme reviews.

The Panel was pleased to see the University is analysing programme review reports to identify themes and opportunities to enhance the process but was surprised to learn that initial monitoring reports had been discontinued. However, it understands that Deans provide an annual report on implementation to the Academic Board.

The Panel endorses the University's enhancement initiative (7) to develop a quality framework and has recommended that maintaining the currency of policies be included in this framework.

#### **GS 17 Graduate profile**

Students are aware of and have the opportunity to achieve the intended attributes in graduate profiles and course/paper learning outcomes.

The University's graduate profile has not changed since 2014, although it was reviewed and found to still be fit for purpose in 2018. Course learning outcomes are aligned with programme graduate attributes. The University seeks feedback from graduates on how they are using "graduate profile skills in [their] employment" and the extent to which graduates are satisfied with "how the University has equipped them with graduate profile skills". The Panel was advised that student perceptions of the attainment of graduate skills and their usefulness are reported to Faculty Boards, Faculty Management Teams and Schools.<sup>146</sup>

The University suggests that students are aware of graduate profile attributes. Response rates for graduate destinations surveys have ranged from 32% to 46% since 2017. However, the Panel did not gain a sense that the graduate profile was currently meaningful for students.

The Panel understands that planned work on redeveloping the graduate profile has been deferred, along with work on the Curriculum Framework. These projects are closely related. An objective of the CMS project is to improve the current manual process of mapping attributes to curricula. As part

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<sup>146</sup> FE, p. 16.

of the graduate profile project the University has indicated it will consider how graduate attributes are embedded into and learning assured in the undergraduate curriculum.<sup>147</sup> The Panel has previously commented (GS 9, GS 12) on the opportunity to embed support for transitions and learning in curricula as part of the Curriculum Framework project.

Associated with this, the Panel considers there are opportunities to engage widely across the University, including with the recommendations from the University's Te Tiriti o Waitangi self-review and with careers and employment teams, in the redevelopment of the graduate profile.

**Affirmations:** *The Panel affirms The University's intention to review its graduate profile as part of the planned Curriculum Framework project and engage widely across the University as part of this process.*

The use of e-portfolios as a tool for students to record and evaluate their own progress towards acquiring graduate attributes was affirmed (A3) in the Cycle 5 academic audit report for the University.<sup>148</sup> However, the Panel considers this has not been fully rolled out. A new e-portfolio tool will be part of the implementation of the new LMS. While it will now take further time to roll out, embed in core curricula and train staff and students in its use and application, the Panel considers e-portfolio will be a useful mechanism for assuring learning and reflection on the acquisition of the graduate profile.

#### **GS 18 Assessment**

Assessment is appropriate and effective.

The University's expectations for assessment are set out in an assessment handbook. The handbook is reviewed regularly. However, changes and innovations in assessment practice arising from the University's experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic have prompted a more extensive review. The Panel was able to see a draft of the most recent revision and thought it a useful guide.<sup>149</sup>

The University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic included a review of all assessment and the development of a framework "to provide for greater resilience and capability building".<sup>150</sup> The University has included further work on the assessment framework as part of an enhancement initiative (8). The Panel supports this direction and the intent to "advance and support work on innovative assessment in a digitally enhanced learning environment". Digital assessment and an assessment framework are both included in Te Korou: Learning and Teaching Plan 2022-2025. The Panel anticipates that assessment developed under Te Korou will reflect the University's "commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and cultural inclusivity".<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> SRR, p. 37.

<sup>148</sup> <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Victoria%20Cycle%205%20Audit%20Report.pdf>, p. 62. Accessed 29 October 2022.)

<sup>149</sup> SD 139.

<sup>150</sup> SRR, p. 40.

<sup>151</sup> FE, GS15, p. 6.



**Affirmation:** *The Panel affirms the University's plans to progress the assessment framework and work on innovative assessment in a digitally enhanced learning environment.*

The Panel is conscious that this work will require ongoing support from academic developers and learning designers. It encourages the University to ensure that adequate support is available.

Otherwise, as part of its quality assurance processes, the University seeks feedback on the appropriateness of assessment through student evaluations of their courses and surveys conducted by VUWSA as part of academic programme reviews.<sup>152</sup> Student feedback provides supporting evidence that assessment is appropriate and effective.

#### **GS 19 Assessment standards**

Assessment and outcome standards are appropriately set and moderated.

The University's processes for determining grades and moderating assessment standards are set out in the 2018 Assessment Handbook.<sup>153</sup> All faculties have moderation processes that are approved by the Academic Committee. Expectations of appropriate moderation processes are also included in terms of reference for reviews of academic programmes. Accreditation by professional bodies further supports the setting and moderation of assessment standards.

Master's and Honours qualifications are externally assessed and moderated.<sup>154</sup> External assessors comment on the academic content of courses compared with national and international standards. The University identified a gap in practice where reports from external assessors were not consistently submitted to the Academic Committee. The inclusion of Master's theses under the auspices of the FGR should help improve the consistency of practice and standards across the University.

#### **GS 20 Academic integrity**

Universities promote and ensure academic integrity and demonstrate fairness, equity and consistency in addressing concerns.

Recommendation six from the Cycle 5 academic audit was that the University give priority to its enhancement initiative to develop an academic integrity strategy. The University's self-assessment at its mid-cycle report was that this work was partially implemented and there was work underway in 2018-2019. Further work on academic integrity was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> SRR, pp. 40 – 41.

<sup>153</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf> (Accessed 4 October 2022.)

<sup>154</sup> SRR, p. 42.

<sup>155</sup> SRR, p. 43.

