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Report of the 2024 Academic Audit of the University of Otago — Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka

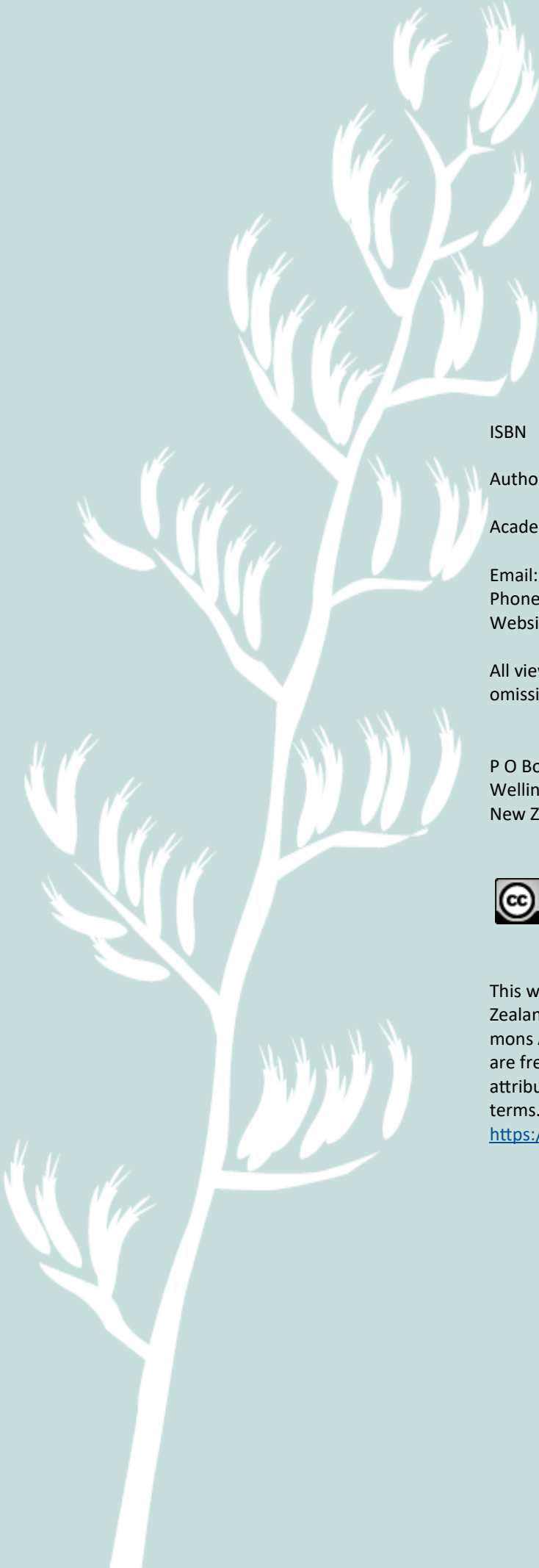
Cycle 6 academic audit undertaken by the Academic Quality
Agency for New Zealand Universities

November 2024

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



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Author:

Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

Email: comms@aga.ac.nz

Phone: 04-801 7924

Website: www.aga.ac.nz

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P O Box 5787
Wellington 6140
New Zealand



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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 arotakenga e ai ki tētahi angamahi o ngā tauākī aratohu e 30 (GS) i ngā wāhanga e rima: (1) Te hautūtanga me te whakahaeretanga o te whakaako me te ako, me te kounga ā-kura wānanga; (2) Te huringa ora, te tautoko me te oranga o te tauira; (3) Te marautanga, ngā aromatawai me te ara tuku; (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, ā, ka tāpae i tētahi pūrongo arotake i a ia anō me tētahi kāhua e kī ana i ngā taunakitanga. Me whakaatu hoki te arotakenga 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, me te wāhi hoki o te whare wānanga ki te arohae me te arotika i te porihanga. Me whai wāhi ki tāna aromatawai ngā tauira katoa, ngā ara tuku katoa, me ngā kaimahi katoa mēnā he kaiako, he kaihōmiromiro rānei.

I tukuna e Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka - University of Otago tāna kāhua arotake i a ia anō i te 28 o Māehe 2024. I whakatau te Paewhiri he whānui te arotakenga, ā, he pai te whakamahinga o ngā raraunga nō ngā rārangi pātai a te whare wānanga. E rua ngā hui (ā-ipurangi) a te Paewhiri i mua i te toro ā-tinana atu ki te Whare Wānanga i te 22 ki te 24 o Hūrae 2024. I te wā o taua toronga, e 24 ngā uiuinga a te Paewhiri, ā, i hui hoki ki ngā kaimahi e 82 me ngā tauira e 37. He mea tautoko e ngā kōrero nō ngā uiuinga ngā kōrero kei te kāhua arotake i a ia anō, ā, i whakamahi te Paewhiri i ngā puna e rua i roto i āna whakatau.

I tū te Huringa 6 Arotake ā-Kura Wānanga o Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka i te horopaki o ngā pānga mauroa o te mate urutā, arā, KOWHEORI-19. I piki hoki ngā wero ā-pūtea nā te urutā, me ngā panonitanga ki te rōpū hautū matua o te Whare Wānanga hei horopaki anō mō tēnei arotakenga. Ahakoa ēnei horopaki uaua, kua whakaurua e te Whare Wānanga tētahi ikoa Māori hou, kua whakawhanaketia hoki tētahi ahunga rautaki hiranga hou. Ka uru ki tēnei ko te tahuri ki Te Tiriti o Waitangi hei ārahitanga, ā, kia tū hoki hei whare wānanga nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa. Kei te whakatōpūtia tana rōpū hautū matua, tae ana ki te kopounga o tētahi Vice-Chancellor hou me te Deputy Vice-Chancellor Māori tuatahi mō te Whare Wānanga. E whai ana te Whare Wānanga ki te kopou i tētahi āpiha matua nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa ki te ārahi i ngā mahi kia noho ai hei whare wānanga nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa.

Ka aro te wāhanga tuatahi o te angamahi arotakenga ki te ārahitanga me te whakahaeretanga o ngā whakaakoranga me ngā akoranga. Ka uru hoki ngā tauākī aratohu e rua, e arotake ana i ngā kokenga o ngā aronga whakangako a te whare wānanga nō te wāhanga tuatahi o te huringa arotake. E ai ki te Paewhiri, he arorau, he whaitake hoki ngā tuinga rautaki a te Whare Wānanga. Māraakerake ana ngā panonitanga me whai i ngā puka rautaki, ā, e whakaatu ana i tētahi hōtaka panonitanga nui. Me whai ko tētahi ara matatini hei whakahaere i ngā panonitanga, me whai tauira, āheitanga, pūnaha maha hoki hei tautoko i ngā panonitanga e tāria ana.

He pānga ō te takune a te Whare Wānanga kia arahina ia e Te Tiriti o Waitangi, kia noho hoki hei whare wānanga o Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, ki ngā kaimahi, te whai wāhi ki ngā reo o ngā tauira, me te whakamahere i te wāhi tūturu me te taiao ako matihiko, te whakawhanake marautanga, te whakamaheretanga o ngā papa ōkiko, matihiko hoki, te whakawhanaketanga o te marautanga me te whakawhanaketanga ngaio mō ngā kaiako. E koa ana te Paewhiri ki te kite i te tuwhera o te Whare Wānanga ki te aro atu ki ētahi atu wero, pēnei i te āta mahi ki te whakakore i te kaikiri me te whakatairanga i te āheitanga ā-ahurea. Kei te koke te Whare Wānanga me ōna aronga whakangako me te ū tonu ki te ōrite o ngā putanga mō ngā tauira Māori me ngā tauira nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa.

Ko te whakawhanaketanga o tētahi taiao ako matihiko hou he aronga rautaki matua, e hāngai ana ki te whakapakari i ngā pūkenga kaimahi ki te momo ako e tautokona ana e te hangarau. He mea hira tēnei taiao hei whakahaere i te whakaako me te ako i roto i tētahi whare wānanga hōu, me te tautoko anō hoki i ētahi atu kaupapa pērā i te whakarite wā ako, te whai i ngā kokenga a ngā tauira, me te pāhekoheko ki ngā ratonga tautoko, me te aromatawai i te pānga o ngā kaupapa me ngā hāpaiaora tūnekeneke. Me whakawhanake ngā pūnaha raraunga me ngā pūrongo i roto i te taiao ako matihiko.

Ko te wāhanga tuarua (B) o te angamahi arotakenga - Te hurihanga ora, te tautoko me te orange o te tauira - he wāhanga kaha mō te Whare Wānanga. He rawe ngā mauhanga o te angitu ā-akoranga a ngā tauira, ā, kei te whai wāhi tonu ki te tautoko i ngā whakawhitinga pai mō ngā tauira, me ngā ratonga tautoko ako me te orange e tika ana ki ngā ahurea. Ahakoa kua whakapakaritia ngā pūnaha tautoko, ka taea anō pea te whakapiki ake mā te raraunga pai ake i te taiao ako matihiko. Me taea e te tātaritanga te tautuhi wawe i ngā tauira kei te mōrearea ā-akoranga, i mua i te tīmatanga o ngā tukanga whakatūpato ā-akoranga. E arotake ana te Whare Wānanga i ngā hōtaka toronga, ā, e whakaaro ana te Paewhiri ka pai ake pea te toronga mō ngā tauira Māori me ngā tauira nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa. Me whakapiki anō ngā ara ki ngā akoranga paerunga mō ēnei tauira. Me whakapai hoki i ngā tukanga mō ngā nawe me ngā pīra e pā ana ki te akoranga kia whakanuia te mōhiotanga me te whakapono ki ēnei tukanga mō ngā tauira paetahi me ngā tauira paerunga.

Ko te wāhanga tuatoru (C) o te angamahi arotakenga e aro ana ki te marautanga, te aromatawai me te ara tuku. Kei te mahi te Whare Wānanga i ngā mahi ki te whakangāwari i ngā pepa, i ngā hōtaka hoki, te whakahou i te Kāhua Ihuputa a te Whare Wānanga, me te arotake i a Ngā Kaupapa mō te Reo Māori. Ka tautoko te Paewhiri i ēnei mahi. E tūtōhu ana hoki kia tirohia e te Whare Wānanga te whakahokinga mai o tana rārangi pātai mō ngā kaiwhakawhiwhi mahi, me te arotake mēnā rānei he māmā ngā whakaritenga arotake o nāianei hei tautoko i ngā panonitanga marautanga i ngā aronga rautaki whānui i te whai kia arahina e Te Tiriti o Waitangi, kia noho hoki hei whare wānanga o Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa. Me whakaatu hoki te hoahoa aromatawai i ngā aronga rautaki i te Angamahi Rautaki Māori, te Angamahi Rautaki Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, me te Mahere Mahi Whaikaha. E wātea

ana hoki ētahi ara hei whakapakari i te haumarutanga ā-ahurea me te whakauru i ētahi whakaritenga motuhake mō ngā aromatawai. Ahakoa kei te whakaaro te Whare Wānanga mō ngā mahi Atamai Hangahanga, e whakaaro ana te Paewhiri ka pai ake te ārahitanga matua me te tūturutanga. I te wāhi whakamutunga o tēnei wāhanga, me whakaaro anō ngā kawatau mō ngā whakaritenga aromatawai ā-waho mō ngā kōhi paetahi me ngā kōhi paerunga.

Ko te wāhanga tuawhā o te angamahi arotakenga (D) e aro ana ki te kounga o te whakaako, te kimi kaimahi, te whakawhanake, me te āhukahuka i ngā kaimahi. E koa ana te Paewhiri ki te kite i te whai wāhi tonutanga a te Hōtaka Whakawhanake Kaiārahi Mātauranga a te Whare Wānanga, me te angitu o ngā kaimahi i ngā Tohu Te Whatu Kairangi Aotearoa Tertiary Educator Awards. He whanaketanga pai anō hoki te whakatūnga o Kōkiri ki Tua. Me whakapiki ake i te nama o ngā kaimahi Māori ki ngā taumata katoa o te Whare Wānanga, ā, me tautoko i tō rātou mana, te angitu me te orange pai. Tērā hoki te hiahia kia nui ake te nama o ngā kaimahi nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa ki ngā taumata katoa, ā, me tautoko anō i tō rātou mana, te angitu, me te orange. Kei te mōhio te Whare Wānanga ki te matea kia hāngai ake ngā mahi whakawhanake ki ngā ahunga rautaki. Ka hiahiatia te tautoko kia whakaū i te ao Māori me ngā mātauranga nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa ki ngā marautanga, me tētahi angawā hei arotahi ki te whakatinanatanga o tēnei tautoko.