However, the Panel was advised that a new Academic Integrity Framework and Academic Integrity Policy was approved in June 2022. Further work is required to operationalise this policy.<sup>156</sup>

The Panel viewed the new Academic Integrity Policy, which takes a principles-based approach.<sup>157</sup> The Panel recognises this work has been informed by the developing body of practice in this area. However, the Panel was not clear that the new policy was examining integrity in ways that might be informed by Mātauranga Māori or frameworks that would reflect what is tika or pono in te ao Māori.<sup>158</sup>

Advice on academic integrity for both students and staff is provided in orientations, course outlines, a Student Conduct Statute and materials that support course and assessment design. Engagement in these processes is required, but not enforced. However, 96% of students in the 2021 “Have your say” survey indicated they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I understand what academic integrity means in my programme of study”.<sup>159</sup> A Principal Academic Integrity Advisor role was established in 2021.<sup>160</sup> COVID-19 has added further dimensions to assuring academic integrity and the University piloted digital invigilation of tests in 2020 and is trialling a digital examinations system in 2022.

Breaches of academic integrity are recorded in an Academic Misconduct Register (AMR). However, the University intends to replace the standalone AMR with functionality in the SRM. The Panel suggests that the University consider whether data governance protocols under development for the use of learner analytics might also be relevant here.

Although the University does have resources and systems to promote academic integrity, the Panel heard a lack of confidence that these systems were sufficient to deter and detect academic misconduct, especially in a context of expanded online assessment and the risks of contract cheating. The Panel appreciates that recent work is yet to be operationalised. However, it recommends the University progress this work with urgency and attends also to student and staff training and capability building. The Panel notes that the SSR referred to the intention to finalise resources to support students and staff.<sup>161</sup> These resources are important. However, the Panel suggests that the University take a more active approach to managing academic integrity. The time taken to finalise and implement the new Academic Integrity Policy is not consistent with the risks that academic integrity presents to the University (and to universities worldwide).

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends the University complete the operationalisation of its new academic integrity policy with urgency.*

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<sup>156</sup> FE, p. 17.

<sup>157</sup> FE, GS20c.

<sup>158</sup> <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/assets/9916d28d7b/vision-matauranga-booklet.pdf> (Accessed 4 October 2022.)

<sup>159</sup> SD 175, p. 19.

<sup>160</sup> SRR, p. 44.

<sup>161</sup> SRR, p. 44.

## **GS 21 Assessment in te reo Māori**

Assessment in te reo Māori, where appropriate, is facilitated by the university.

Provisions for assessment in te reo Māori are set out in the University’s “Use of Te Reo Māori for Assessment” policy, Doctoral Policy and Master’s Thesis Policy.<sup>162</sup> The provision for assessment in te reo Māori in taught courses has been included in the latest revision of the Assessment Handbook with associated procedures included as an Appendix. Course outlines include a link to the Use of Te Reo Māori for Assessment Policy.<sup>163</sup>

Although provisions for assessment in te reo Māori are in place, the Panel heard of instances where students had received advice that appeared to be contrary to these provisions. The University provided evidence that Faculty Managers were aware of the provisions for assessment in te reo Māori but did not comment on awareness levels for staff or students. Instances of assessment being undertaken in te reo Māori are however low.<sup>164</sup> This current low level of awareness reinforces the need for a shared understanding to be developed across the University.

The University does have plans to increase the use of te reo Māori in assessment as part of increasing use of te reo Māori more broadly. Actions to support this are set out in the University’s Te Reo Māori Plan. The University’s self-review against its Te Tiriti o Waitangi Statute recommends that a central register of assessment submitted in te reo Māori be established, together with a budget for translation services.<sup>165</sup> The Panel supports the direction of planned initiatives and recommendations and recognises that challenges in facilitating assessment in te reo Māori are not specific to Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington.

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<sup>162</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/academic/the-use-of-te-reo-maori-for-assessment-policy.pdf> (Accessed 5 October 2022.)

<sup>163</sup> SRR, p. 45.

<sup>164</sup> SD 141.

<sup>165</sup> FE, GS06 b. Recommendation 17.

## Section D: Teaching quality

This section of the audit framework focuses on teachers and teaching.

The University provided summary statistics on the make-up of its staff profile.<sup>166</sup> Of the 882.95 FTE academic staff in 2021, 5.2% were Māori and 2% were Pacific Peoples.<sup>167</sup> Of the 169 Professors at the University in 2021, 6 were Māori and 1 was identified as a Pacific Person. The percentages of total staff FTE who are Māori or who are Pacific Peoples are slightly higher at 5.8% and 2.85%, respectively. However, these percentages still lag behind the make-up of the student population and national parity and give context to comments heard by the Panel that students perceive there to be low levels of visibility of Māori staff and Pasifika staff.

### **GS 22 Staff recruitment**

All staff who teach or supervise, or support teaching or supervision, are appropriately qualified and experienced (including in research as appropriate to role) upon appointment.

The University has clear processes in place for staff recruitment and for appointing postgraduate supervisors. For recruitment, Key Result Areas (KRAs) in position descriptions are drawn from the University's Academic Career Framework/Ngā Paearu Akorangi (ACF).<sup>168</sup>

The University has set targets for the composition of its workforce including doubling the numbers of Māori academic and tripling the number of Pasifika academic staff<sup>169</sup> but faces challenges in recruiting these staff. This in turn presents challenges to supporting the Mātauranga Māori components of the Academic Career Framework/Ngā Paearu Akorangi and the ability to provide supervision for Māori students and for Pasifika students.

Although challenges in recruiting Māori staff and Pasifika staff are faced nationally by universities, the Panel has previously noted that it appreciates that the University's location in the nation's capital city and the home of Government creates additional pressure on recruitment. However, the Panel was not convinced the University was leveraging the Mātauranga Māori, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and partnering components of the ACF to prioritise recruitment of Māori staff and Pasifika staff. It heard the University was exploring joint (PhD/academic staff) appointments to grow capacity.

A further challenge is that the low numbers of Māori staff means that cultural support for new Māori staff can be limited. The University is endeavouring to build cohorts of Māori staff so that new staff feel safe and supported. The Panel considered there was a need for greater focus on recruitment of staff with expertise in Mātauranga Māori. In doing so, the Panel suggests the University should appreciate that this expertise is not necessarily signalled by a PhD.

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<sup>166</sup> FE, 2021 universities-workforce-questionnaire.

<sup>167</sup> Pacific Peoples is the term used in the universities-workforce-questionnaire. Elsewhere this report follows the University's usage of Pasifika.

<sup>168</sup> SRR, pp. 46 - 47; SD 149.

<sup>169</sup> KD1, p. 27.

The Panel considered the University does have appropriate systems, frameworks and intentions but suggests they could be better leveraged to support the strategic priorities of recruiting and retaining Māori staff and Pasifika staff.

The Panel was interested in the development of a teaching-intensive pathway for staff and did see this as a way to attract and retain excellent teaching staff. It suggests caution, however, in making this pathway available to early career academics who have not yet consolidated their research portfolio.

### **GS 23 Induction and ongoing expectations**

New staff who teach or supervise, or support teaching or supervision, become familiar with academic policies and expectations of the university through effective induction processes, and the university has processes to enable all staff to maintain currency with academic policies and expectations.

The University's guide for new staff covers its history, values, planning and reporting, employment matters and university services and facilities.<sup>170</sup> A Tiriti o Waitangi Guide (to accompany the Statute) is also introduced at staff orientation. The DVC Māori and AVC Mātautanga Māori contribute to every new staff orientation to help "give effect to the Tiriti principles in practical and impactful ways".<sup>171</sup>

The New Staff Guide to the University includes reference to "speaking truth to power" in the Vice-Chancellor's welcome.<sup>172</sup> This also indicates protection for staff undertaking these activities. The Panel heard other references to the university's role as critic and conscience of society, especially in relation to being a University with a marae at its heart<sup>173</sup> and Aotearoa sitting in the Pacific Ocean.

The new staff orientation programme includes a pōwhiri at the marae—Te Herenga Waka—and the Panel heard positive feedback on this aspect of induction. However, the Panel also heard there was further work to do in setting expectations for the development of cultural competencies and the ability to pronounce te reo Māori names and words by staff that are recruited from overseas.

All new staff are required to attend an "Orientation to Academic Life" and staff new to teaching should also attend the Introduction to Learning and Teaching (TILT). Staff supervising postgraduate research students should also attend a further orientation programme.

The University presented and the Panel heard positive feedback from those who had attended orientation programmes. However, the Panel also heard that although attendance at orientation programmes is required, it is not monitored and therefore not enforced. Beyond the central university programme, experiences of orientation were variable across faculties.

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<sup>170</sup> SD 157.

<sup>171</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/maori-hub/ako/te-tiriti-o-waitangi> (accessed 5 October 2022.)

<sup>172</sup> SD 157.

<sup>173</sup> KD 1.

The Panel also heard that orientation programmes did not address ways of working with Pasifika staff or understanding of Pasifika world views. It was explained that Pasifika staff tend to be more reflexive and do not necessarily engage immediately in School meetings or academic committee discussions. An appreciation by non-Pasifika staff of different models of engagement would assist Pasifika staff to make their contributions.

The University has included comment on orientation and induction programmes for new Heads of School. The Panel therefore explored this further. It again found that practice and experiences varied across faculties.

Communication and consultation processes to help staff maintain currency with expectations were explained. Ongoing professional development was also cited as a means of maintaining currency. No indicators whereby the University might know if currency was maintained (for example, records of non-conformance or staff surveys) were presented. The implementation of the new Human Capital Management System should be able to assist with this assurance of currency. Other than variability across the University, the Panel did not gain any sense of lack of awareness of policies or expectations. An important inclusion to both induction and the maintenance of currency processes will be the socialisation of and training on the new Academic Integrity Policy.

#### **GS 24 Teaching development**

Staff who teach or supervise, or support teaching or supervision, are supported to take up opportunities to develop their practice, including the use of innovative pedagogy and new technologies.

Teaching development at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington is led by the Centre for Academic Development (CAD). Following a change process in 2021, CAD operates a Hive model with academic development and learning design staff located in faculties. Faculty-based CAD staff also contribute to Faculty Learning and Teaching Committees. CAD is also represented on University committees responsible for teaching and learning.<sup>174</sup>

CAD offers a range of programmes and initiatives that support teaching development, including a dedicated programme for tutor development. CAD programmes and initiatives include support for a professional learning community (VicTeach), a programme for early career academics (VECAP), an “open classrooms” week twice a year, an annual learning and teaching colloquium (Ako Victoria) and an Ako in Action student-staff partnership programme. Feedback and evaluations of these programmes provide evidence they are well-received.<sup>175</sup>

Changes to teaching and assessment as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a significant uplift in teaching development as teaching moved first to online delivery and then to dual delivery. The University introduced a standard course design template and guidance to ensure good-practice learning design was incorporated into courses that needed to be re-developed as part of the

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<sup>174</sup> SRR, p. 49.

<sup>175</sup> SRR, pp. 50 – 52.

response to COVID-19.<sup>176</sup> CAD also developed an extensive series of webinars for staff, created an online ‘drop-in’ model for advice and expanded its Digital Learning Hub. The expanded Digital Learning Hub and online drop-in sessions have been retained as part of ongoing support for teaching development.<sup>177</sup> The Panel also heard enthusiastic appreciation for the work of CAD during the pandemic.

**Commendation:** *The Panel commends the work of CAD in supporting teaching development across the University generally and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in particular.*

The Panel was interested to learn about the professional development and fellowship programme the University has been accredited to offer by the UK-based AdvanceHE. The University’s programme—Te Arawai Ako—has been redeveloped to align with values in Te Rautaki Maruako, the University’s Learning and Teaching Strategy.<sup>178</sup> The Panel heard an intention to link the Arawai Ako programme to professional development and promotions processes.

The Panel explored teaching development for Māori staff, for Pasifika staff and for non-Māori, non-Pasifika staff to reflect Mātauranga Māori in their teaching. They heard that support for Māori staff is available but tends to come from peers. The Panel notes that further support may be available through the new national programme for early career Māori academics – Te Kei.<sup>179</sup> CAD resources include guides and links for teaching Māori content or Māori students and resources for teachers working with Pasifika students.<sup>180</sup>

CAD has been heavily involved in implementing new teaching and learning digital infrastructure across the University, ensuring that these developments have been pedagogically led and that professional development and support for users have been embedded in the implementation. The Panel affirmed this approach in GS 3 and further commends CAD’s leadership contribution to the change programme for teaching and learning infrastructure. It is important to retain this leadership as implementation progresses.