Ko te wāhanga whakamutunga (E) o te angamahi arotakenga e aro ana ki ngā tauira rangahau paerunga. He kaha tonu te Whare Wānanga i te wāhi ki te angitu ā-akoranga o ngā tauira rangahau paerunga, ā, e rongo ana hoki i te pai o te kaihōmiromiro. Ka taea te whakapakari ake i te wheako mā te whakaū me te aroturuki i ngā whakaritenga matua mō ngā kaihōmiromiro, te whakapakari i te mārama ki ngā tukanga mō ngā whakaurunga, ngā karahipi, me ētahi atu tautoko pūtea mā ngā tauira rangahau paerunga. E koa ana te Paewhiri ki te kite i tētahi whanaketanga e taea ai ngā whakamātautau ā-waha mō ngā tauira Tohu Kairangi Māori i runga i te marae. E wātea ana he ara hei whakapai ake i te wheako o ngā tauira Paerua mā te whakapiki i te ōrite o ngā kawatau puta noa i te Whare Wānanga.

Ka tonu hoki te Angamahi Arotakenga Kura Wānanga Huringa 6 kia huritao ngā whare wānanga i ō rātou takohanga i raro i Te Tiriti o Waitangi, te whirinakitanga o ngā rangahau me ngā whakaakoranga, me te tūranga o ngā whare wānanga hei kaiaroahae, hei kaiarotika o te pāpori. Me whai wāhi ki tana aromatawai ko ngā tauira katoa, ngā ara tuku katoa me ngā kaimahi katoa ka pīkau, ka tautoko rānei i ngā whakaakoranga, hōmiromirotanga rānei.

Ko te takune a te Whare Wānanga kia noho hei whare wānanga e aratakina ana e Te Tiriti o Waitangi. He haerenga tēnei kua kitea kētia i ngā rautaki, ngā tautoko ā-tauira, ngā marautanga me ngā kaimahi, engari me whai wāhi tonu. Kei te kitea te whirinakitanga o ngā mahi whakaako me te rangahau i ngā mahi kura wānanga. E ū ana te Whare Wānanga ki tōna tūranga hei kaiaroahae o te pāpori, ā, kua whāia ētahi tūāoma ki te tautoko i ngā kaimahi i tēnei tūranga, ā, e tāria ana ētahi atu mahi anō.

I te wāhi ki ngā wāhanga hōkaitanga o te angamahi arotakenga, e mōhio pū ana te Whare Wānanga ki ngā hiahia o ngā rōpū tauira rerekē, ā, e urupare atu ana anō hoki. E tino pērā ana ia ki ngā tauira Māori, ngā tauira nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, me ngā tauira whaikaha. Ka aro hoki te Whare Wānanga ki ngā matea o ngā tauira i ngā whare wānanga i Ōtautahi me Te Whanganui-a-Tara, me ngā tauira kei tawhiti e ako ana. Kei te haere ngā mahi āwhina i ngā rōpū kaimahi motuhake. Ka piki haere te

hiranga o te aro ki ngā ara tuku rerekē a te Whare Wānanga hei te anamata, me te aha, kua tīmata kē tana whakatere i ngā mahi nei.

I runga i ngā taunakitanga i wātea mai ki te Paewhiri i te wā o te arotakenga, e whakatau ana ia kua kapi, ā, i ētahi wā kua hipa noa atu te Whare Wānanga i ngā paerewa o te whare wānanga tū tika. E tino hāngai ana tēnei ki ngā tutukitanga ā-tauira me ngā tautoko ā-tauira. Nā reira e tutuki ana i te Whare Wānanga ngā kawatau o te Huringa 6 Angamahi Arotakenga Kura Wānanga. Mēnā e kitea ana he mahi anō e hiahiatia ana, kua tukuna e te Paewhiri ngā tūtohutanga, kua taunaki hoki i ngā kaupapa whakangako kua tohua kētia e te Whare Wānanga. Kua tukuna e te Paewhiri ngā whakamihi e tekau mā toru, ngā whakatūturutanga e tekau mā rima, ā, ngā tūtohutanga e tekau mā iwa e tautoko ana, e akiaki ana hoki i ngā mahi pai. Ko te whai o ēnei ko te āwhina i te Whare Wānanga i a ia ka koke i tōna anō ahunga ā-rautaki.

Me tuku e te whare wānanga tētahi 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.

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.¹

The second phase of Cycle 6 is an audit against a framework of 30 guideline statements (GS) 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.

The University of Otago — Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka submitted its self-review portfolio on 28 March 2024. The Panel found the self-review to be comprehensive and to have made good use of data from university surveys. The Panel met twice (online) before undertaking an in-person site visit to the University from 22-24 July 2024. During the site visit, the Panel held 24 interview sessions and met with 82 members of staff and 37 students. Information gained through the interviews supplemented that contained in the self-review portfolio and the Panel drew on both sources to reach its findings.

The Cycle 6 Academic Audit of University of Otago — Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka took place in the context of the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Financial challenges, arising in part from the pandemic, and changes in the senior leadership of the University provided further context for this audit. Despite this challenging context, the University has launched a new ikoa Māori and developed a new and aspirational strategic direction that includes becoming Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and a university of the Pacific. It is consolidating the renewal of its senior leadership team, including the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor and the first Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Māori) for the University. The University intends to appoint a senior Pacific role to lead work to become a university of the Pacific.

The first section of the audit framework is concerned with leadership and management of teaching and learning. It also contains two guideline statements that examine progress on a university's

¹ <https://www.enhanceunz.com/>

enhancement theme objectives from phase 1 of the audit cycle. The Panel finds the University's strategic documents to be coherent and to provide useful direction. The strategic documents are explicit about changes needed and set out a substantial change programme. A sophisticated approach to change management—utilising multiple models, capabilities and levers—will be required to support the anticipated changes.

The University's aspirations to become Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and a university of the Pacific have implications for staffing, engagement with student voices, how both the physical campus and digital learning environments are planned, curriculum development and professional development for teachers. The Panel is pleased to see the University's willingness to be open about addressing other challenges, including undertaking work to address racism and promote bicultural competency. The University has made progress on its enhancement theme objectives and remains committed to achieving equity of outcomes for taurira Māori, and for Pacific students.

The development of a modern digital learning environment is a key strategic initiative, together with augmented staff capabilities in technology-enhanced learning. Such an environment is needed to undertake teaching and learning in a modern university and to support other initiatives. These other initiatives include timetabling, the ability to track student progress and engagement with support across different services, and assessing the impact of initiatives and interventions dynamically. Data and reporting systems should be developed as part of the digital learning environment.