**Commendation:** *The Panel commends CAD’s leadership role in the change programme for teaching and learning digital infrastructure.*

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<sup>176</sup> SRR, p. 53.

<sup>177</sup> SRR, p. 50.

<sup>178</sup> [https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/2031221/te-arawai-ako-programme-handbook-web.pdf](https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/2031221/te-arawai-ako-programme-handbook-web.pdf), p. 4. (Accessed 6 October 2022.)

<sup>179</sup> <https://www.tekei.co.nz/> (Accessed 6 October 2022.)

<sup>180</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/maori-hub/ako/teaching-resources>; <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/learning-teaching/support/approach/pasifika> (Accessed 6 October 2022.)

**GS 25 Teaching quality**

The quality of all teaching is appropriate and is enhanced by feedback and other processes. Quality shortfalls are addressed proactively, constructively and consistently.

The University sets out a range of mechanisms for monitoring teaching quality, including student feedback and professional development and career planning processes (PDCP).

Students provide feedback on teaching quality in end-of-course surveys and in other surveys conducted by the University. The University recognises that student feedback is an important contributor to assessing teaching quality but also that it may not provide a complete view. The University reports that student feedback on overall effectiveness of teaching has remained consistent both in terms of response rates and average ratings over the past eight years.<sup>181</sup> Ninety-five percent of students have assessed teachers as good or better since 2019.<sup>182</sup>

While the Panel did not hear any views to the contrary about the quality of teaching at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington, it did hear some concerns about the ability of Heads of School to effect improvement if shortfalls and opportunities for development are identified. This comment applies to both teaching and supervision. Further comment on the supervision component will be made in Section E. The SRR indicated that the PDCP process<sup>183</sup> and the Staff Conduct Policy<sup>184</sup> (under review at the time of the SRP submission) were the mechanisms for addressing poor teaching performance. However, the PDCP does not refer to processes for managing poor teaching quality (although this could be captured under “development needs”) and neither the Staff Conduct Policy nor the accompanying Guidelines are explicit about shortfalls in teaching quality, referring to “poor performance” more generally. The Panel suggests that this is something for the University to be aware of and to consider how it communicates about shortfalls in teaching quality and addresses any concerns.

PDCP is an annual process that requires a Teaching Performance Profile and a summary of student feedback on teaching. The Panel anticipates this may be supplemented (or replaced) by portfolios developed as part of the Arawai Ako initiative in the future.

**GS 26 Teaching recognition**

High-quality teaching is recognised and rewarded.

High-quality teaching is recognised and rewarded through promotions processes and teaching excellence awards. Te Arawai Ako programme will provide a further avenue for recognition and reward.

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<sup>181</sup> SRR, p. 52.

<sup>182</sup> FE, p. 19.

<sup>183</sup> SD 177.

<sup>184</sup> <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/conduct-policy.pdf> (Accessed 6 October 2022.)



Staff the Panel met with indicated that recognition and reward for good-quality teaching had been increasing. This included recognition of research on the scholarship of teaching and learning, which in turn provides support for the interdependence of research and teaching at the University.

The establishment of teaching-intensive pathways was seen as a way of being able to recognise and reward high-quality teaching. However, the Panel also heard that the balance between research and teaching did tend to be weighted towards research and that gender issues were present in teaching workload allocations in some parts of the University, with women taking on higher teaching loads and larger classes. The Panel suggests the University examine whether this is in fact the case.

The Panel heard a lack of clarity whether the contributions that Māori staff and Pasifika staff make to culturally relevant teaching, both in their own teaching and in supporting non-Māori, non-Pasifika staff, were being recognised. This is a further prompt for the University to examine what is being recognised and rewarded with respect to teaching.

The University has teaching excellence awards for established and early career staff. Staff can apply under either general criteria or kaupapa Māori criteria. Staff with whom the Panel met reported mixed experiences of the extent to which teaching excellence awards were celebrated in schools and faculties.

The Panel explored an apparent lack of transition from University excellence award winners to national teaching excellence awards. They heard that the University had not established the consistent coaching and mentoring systems seen as necessary for success in the national awards.

The VicTeach community was seen as providing good support for peers and has the expertise to offer further support. An annual teaching retreat was highlighted as being of particular value, as was the inclusion of both academic and professional staff.

**Commendation:** *The Panel commends VicTeach for its support for innovative and good-practice teaching and learning.*

## Section E: Supervision of postgraduate research students

Undertaking research is a defining characteristic of Aotearoa New Zealand universities. Postgraduate research students are therefore specifically considered in this section of the academic audit framework.

In 2021, the University enrolled 1,000 doctoral students and 503 students in research master's programmes. The University's strategic plan has a target of doubling these numbers by 2025.<sup>185</sup> The percentage of PBRF-eligible thesis-enrolled students who are Māori has increased steadily from 6% in 2018 to 8.6% in 2022. The percentage of Pasifika students has fluctuated over this period and is currently at 3.5% having been at a low of 3.2% in 2021 and reaching a high of 4.2% in 2016. Disabled students have been recorded since 2019 and constitute 7.1% of PBRF-eligible thesis enrolments in 2022. The percentage of international students remained fairly steady at just over 32% from 2019 to 2021 but dropped to 30.2% in 2022.<sup>186</sup> One-hundred and fifty PhD students are based offshore.<sup>187</sup>

The Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) is responsible for administering all postgraduate research students. The Panel understands that responsibility for managing research masters has recently moved to the FGR (as anticipated by enhancement initiative 10).<sup>188</sup> The Panel sees this as a potentially positive development that should help provide consistency of experience for postgraduate research students and for staff in setting expectations for supervision loads. However, it suggests that further attention needs to be paid to how the FGR is connected to and works with faculties and schools, Āwhina, the PSST and CAD.

The University has sought feedback from postgraduate research students on the effects of COVID-19.<sup>189</sup> Both doctoral and master's students indicated that they were affected but were mainly able to continue with their research in different ways. Over two-thirds of master's students reported experiencing stress. In response, the University implemented a no-fees extension to submission dates for master's students.<sup>190</sup>

### **GS 27 Supervision quality**

The quality of postgraduate research supervision is ensured.

Provisions for supervision are set out in the Doctoral Regulations and Master's Thesis Regulations.<sup>191</sup> New supervisors are paired with an experienced supervisor who acts as a mentor for the new supervisor. Suitably qualified supervisors may be appointed from outside the University as secondary supervisors. External supervisors are employed as Honorary Research Associates and their

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<sup>185</sup> KD 1, p. 21.

<sup>186</sup> FE, GS27 a.

<sup>187</sup> SRR, p. 57.

<sup>188</sup> SRR, p. 61.

<sup>189</sup> FE, GS29 b.

<sup>190</sup> FE, GS29 a.

<sup>191</sup> SRR, p. 56; SD 187; SD 189.

employment conditions include a requirement to follow university policies, though the Panel was told that this requirement was not enforced.<sup>192</sup>

The Doctoral Regulations include a requirement for academic supervisors to have capacity in their workload. The Panel heard that there was inconsistency as to whether supervision was part of an academic's teaching or research workload. It appreciates there may be disciplinary differences, but the allocation of supervision responsibilities should be transparent and equitable.

The Doctoral Regulations also have a requirement for new supervisors, including external supervisors, to have completed a supervisor-training session. Heads of School are responsible for training for master's thesis supervisors, which may take the form of acting as a co- or secondary supervisor, rather than a formal training workshop. Despite the requirement for training to occur, the Panel heard that this was not monitored and therefore not enforced. The Panel also heard that supervisors sought advice and support from peers rather than the FGR.

The Cycle 5 academic audit of the University had supported a FGR initiative to "establish a working party to consider good practice in supervision".<sup>193</sup> The FGR-led working party had met over 2019-2020 and reported to the Dean. Further information provided by the University indicated that the report was still with the Dean and that the principal outcome of a new training module for experienced supervisors was being developed. The Panel was advised at the site visit that twelve modules are expected to be rolled out in 2023 and that a debate about whether these should be voluntary or required would follow.

The Panel considers the lack of attention to ensuring training occurs constitutes a risk to both students and the University. The University has identified an enhancement initiative (9) to "establish a professional development programme to ensure all supervisors (new and experienced) are exposed to the latest pedagogical developments in research training".<sup>194</sup> The Panel supports this enhancement initiative but considers that responsibilities for ensuring training is completed need to be clarified and enforced (monitored and compliance recorded). The Panel was informed that the new LMS will be used to support supervisor training.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends the University complete its review of ongoing training for postgraduate supervisors and enforce responsibilities for ensuring training is undertaken.*

Student perceptions of quality of supervision is monitored by schools and in annual surveys. Monitoring by schools is not anonymous (or necessarily confidential), and the University recognises this may not be conducive to identifying any issues.<sup>195</sup> The Panel noted the need to make clear responsibilities and processes for complaints and grievances extended to postgraduate supervision in GS 11.

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<sup>192</sup> SRR, pp. 56 – 57.

<sup>193</sup> <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Victoria%20Cycle%205%20Audit%20Report.pdf>, p. 56, (Accessed 30 October 2022.)

<sup>194</sup> SRR, p. 58.

<sup>195</sup> SRR, p. 57.

The University's Cycle 5 academic audit report included a recommendation that "the University develop a protocol within thesis progress reporting processes that ensures that individual issues are managed confidentially and effectively, but which also provides an avenue for centralised notification of issues which might be serious, systemic or point to problems with University processes".<sup>196</sup> The University has considered this further and concluded that the progress reporting system is not the appropriate place for concerns to be raised.

If students have concerns, they are asked to raise them immediately. If it is not possible to raise the issue with the student's supervisor, other avenues include the Head of School or Associate Dean Postgraduate. Students can seek support from the Postgraduate Students' Association, VUWSA, the SICR Office or the FGR. The Panel did not hear that there are any particular issues with these options.

However, raising concerns, issues, complaints or grievances can be more challenging for postgraduate research students due to power imbalances and staff holding multiple roles. For example, a supervisor may also be a postgraduate advisor, Associate Dean or Head of School, which may limit the options for students who need to raise an issue or concern. Lack of clarity of process and lack of confidence in confidentiality (or lack of confidentiality) can exacerbate these challenges. The Panel encourages the University to mitigate these challenges.

The 2021 "Have Your Say" survey indicated that 84% of research students were satisfied with their primary supervisor.<sup>197</sup> More detail is provided in a 2021 survey of doctoral students. This identifies the main sources of dissatisfaction with supervision quality as supervisor availability and feedback.<sup>198</sup> The Panel suggests the University continue to monitor and address this feedback.

The University's Te Tiriti o Waitangi self-review noted the inappropriateness of non-Māori staff taking on supervision duties that were beyond their expertise. This presents a risk of misappropriation of Māori knowledge as well as causing distress to Māori staff and students.<sup>199</sup> The ability of staff to supervise Māori students is also a matter of supervision quality and should be taken into account in the appointment of supervisors and training.

#### **GS 28 Resourcing of postgraduate research students**

Postgraduate research students are appropriately resourced and supported to undertake their research.

Resourcing for postgraduate research students can be broadly grouped into scholarships, training and professional development, facilities, equipment and consumables, support for wellbeing and advocacy. A Resource Agreement for Thesis Students (RAfTS), signed between the Victoria University Postgraduate Students' Association and the University, sets out resources and support that should

<sup>196</sup> <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Victoria%20Cycle%205%20Audit%20Report.pdf>, p. 58. (Accessed 7 October 2022.)

<sup>197</sup> SD 20, p. 15.

<sup>198</sup> SD 197, pp. 13 – 14.

<sup>199</sup> FE, GS06 b, p. 23.

be available for postgraduate research students, plus processes for addressing shortfalls in provision.<sup>200</sup> The RAfTS covers induction and information provisions, office space and furniture (plus how new space will be developed), resources and support.