Section B of the audit framework—Student life cycle, support and wellbeing—is an area of strength for the University. It has an outstanding track record in student academic achievement, an ongoing commitment to supporting successful transitions for students, and comprehensive and culturally appropriate learning support and wellbeing services. Although support systems are well established and effective, they could be strengthened by better data that should be available through the development of the digital learning environment. Analytics should allow earlier identification of students at academic risk, before they trigger academic warning processes. The University intends to review its access programmes, which the Panel considers could better facilitate access for taurira Māori and Pacific students. Pathways into postgraduate studies for these students should also be strengthened. Work to improve access to and resolution of academic complaints, appeals and grievances should seek to improve awareness of and trust in these processes for both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

The third section (C) of the audit framework examines curriculum, assessment and delivery. The University has work underway to simplify papers and programmes, refresh the University Graduate Profile, and review Ngā Kaupapa mō te reo Māori | Māori Language Policy. The Panel endorses this work. It also recommends that the University consider reintroducing its survey of employers and examine whether its existing review arrangements are sufficiently agile and focused to support the curriculum changes that will arise both from initiatives underway in this area and the broader strategic aspirations to become Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and a university of the Pacific. Assessment design should also reflect these aspirations and direction from the Māori Strategic Framework, Pacific Strategic Framework and the Disability Action Plan. There are also opportunities to strengthen the cultural safety and inclusiveness of special consideration and alternative arrangements in assessment. Although work to consider the current and future role(s) of Generative Artificial Intelligence is underway, the Panel considers more detailed and consistent guidance would

be helpful. Finally, in this section, expectations for external moderation of assessment for both undergraduate and postgraduate level taught papers should be reconsidered.

Section D of the audit framework considers teaching quality and the recruitment, development and recognition of staff. The Panel is pleased to see the ongoing contribution made by the University's Academic Leadership Development Programme and the success achieved by University staff in the national Te Whatu Kairangi Aotearoa Tertiary Educator Awards. The recent establishment of an Educational Network|Kōkiri ki Tua is also a positive development. Further work is needed to increase the numbers of kaimahi Māori at all levels throughout the whole University, and to support their influence, success and wellbeing. Separately, reflecting different but complementary drivers and responsibilities, there is a need to increase the number of skilled Pacific staff at all levels throughout the whole University, and to support their influence, success, and wellbeing. The University has recognised the need for its teaching development activities to be better aligned with strategic direction. Support is needed to embed te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies in curricula, as is a timeline for the implementation of this support.

The final section (E) of the audit framework focuses on postgraduate research students. Again, the University has a record of strong academic achievement for postgraduate research students and reports high levels of satisfaction with supervision. The already positive experience for postgraduate research students could be strengthened further by specifying and monitoring core training requirements for supervisors and improving transparency of processes and decisions around admission and enrolment, scholarships and other financial support for postgraduate research students. The Panel is pleased to see a recent development that enables oral examinations for Māori PhD students to be held on a marae. There is an opportunity to improve the experience of research Master's students through greater consistency of expectations across the University.

The Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework also asks universities to reflect on their 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.

The University aspires to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led. This journey is already reflected in strategy, student support, curriculum and staffing, but will require continued engagement. The interdependence of teaching and research is clearly visible in academic activities. The University is explicit about its role as critic and conscience of society; it has taken steps to support staff contributing to this function and anticipates further work.

With respect to the scope components of the audit framework, the University is clearly aware of and is responsive to the needs of different groups of students, particularly Māori students, Pacific students and disabled students. The University also considers the needs of students on the Christchurch and Wellington campuses and students studying at a distance. The University has a programme of work underway that will assist in paying further attention to the needs of specific groups of staff. Attention to different modes of delivery will become increasingly important for the University in future and, again, it has work underway here.

Based on the evidence available to it at the time of the audit, the Panel considers the University does meet, and in several instances exceeds, the outcomes and standards a university of good

international standing would be expected to demonstrate in respect of the guideline statements. This is particularly the case for student achievement and student support. The University therefore meets the expectations of the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework. 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 13 commendations, 15 affirmations and 19 recommendations that support and encourage good practices and are intended to assist the University as it progresses its own strategic direction.

The University of Otago — Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka 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.²

² www.aqa.ac.nz

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List of key terms and acronyms

AR23	Annual Report 2023
BoGS	Board of Graduate Studies
BUGS	Board of Undergraduate Studies
CALT	Committee for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
CDC	Career Development Centre
CUAP	Universities New Zealand Committee on University Academic Programmes
DI&S	Disability Information and Support Te Pokapū Hāpai Huka Hauā
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
EFTS	Equivalent Full-Time Student(s)
FE	Further evidence provided by the University (forms parts of the SRP)
FTE	Full-time Equivalent (staff)
Gen-AI	Generative Artificial Intelligence
GOS	Graduate Opinion Survey
GRS	Graduate Research School
GS	Guideline statement (in the Cycle 6 academic audit framework)
GYR	Graduating Year Review
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technology
HEDC	Higher Education Development Centre
HSFY	Health Sciences First Year
KD, SD	Key/Supporting document (forms part of the University's Self-review Portfolio)
LMS	Learning management system
LSP	Learner Success Plan
MSF	Māori Strategic Framework
OUSA	Otago University Students' Association
PIC	Pacific Islands Centre
PSF	Pacific Strategic Framework
PVC	Pro-Vice-Chancellor
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SMS	Student management system
SR, SRR, SRP	Self-review, Self-review report, Self-review portfolio
THM	The Māori Centre Te Huka Mātauraka

Introduction

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

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 Pacific students”.⁵ The start of phase two was deferred by 12 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; and (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 and audit report. 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 2018.⁶ 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.

The University of Otago — Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka (the University) submitted its self-review on 28 March 2024. The self-review report (SRR) was both in hard copy and loaded onto an AQA OneDrive site. The Panel found the Self-review Report (SRR) and supporting portfolio to be comprehensive. The SRR was well-supported by evidence from the University’s portfolio of student surveys.

³ <https://www.inqaahe.org/recognition-process/aligned-agencies-database/> (Accessed 1 October 2024.)

⁴ www.aqa.ac.nz

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

⁶ 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.)

However, the Panel would also have liked to see evidence from a broader range of sources and evidence that addressed the impact of initiatives and developments more directly.

Once the University had uploaded its self-review portfolio 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 22-24 July 2024.

During the site visit, the Panel (see p. 57) held 24 interview sessions and met with 82 members of staff and 37 students, including staff based on the Christchurch and Wellington campuses and students studying by distance by Zoom. Most of the other interviewees were able to attend face-to-face meetings, although one session with students was also held by Zoom. All interviewees were prepared to engage constructively and candidly with the Panel and to provide helpful insights to the audit areas.