The University increased both the stipend for doctoral scholarships in 2020 and its overall scholarship budget. This is a positive move. However, the Panel encourages the University to keep the level of stipend under review, especially given the high cost-of-living increases. Guaranteed scholarships are available to students with a GPA of 8.5. New criteria for scholarships for Māori students and Pasifika students for doctoral and Master's study were introduced in 2021.<sup>201</sup>

New doctoral students are required to attend induction, orientation and welcome sessions. Again, the Panel heard that it is possible for students not to attend required sessions. Enforcing responsibilities for compliance with this requirement should also be addressed in the recommendation made with respect to GS 27. This point is also made in a report on the 2021 Doctoral Survey.<sup>202</sup>

Training and professional development is provided in faculties, through central services such as Te Taiako Student Learning, Careers and Employment, the FGR and Faculties. Te Taiako Student Learning offers a series of postgraduate workshops as does the FGR. Most of these workshops are available online. Overall, 52% of doctoral students attended FGR events, training sessions or workshops. Those who did attend provided positive feedback on their experience.<sup>203</sup> Some limitations with online delivery of workshops were also identified. These included the lack of opportunity to make social connections and poor choice of times for delivery for offshore students.

Support for professional development includes opportunities to undertake teaching. Fifty percent of postgraduate research students have engaged in some form of teaching. Most agreed it helped their professional development but less than 40% received formal training, mentoring or feedback to support their teaching activities.<sup>204</sup> As previously noted (GS 22) the University is exploring joint (PhD/academic staff) appointments as a model for recruiting and retaining staff in hard to recruit areas. However, this approach needs to be supported by professional development as teachers as well as researchers.

In addition to resources specified in the RAfTS, doctoral students also need to identify whether they will require additional resources. If so, an agreement should be reached with the supervisor and approved by the Head of School.<sup>205</sup> The Panel heard of variability in the level and quality of equipment that postgraduate students have access to across the University. The Panel suggests the University include questions about adequacy of resourcing and support in its "Have Your Say" or "Doctoral Student" survey as a means of monitoring the RAfTS.

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<sup>200</sup> SD 195.

<sup>201</sup> SRR, pp. 58 – 59.

<sup>202</sup> SD 197, p. 3.

<sup>203</sup> SD 197, p. 4.

<sup>204</sup> SD 20, p. 17.

<sup>205</sup> SRR, p. 59; SD 200.

As part of its response to COVID-19, the University allowed PhD students to commence their study while still offshore. The provisions for this included an assessment of resource availability.<sup>206</sup> An offshore pastoral care coordinator role was established to support supervisors in providing pastoral care for offshore students.<sup>207</sup> The Panel considered this to be a positive development.

The Panel made recommendations in Section B of this report regarding embedding support for transitions, employability, learning support and academic skills development in the curriculum. The same opportunities for embedding support and academic skills development also apply to postgraduate research students. A similar approach should also be adopted to assure access to and provision of language and learning support (and other support such as for statistical literacy) for postgraduate research students. The Panel heard that supervisors are generally expected to support learning needs for postgraduate research students. It acknowledges that this will be the case for discipline-specific skills and competencies, but considers that support for careers and employability, for example, would benefit from structured engagement with specialists. This will require the FGR to take on a more active monitoring role to ensure that development of these skills and competencies is being supported for postgraduate research students.

#### **GS 29 Postgraduate research student progress**

Student progress and achievement is monitored and supported through consistent and clear academic advice, and guidance for students on completion of requirements.

Progress for doctoral students is monitored every 6 months (May and November) via a Candidate Development Plan.<sup>208</sup> Progress for research master's students is monitored through a one-month proposal and then three- and eight-month progress reports. Compliance with progress reporting for both doctoral and master's students is not complete. The SRR suggests that this is at least in part due to inadequacy in the current software solution. However, given other gaps in compliance and record keeping, the Panel's view is that there are also quality culture and management issues that need to be addressed.

**Recommendation:** *The Panel recommends that compliance with progress-reporting requirements for postgraduate research students be enforced.*

The Panel felt that, in contrast to the attention being paid to monitoring student progress for undergraduate students and the implementation of systems, structures and processes to facilitate this, rather less attention was being paid to ensuring that postgraduate student progress was being proactively managed.

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<sup>206</sup> SD 202.

<sup>207</sup> SRR, p. 57.

<sup>208</sup> SRR, p. 60.

**GS 30 Thesis examination**

Thesis standards are assured through examination processes that are nationally and internationally benchmarked.

Examination requirements for doctoral and master's theses are set out in the respective regulations.<sup>209</sup>

The regulations for examination of doctoral theses specify that candidates should be registered for the three months immediately preceding submission, theses are to be submitted digitally and a statement of authorship should accompany the submission. A statement from the supervisor is also required. The University has taken recent steps to improve compliance with the registration requirement as it also has a purpose in signalling the thesis is to be submitted and that arrangements for examination need to be made.<sup>210</sup> Theses submitted in te reo Māori are not to be translated for examination.

Examiners are nominated by the Head of School and approved by the FGR. Three examiners are appointed for doctoral theses—an internal examiner, an external examiner from Aotearoa New Zealand and an international examiner. An independent chair is appointed by the FGR. Chairs are required to participate in training. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the University moved to use video conference for the oral examination and plans to continue this process.

The University does not routinely report on trends in thesis examination outcomes, but comments that cases where a consensus is unable to be reached between examiners are rare.

Masters' theses are examined by two examiners, one of whom is external to the University. Responsibility for examination of master's theses has recently moved to the FGR.

The Panel is satisfied that processes and standards for examination of research thesis are consistent with national and international practice.

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<sup>209</sup> SD 187; SD 189.

<sup>210</sup> SRR, p. 61.

## Conclusion

The concluding section of this report first provides an assessment of the underpinning and scope components of the audit framework before summarising the commendations, affirmations and recommendations the Panel has made.