About the University

The University of Otago — Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka was the first university to be established in Aotearoa New Zealand, in 1869.⁷ It is a predominantly 'residential university' and has one of only two medical schools and the only Faculty of Dentistry in the country. In 2023 the University enrolled over 21,000 students (18,962 EFTS), with almost 90% of students coming from outside Dunedin.⁸ The University's main campus is in Dunedin (17,461 EFTS), with campuses that undertake clinical training and other health sciences postgraduate delivery and research in Christchurch (740 EFTS) and Wellington (645 EFTS).⁹ Sites in Auckland and Invercargill are also described as campuses but have low numbers of students associated with them.¹⁰

The University's principal Te Tiriti o Waitangi relationship is with Kāi Tahu as mana whenua, with close relationships with three Otago Ngāi Tahu rūnaka (kā rūnaka o Ōtākou, rātou ko Puketeraki, ko Moeraki). Mana whenua relationships were central to the development and launch in May 2024 of the University's new ikoa Māori: Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka.¹¹ The existing Memorandum of Understanding with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu was being reviewed at the time of this audit. The MoU recognises that University activities extend beyond the takiwā of Ngāi Tahu, and that the University also has relationships with other iwi and Māori health providers.¹² The University's mission includes being "committed to partnership with mana whenua and upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi".¹³ The Panel heard many references to the University's aspirations to be 'Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led' and to the intent to integrate "te ao Māori, tikanga Māori, te reo Māori and mātauraka Māori into [our] teaching, learning, research and support services."¹⁴

⁷ SRR, p. 5.

⁸ SRR, p. 7.

⁹ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/christchurch/about>; <https://www.otago.ac.nz/wellington/about> (Accessed 1 August 2024.)

¹⁰ SRR, p. 7.

¹¹ SRR, p. 9.

¹² <https://www.otago.ac.nz/maori/mana-whenua/iwi> (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

¹³ SRR, p. 8.

¹⁴ KD 1 (Vision 2040), p. 8.

Internationally, the University is ranked at 214 in the QS World University Rankings and in the 401-500 band for the Academic Ranking of World Universities.¹⁵ It is a founding member of the Matariki Network of Universities¹⁶ and the Otago Business School was reaccredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business in 2022.¹⁷ Thirty-four international and 25 national professional accreditations are held across 46 programmes.¹⁸

The University is governed by a 12-member Council. This includes at least one member who is Māori, appointed after consultation with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, and the President of the Otago University Students' Association.¹⁹ The University Senate is a sub-committee of Council and advises it on academic matters as the Academic Board of the University.²⁰ Other committees of Council include the Appeals Board, Audit and Risk Committee, Capital Development Committee, People and Culture Committee, Strategy and Planning Committee, and Treaty of Waitangi Committee.²¹

The composition of Senate was reviewed in 2021 to enhance diversity and representation. This resulted in the Tumuaki of Te Rōpū Māori and the President of the University of Otago Pacific Islands Students' Association becoming *ex officio* members of Senate. The President, Academic Representative and Postgraduate Students' Representative of the Otago University Students' Association are also *ex officio* members of Senate.²²

A series of sub-committees provide advice to Senate on teaching, learning, academic quality and research. They include the Board of Graduate Studies (BoGS), Board of Undergraduate Studies (BUGS), Committee for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT), and the Quality Advancement Committee.

The Vice-Chancellor is advised by a relatively large Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of 15 people, all of whom report to the Vice-Chancellor.²³ The SLT comprises four Pro-Vice-Chancellors who lead each of the teaching Divisions; four Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Māori, External Engagement, Academic, Research and Enterprise); Directors of Māori Development, Pacific Development, Strategy, Analytics and Reporting, and Human Resources; the Registrar and Secretary of Council, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer.²⁴ The DVC (Academic) leads the Academic Division | Te Wāhaka Matua Mātauraka which includes Student Services, Student Experience, Academic Committees, Quality Advancement, and Higher Education Development.²⁵ The Graduate Research School (GRS), which has oversight of graduate research study, is part of the Research Division led by the DVC (Research and Enterprise).²⁶

¹⁵ <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/80898/university-rankings> (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

¹⁶ SRR, p. 75.

¹⁷ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/news/newsroom/otago-business-school-receives-aacsb-accreditation> (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

¹⁸ SRR, p. 58.

¹⁹ <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2015-au5061> (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

²⁰ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/council/committees> (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

²¹ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/council/committees/committees> (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

²² <https://www.otago.ac.nz/staff/policies/policy-collection/senate-statute-2021> (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

²³ SRR, p. 10; KD 11.

²⁴ KD 11.

²⁵ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/council/committees/committees/slt/academicdivision#brock> (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

²⁶ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/about> (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

Teaching and research activities are carried out in four Divisions—Health Sciences, Humanities, Sciences and Commerce (Otago Business School). The Division of Health Sciences is the largest (6,180 EFTS, 1,046 FTE academic staff) and the Division of Commerce the smallest (2,933 EFTS, 123 FTE academic staff).²⁷ The teaching divisions are supported by 12 service divisions including Academic, Student Services, and Campus and Collegiate Life.²⁸ The Campus and Collegiate Life Services network includes the 11 University-owned and four affiliated residential colleges.²⁹

The University's strategy is set out in two key documents: Vision 2040 and Pae Tata — Strategic Plan to 2030. Vision 2040 sets out strategic imperatives for the University on:

- learning and teaching
- discovery and innovation
- the University's place in the world, including paying particular attention to “being a true university of the Pacific”
- transformative student experiences
- people and culture
- securing [the University's] future.

The ways in which the University seeks to “advance in relation to Te Tiriti [o Waitangi]” are included in each of the strategic imperatives.³⁰

Pae Tata sets out the short- to medium-term steps the University will take towards achieving Vision 2040. The introduction to Pae Tata outlines a ‘case for change’ for the future success of the University. The Panel sees as strengths of Pae Tata the ‘ownership’ of the need for change, calls to action, and warning of consequences of not changing.

Pae Tata has five ‘domains’ for priority action:

1. Education: Provide compelling and viable educational offerings
2. Research and Innovation: Organise and focus research and innovation
3. Te Tiriti: Whakamana Te Tiriti o Waitangi—strengthen our capability, capacity and culture to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi
4. Global and Connected: Become a more global and connected university
5. Our People: Support our people to achieve their best.³¹

A series of strategic frameworks supports and focuses Pae Tata on specific areas:

- the Māori Strategic Framework (MSF)
- the Pacific Strategic Framework (PSF)
- Tī Kouka – the Sustainability Strategic Framework
- Te Rautaki Arara Tōkeke – Equity and Diversity Strategic Framework.³²

In addition, the University's Investment Plan and its Learner Success Plan align the University's strategic direction with priority areas. The MSF has been recently revised and a revision of the PSF

²⁷ SRR, p. 7; FE 27, p. 5.