### Underpinning and scope components of the audit framework

In addition to the Guideline statements, the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework contains three underpinning components and three scope components. The underpinning components are that the university's audit portfolio reflects: the University's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi; the close interdependence of university research and teaching; and the university's role as critic and conscience of society. The University indicated in its SRR where a guideline statement was relevant to an underpinning component of the audit framework.

The University's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi is clearly set out in its Te Tiriti o Waitangi Statute and strongly supported by the University's self-review against the Statute. The Panel has made multiple references to the University's Te Tiriti o Waitangi self-review and considers it provides the University with a strong framework for future work. Some aspects have yet to be fully developed, including how the University will achieve a further doubling of staff who are Māori and how the University will leverage the Mātauranga Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi components of its Academic Career Framework/Ngā Pararu Akorangi.

Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington draws on its PBRF ranking as the most research-intensive university in Aotearoa New Zealand to support the interdependence of research and teaching and its strategic positioning as a global-civic university as the basis for its role as critic and conscience of society.<sup>211</sup> The connection between research and teaching is also examined in academic programme reviews and new staff are provided with guidance on the university's role as critic and conscience. The Panel considers that the Curriculum Framework and Graduate Profile projects offer valuable opportunities for the University to reinforce the interdependence between research and teaching, and the University's role as critic and conscience of society.

The scope components are that the SRP should consider all students, all delivery and all staff who undertake or support teaching or supervision. The university is expected to place emphasis as is appropriate for their context. The Panel considered the SRP did allow consideration of all students. The EDI framework was useful in identifying EDI focus groups for the University. The experience of COVID-19 means the University has needed to pay more attention to how it delivers its teaching and supports learning and the Panel saw ample evidence of this. The SRP also included reference to different groups of staff who undertake or support teaching or supervision, including staff on teaching-intensive pathways, learning designers supporting the implementation of the new LMS, professional staff, and postgraduate supervisors external to the University.

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<sup>211</sup> SRR, p. xi.



## Enhancement initiatives

Identifying enhancement initiatives is an important component of the academic audit self-review process as the University assesses whether it meets the guideline statements in the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework. The University identified 10 enhancement initiatives.<sup>212</sup> The Panel has commented on and endorsed the direction of all the University's enhancement initiatives. It has made recommendations with respect to three enhancement initiatives and an affirmation with respect to six others. Implementation is underway for the final enhancement initiative.

## Summary of commendations, affirmations and recommendations

Based on the evidence available to it at the time of the audit, the Panel considers the University meets the expectations of the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework. In several instances the University exceeds the outcomes and standards a university of good international standing would be expected to demonstrate.

Commendations of good practice, affirmations of work underway and recommendations of matters for the University to consider are summarised below. The Panel has made recommendations that encourage further good practice and are intended to assist the University as it progresses its own strategic direction. The pattern of commendations, affirmations and recommendations reflects the systems and services development work underway at the University.

### Commendations

In an academic audit, commendations refer to examples of exceptionally good practice or to examples of innovative practice that should produce positive impacts on teaching, learning and student experience. The Panel has made the following commendations:

- |       |    |  |
|-------|----|--|
| GS 6  | C1 | The Panel <b>commends</b> the establishment of Āwhina and the University's ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of this initiative.   |
| GS 6  | C2 | The Panel <b>commends</b> the University for its Te Tiriti o Waitangi Handbook and Te Tiriti o Waitangi audit.   |
| GS 7  | C3 | The Panel <b>commends</b> the establishment of Pasifika Student Success Team and its commitment to supporting success for Pasifika students.                                   |
| GS 14 | C4 | The Panel <b>commends</b> the Academic Approvals and the Programme and Course Design handbooks that provide useful guidance for staff in developing programmes and assessment. |
| GS 24 | C5 | The Panel <b>commends</b> the work of CAD in supporting teaching development across the University generally and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in particular.           |

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<sup>212</sup> SRR, p. xiii.

- GS 24 C6 The Panel **commends** CAD’s leadership role in the change programme for teaching and learning digital infrastructure.
- GS 26 C7 The Panel **commends** VicTeach for its support for innovative and good practice teaching and learning.

### **Affirmations**

Affirmations refer to initiatives planned or underway that are likely to have a positive impact but are at an early stage and data are not yet available to assess impact. The Panel has made affirmations in the following areas:

- GS 1 A1 The Panel **affirms** the University’s investment in data capability to inform teaching and learning, performance monitoring and support for students, and suggests that further work provide support for staff to interrogate data for iterative enhancement.
- GS 2 A2 The Panel **affirms** the development of the Ngā Kīwai o te Kete – Student Engagement Framework and annual Student Agreement and encourages the University to keep progressing its work on building productive partnerships with students.
- GS 3 A3 The Panel **affirms** the model for supporting staff in implementing the new Learning Management System.
- GS 3 A4 The Panel affirms work underway across a portfolio of interdependent physical, but especially digital, projects to create an enhanced teaching and learning environment, with attention particularly focused on the future development of an aligned Curriculum Framework and the building of staff capability.
- GS 6 A5 The Panel **affirms** the University’s implementation plan for recommendations from its Te Tiriti o Waitangi audit.
- GS 7 A6 The Panel **affirms** the University’s Enhancement Initiative 7 that it “progress the development of the Fale Malae to increase the engagement with Pasifika communities, students, and schools in university life and to enhance Pasifika students entering university and achieving academic success”.
- GS 8 A7 The Panel **affirms** the University’s intention to review access pathways for EDI focus group students and suggests that this include specification for future reporting that is comprehensive and systematic.
- GS 10 A8 The Panel **affirms** the development of the holistic advising model and the establishment of Titoko to support it.
- GS 13 A9 The Panel **affirms** the University’s initiative to develop a Wellbeing Outcomes Framework.

- GS 17     A10     The Panel **affirms** The University’s intention to review its graduate profile as part of the Curriculum Framework project and engage widely across the University in this process.
- GS 18     A11     The Panel **affirms** the University’s plans to progress the assessment framework and work on innovative assessment in a digitally enhanced learning environment.