²⁸ https://www.otago.ac.nz/about/administration/service_divisions (Accessed 5 August 2024.)

²⁹ SRR, p. 6.

³⁰ KD 1 (Vision 2040).

³¹ SRR, p. 10.

³² SRR, pp. 10-12.

has been foreshadowed. This does need to be refreshed to align fully with Pae Tata. However, this is a matter of timing and the priorities in Pae Tata's Education domain (below) complement the PSF.

Context for this Audit

All audits take place at a point in time and within a particular context. In addition to the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, including consequential financial challenges, the University has also experienced significant changes in its senior leadership roles.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected not only students attending (or intending to attend) the University between 2020 and 2022, but also those students whose experience of school was disrupted. The University has monitored the impact of COVID-19 on students' academic achievement and retention rates. Although pass rates have recovered, a fall in retention rates is having ongoing impacts.³³ The COVID-19 pandemic also accelerated a move to digital and online teaching; the implications of this development are addressed later in this report.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Christchurch and Kaikoura earthquakes have ongoing impacts, with the main building on the Wellington campus being evacuated in August 2021.³⁴

The University has experienced financial challenges, arising in part from the COVID-19 pandemic and from cost-of-living increases; and from Government funding not keeping pace with inflation.³⁵ These pressures have contributed to restructuring in some parts of the University³⁶ and limited progress in other areas, for example, succession planning. In other areas, however, financial pressures have contributed to the prioritisation of projects designed to enhance financial sustainability, for example the planned streamlining of paper and programme offerings.

A series of senior leadership changes has occurred since the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University. The current Vice-Chancellor commenced his role on 1 July 2024, just before the site visit for this audit. An acting Vice-Chancellor had served a second term for the 12 months prior to this as the tenure of the previous Vice-Chancellor was cut short due to illness. The changes in the Vice-Chancellor role particularly affected the DVC (Academic) portfolio, with acting and interim DVCs (Academic) filling the role while the DVC (Academic) was acting Vice-Chancellor. Other leadership changes included the sad death of the Director Pacific, the appointment of two new Pro-Vice-Chancellors (PVCs) of the Health Sciences and Commerce Divisions, and the establishment of the first DVC Māori role for the University, and a Dean, Learning and Teaching. The Panel views recent and signalled key strategic appointments, including the DVC Māori, the Chief Te Tiriti Relationships Officer, the Dean of Learning and Teaching, and potentially a DVC Pacific role, as positive developments.

Despite the challenging external environment and significant changes within the senior leadership team, the University was able to develop a new strategic direction, including developing and launching a new ikoa Māori, and a renewed commitment to becoming a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led institution and a university of the Pacific. These are significant strategic developments and

³³ SRR, p. 12.

³⁴ SRR, p. 25.

³⁵ AR23, p. 12; KD 2 (Pae Tata), p. 7.

³⁶ AR23, p. 12.

commitments. The Panel considers the University should be commended for maintaining strategic impetus through these difficult times.

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University's new and aspirational strategic direction to become a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led university and university of the Pacific, its new ikoa Māori and the appointment of the University's first DVC Māori.*

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University for maintaining strategic impetus through a period of significant change in senior leadership.*

The appointment of a strategic leadership role to support Pacific students and staff, teaching and research at the University was foreshadowed to the Panel. The Panel understands the University has not yet finalised the position description for this role. It notes however, that the University uses PVC for leadership roles of the teaching and research Divisions and DVC for roles with pan-University responsibilities. The Panel suggests that the appointment of a DVC Pacific, who is a member of the SLT, would signal the broader remit and standing of the role, and lend weight to the University's strategic aspiration to be a university of the Pacific (see GS 7).³⁷

At the time of this audit, the University had a significant programme of work underway or in development in its learning and teaching portfolio, driven by both strategic priorities and cost pressures. They include:

- refreshing the Teaching and Learning Plan
- enhancing the digital learning environment
- incorporating te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies into learning and teaching
- expanding online teaching delivery
- reviewing the University Graduate Profile and a curriculum framework
- rationalising the numbers of papers and programmes offered
- reviewing timetabling
- reviewing academic staff development.

These contextual factors are reflected in the Panel's commendations, affirmations and recommendations. The University has also identified a series of enhancement initiatives³⁸ (some of which overlap with the list above) in its self-review work for this audit. The Panel comments further on both the work underway and the enhancement initiatives in this report.

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 the university, and made recommendations where it considers attention needs to be paid to enhancing practice.

The University uses the Kai Tahu mita (dialect) in university documents and this report tries to reflect that usage. This report also reflects the University's use of 'Pacific' rather than Pasifika.³⁹

³⁷ KD 1, p. 16.

³⁸ SRR, p. 88.

³⁹ Breed, X. (2022). Themes for Pasifika from the Cycle 5 academic audit of New Zealand universities. Available from <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/node/393> (Accessed 29 April 2024.)

A draft of this report was submitted to the Board of the Academic Quality Agency for a quality assurance check on 16 September 2024 and to the University for a review of matters of factual accuracy on 30 September 2024.

This report is released under the authorisation of the AQA Board. All enquiries regarding the report should be directed to comms@aqa.ac.nz.

Cycle 5 Academic Audit

The Panel has reviewed the University's progress in responding to recommendations made in its Cycle 5 academic audit report.⁴⁰ The Cycle 5 recommendations were:

- R1: The Panel recommends that the University consider whether the Committee for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching is giving full effect to its strategic role and contribution, including implementation and monitoring of progress of strategic direction and initiatives.
- R2: The Panel recommends that the University progress its intentions to review course advice as a matter of urgency.
- R3: The Panel recommends that that the University should address progress on its Māori Strategic Framework further and that it should consider how Māori knowledge and pedagogy can be incorporated into curricula.
- R4: The Panel recommends that the University consider how it identifies students at risk of under-performance early in their studies and how it ensures that all students receive useful and timely feedback on their performance.
- R5: The Panel recommends that the University develop mechanisms for ensuring that students are made aware of changes and improvements that are informed by their feedback.
- R6: The Panel recommends that the University assess and consider the impacts of variations in availability of departmental and academic division support for postgraduate research students.

Recommendations 1 and 2 have been comprehensively addressed. With respect to recommendation 1, the Panel could see that CALT is exercising a strategic remit, including commissioning advice about future learning environments (see GS 3). For recommendation 2, the University has established a centralised advising unit. Further comment is made in GS 10.

Progress has been made on the MSF referred to in Recommendation 3 and the strategic intention to integrate mātauraka Māori into teaching and learning has been referenced above.⁴¹ The follow-up report on Cycle 5 recommendations states that there are many instances where mātauraka Māori has been incorporated into papers and programmes.⁴² However, in the absence of information systems that support content and curriculum management, it is difficult for the University to fully assess the extent to which mātauraka Māori has been incorporated. The University also indicates

⁴⁰ <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/University%20of%20Otago%20Report%20Cycle%205.pdf>, pp. 62-3-63. (Accessed 5 September 2024.)

⁴¹ KD 1 (Vision 2040), p. 8.

⁴² KD 9, p. 12.

that it intends to collect further information about te ao Māori content of papers and programmes.⁴³ The Panel’s assessment is that there is further work to do with respect to the Māori knowledge and pedagogy component of Recommendation 3. It makes further comment in GS 6, 10, 14, 16 and 18; and to the need to develop capacity and capabilities to undertake this work in GS 22, 23 and 24.

Recommendation 4 has been addressed and a centrally managed “academic warning” system is in place. This is discussed further in GS 10. The University took timely action to address Recommendation 5 and outlined a series of initiatives to ‘close the loop’ on student feedback.⁴⁴ The Panel considers there is still further work to do to ensure students are aware of changes and improvements that are informed by their feedback. It will make further comment in GS 15.

Finally, with respect to Recommendation 6, the University acknowledges that variations continue to exist. The Panel appreciates this is a reality of different disciplinary contexts and practices. However, it comments further on how greater transparency could help manage these variations in GS 28.

⁴³ SRR, p. 37.

⁴⁴ KD 9, pp. 19-20.

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 6.⁴⁵

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.

The University's main strategic planning documents were summarised in the introduction to this report. The Panel is impressed by the coherence of these documents; it heard frequent mention of how they were aligned with one another and how they informed planning and prioritisation in Academic and Service Divisions. In particular, the Māori Strategic Framework offers opportunities for the wider University to realise Māori aspirations for students, staff, space, curricula, and learning and teaching. This also applies to Pacific aspirations for students, staff, space, curricula, and learning and teaching through the Pacific Strategic Framework.

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the coherence and consistency of guidance provided across the University by strategic documents, including the Māori Strategic Framework and Pacific Strategic Framework.*

Pae Tata sets out ambitious priorities for the University that involve change, renewal and redevelopment across most aspects of the University. The priorities in the Education domain are to:

1. grow the student cohort and increase its diversity
2. redefine graduate attributes to guide excellence in teaching and deliver a transformative student experience
3. streamline educational offerings to deliver an exceptional experience that is financially viable and aligned with demand and the University's strengths
4. meet student needs with best-practice pedagogy
5. achieve equity in student participation and achievement.⁴⁶

A Learner Success Plan, underpinned by the MSF and PSF, sets targets for pass rates, first-year retention, qualification completion, and a sense of belonging for Māori, Pacific and Disabled learners. Cultural affirmation indicators will be developed for tauira Māori and Pacific students. The targets (pass rate, first year retention and qualification completion) are the existing rates for non-Māori, non-Pacific students.⁴⁷ Achieving these would therefore mean achieving parity for tauira Māori and Pacific students. However, Māori leadership, Pacific leadership, capability building, resourcing and support will be needed to achieve the targets. The Panel comments further in GS 6, GS 7, and GS 22.

⁴⁵ AQA (2020). Guide to Cycle 6 Academic Audit. p. 3.

⁴⁶ KD 2 (Pae Tata).

⁴⁷ KD 7 (Learner Success Plan), p. 4.

The work programme outlined on p. 6 is included in the Pae Tata priorities and the University has developed multi-year plans and project charters to manage the work required.⁴⁸ The plans and charters seen by the Panel pay more attention to IT system and curriculum infrastructure aspects of the work. These are important and the Panel comments further in GS 3 and Section C. However, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and cultural dimensions of this work are also important, and an uplift in capabilities will also be required to implement the work programme.

The University is aware of the sustained effort required to implement strategy within the timeframes of Pae Tata. The Panel has commented above that it sees the 'call to action' as a positive aspect of Pae Tata. However, it considers that more attention needs to be given to the models for and management of change. Where are big changes needed, as opposed to more minor re-orientation of existing models? The Panel heard that the University does have good project management capabilities, and it encourages the University to consider the full range of levers and capabilities that might be used to achieve the changes needed. The direction-setting strategic documents provide clear top-down priorities. However, more attention might be paid to where different models of change might be used, and how change can be incentivised and supported from the bottom up and through mid-level management. Aspects of a bottom-up approach are already in place with the integration of elements of the Māori Strategic Framework into criteria for academic staff promotions.⁴⁹ The development of the digital environment offers further opportunities for business process redesign or automation. Other levers for change could include managing narratives, professional development opportunities, promotion and other recognition, internal controls and regulations, and change management, in addition to project management.

Recommendation: *The Panel recommends the University consider the full range of models, levers and capabilities available to support strategy implementation and change.*

The priorities for change are also important. The Panel comments on areas where IT systems would allow the University to identify and manage students in need of further support earlier in their studies. Such systems would also allow a holistic view of the support provided for students, and evaluation of the impact of these interventions.

The University has a comprehensive and well managed student survey portfolio which provides data for planning and reporting.⁵⁰ Student evaluations of teaching are also available, although (in common with many universities) there are concerns about the response rates for these data.

While the survey portfolio is comprehensive, it does not provide analytical data to guide the implementation and assess the impact of initiatives and interventions in a dynamic way. The Panel heard that other data are available, including predictive models of student success, and that most staff could access the data they sought, even if it took time. However, the timeliness and granularity of existing data are limited by the lack of a digital learning environment with integrated data flows. Such an environment would allow more automated, transparent and earlier reporting. It would also allow some behavioural data to be collected and enable different parts of the university to access common data. The situation is less coherent for staff data, with effort being required to establish

⁴⁸ FE 7; FE 8; FE 9.

⁴⁹ https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0034/294874/HR-Academic-Staff-Promotions-1-March-2024-1.pdf, p. 2. (Accessed 6 August 2024.)

⁵⁰ SRR, p. 17.