### Recommendations

Recommendations refer to areas where the Panel considers the University would benefit from making some improvements or changes. Recommendations alert the University to what the Panel needs to be addressed, not how this should be done. The Panel has made the following recommendations:

- GS 1        R1        The Panel **recommends** that evaluation plans are developed for all teaching, learning and supervision initiatives.
- GS 5        R2        The Panel **recommends** that academic policy be included in the academic quality framework anticipated in Enhancement Initiative 7.
- GS 7        R3        The Panel **recommends** the University address remaining recommendations in the post-implementation of the Pasifika Student Success Team.
- GS 8        R4        The Panel **recommends** the University give greater strategic focus to attracting Māori students and Pasifika students to postgraduate, particularly doctoral study.
- GS 9        R5        The Panel **recommends** the University focus its enhancement initiative to embed support for transitions and particularly for employability in the curriculum.
- GS 11       R6        The Panel **recommends** the University progress with urgency its work on reviewing the Academic Grievance Policy and developing clear guidance for students and staff in raising and resolving complaints.
- GS 12       R7        The Panel **recommends** that data regarding student cohort access to various forms of learning support be collected for monitoring utilisation trends and evaluating the efficacy of service provision.
- GS 12       R8        The Panel **recommends** the University consider embedding learning support and academic skills development in the curriculum.

GS 16	R9	The Panel <b>recommends</b> the University consider whether the composition of its programme review panels provides sufficient breadth of perspectives in reaching evaluative conclusions.
GS 20	R10	The Panel <b>recommends</b> the University complete the operationalisation of its new academic integrity policy with urgency.
GS 27	R11	The Panel <b>recommends</b> the University complete its review of ongoing training for postgraduate supervisors and enforce responsibilities for ensuring training is undertaken.
GS 29	R12	The Panel <b>recommends</b> that compliance with progress-reporting requirements for postgraduate research students be enforced.

### Follow-up report

The Panel invites Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington to provide a follow-up report one year after the release of this report. The report should address progress with respect to both affirmations and recommendations. Once it has been accepted by the AQA Board, the University’s follow-up report should be made publicly available.

### Members of the Audit Panel

Professor Robyn Longhurst <i>Chair of the Panel</i>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, University of Waikato
Dr Dione Payne	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Māori and Pasifika Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki, Lincoln University
Professor Sally Kift	Higher Education Consultant
Professor Tim Cooper	Head, School of Arts Te Whare Wānaka o Ōtako, University of Otago
Sahan Jayatissa	Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland

#### *Secretariat:*

Sheelagh Matear	Executive Director Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities
Hana Meinders-Sykes	Deputy Director Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

## **Acknowledgements**

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Thanks also to Sharon Cuzens for proofreading the report.

The translation of the Summary into Te Reo Māori was undertaken by Ōkupu.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> <https://www.okupu.co.nz/>

## Appendix 1: The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities, Te Poukapū Kōunga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa (AQA) AQA is an operationally independent entity established by the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee in 1994. Its purpose is to contribute to the advancement of New Zealand university education by:

- engaging as a leader and advocate in the development of academic quality
- applying quality assurance and quality enhancement processes that assist universities in improving student engagement, academic experience and learning outcomes
- supporting confidence in the academic quality of New Zealand universities.<sup>214</sup>

The AQA helps support universities in achieving standards of excellence in research and teaching by conducting institutional audits of the processes in universities which underpin academic quality and by identifying and disseminating information on good practice in developing and maintaining quality in higher education. Activities include a quarterly newsletter and regular meetings on quality enhancement topics.

The AQA interacts with other educational bodies within New Zealand and with similar academic quality assurance agencies internationally. The Agency is a full member of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), and of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). AQA was assessed in 2020 as being aligned with the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice in Quality Assurance. This recognition of alignment is current until November 2025.

Further information is available from the AQA website: [www.aqa.ac.nz](http://www.aqa.ac.nz).

### Quality assurance principles

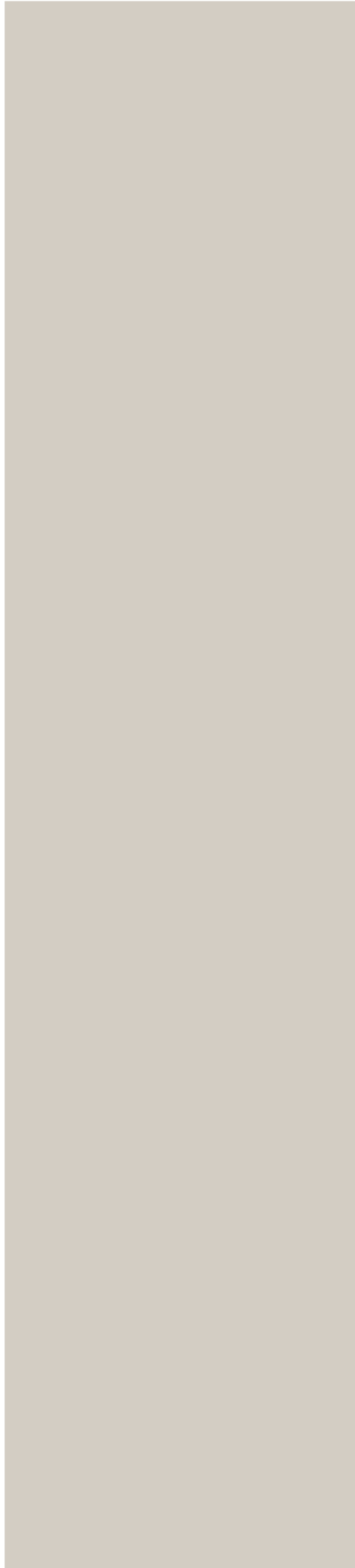
AQA and CUAP have jointly agreed principles that underpin quality assurance. These are that quality assurance acknowledges the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and is:

- developed by the universities
- evidence-based
- enhancement-led
- founded on self-review
- assured by peer review
- collective and collegial
- individually binding
- internationally benchmarked
- independently operated
- publicly accountable
- in partnership with students.

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<sup>214</sup> AQA (2020), Constitution. Available at <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/AQA%20Constitution%20Amended%20Oct%202020.pdf>. (Accessed 23 February 2022).





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