‘single sources of truth’ for some data and an inability to report on some aspects of supervision performance. The Panel considers the University needs to improve its data provision and use to support and monitor progress on its ambitious strategic workplan. The recommendation below is intended to support the enabling action identified in the University’s LSP to make “effective use of data analytics for teaching, learning and support”.⁵¹

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** that the University’s new digital learning environment should include as integral elements, the data and reporting systems needed to support and monitor strategy implementation and other initiatives.*

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 has a close relationship with the Otago University Students’ Association (OUSA). This supports engagement through:

- regular meetings between association executives and the Vice-Chancellor, and other members of SLT
- policy development
- membership of academic and other committees
- the class representative system (administered by OUSA)
- contracted provision of student services including advocacy, counselling, sport, recreation and cultural activities
- a Student Charter.⁵²

Relationships also exist with other students’ associations: Te Rōpū Māori, University of Otago Pacific Islands Students’ Association, and the Otago International Students’ Association.⁵³ These associations have less consistent and less equitable engagement opportunities. In part, these differences may be attributable to the different structures and resources of the students’ associations. While the University has revised the membership of Senate to increase the diversity of student voice,⁵⁴ this does not seem to be consistently reflected in the sub-committees of Senate. The President of OUSA is the student member of Council. Engagement with disabled students has focused on particular areas, such as the development of the Disability Action Plan.

In contrast, the diversity of student perspectives is explicitly reflected in engagement around the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 (the Code). The Manager Student Pastoral Care holds regular meetings with OUSA (including postgraduate and international representatives), Te Rōpū Māori, University of Otago Pacific Islands Students Association, Otago International Students’ Association, Otago Disabled Students Association,

⁵¹ KD 7, p. 15.

⁵² SRR, pp. 18-19.

⁵³ SRR, p. 18.

⁵⁴ SRR, p. 9.

Association of Postgraduate Students of Otago, Christchurch and Otago Postgraduate Association of Wellington.⁵⁵

The Panel heard that student members of committees had mixed experiences. Some Convenors of committees met with student members in advance and the committees themselves were welcoming and supportive. Others were intimidating and appeared not to value student voices. The Cycle 5 academic audit report for the University noted that the University had developed an induction programme for student members of academic committees.⁵⁶ The Panel did not hear any reference to this programme still being in place.

Other mechanisms for student voices to contribute to quality assurance processes include student surveys, student feedback on teaching and learning, and engagement with internal review processes.⁵⁷ The University monitors whether student cohorts respond differently to surveys and evaluations of teaching and learning.⁵⁸ The OUSA President is included in the distribution list for review reports.⁵⁹

The University has identified an enhancement initiative to “strengthen the University’s formal commitment around engagement with the student voice”.⁶⁰ The Panel heard that developing mechanisms for managing turnover of individuals (noting that turnover occurs in both students and staff), consolidating progress, and recognising and rewarding contributions were among the issues being considered. The Panel affirms this initiative and encourages the University to be consistent in how it acknowledges and embeds diversity of student voices in engagement with both academic and pastoral matters. Engagement with Te Rōpū Māori should reflect the University’s aspirations to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led. Being a university of the Pacific should also be reflected in engagement with Pacific students. The University could also consider whether its leadership development programme could again be leveraged to support students contributing to quality assurance and other processes.

Affirmation: *The Panel affirms the University’s commitment to strengthen and formalise engagement with student voices and encourages the University to ensure its commitments to being Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and a university of the Pacific are embedded in this work, together with other diverse student voices.*

⁵⁵ FE 16, p. 6.

⁵⁶ <https://aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/University%20of%20Otago%20Report%20Cycle%205.pdf>, p. 9. (Accessed 7 August 2024.)

⁵⁷ SRR, p. 19.

⁵⁸ FE 17.

⁵⁹ SRR, p. 19.

⁶⁰ SRR, p. 88.

GS 3 Teaching and learning environments

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

Significant parts of the University's strategic plan and work programme are concerned with the renewal of teaching and learning environments. This includes physical, digital and blended environments.

Students are generally satisfied with the campus environment and the quality of spaces.⁶¹ The pou whenua is important in signalling the past and ongoing relationship with mana whenua.⁶² The Library has taken a partnership approach to co-create spaces and services that strengthen relationships with Māori, Pacific and diverse communities.⁶³ Despite these examples, the Panel heard that relatively few culturally affirming spaces (such as whare) were available on campus. The Māori Centre | Te Huka Mātauraka (THM), the Pacific Islands Centre (PIC) and spaces such as Kōhatu – Centre of Hauora Māori and Va'a o Tautai – Centre for Pacific Health (in the Division of Health Sciences) do provide additional culturally affirming spaces. However, the Panel recommends the University embed culturally affirming design in future campus planning more broadly. This would provide further opportunities to strengthen or consolidate relationships with mana whenua.

The University has explored initiatives to develop flexible teaching spaces and developed strategies for lecture theatres and library spaces. However, a more comprehensive plan for teaching space on the Dunedin campus is contingent on the outcome of the planned timetabling initiative⁶⁴ (which in turn will be informed by the streamlining of papers and programmes). Making better use of existing space is one of the strategic priorities for the University,⁶⁵ which has also identified an enhancement initiative to progress the work of the Timetabling project.⁶⁶ The Panel affirms this initiative.

Affirmation: *The Panel affirms the enhancement initiative to progress the work of the Timetabling project.*

The University's strategic plan indicates that transforming digital spaces will support the outcomes that are sought. It has established priorities to:

1. develop a Digital Transformation Roadmap
2. deliver a contemporary digital student experience
3. streamline and update systems and the data landscape.

To progress these priorities, the University needs to establish or redevelop a number of enterprise-wide components of the digital learning environment, including the learning management system (LMS), the student management system and, potentially, a curriculum management system.⁶⁷ The University has undertaken a review of the digital learning environment to help inform this work and

⁶¹ SRR, p. 21.

⁶² <https://www.otago.ac.nz/news/newsroom/new-pou-whenua-to-inspire-tauira> (Accessed 8 August 2024.)

⁶³ SRR, p. 23.

⁶⁴ SRR, p. 21.

⁶⁵ KD 2 (Pae Tata), p. 53.

⁶⁶ SRR, p. 88.

⁶⁷ KD 2 (Pae Tata), p. 59.

has developed a business case to progress it.⁶⁸ The Panel strongly affirms the University's enhancement initiative to invest in its digital learning environment. This affirmation needs priority attention and progress as the University's current digital learning environment is significantly underdeveloped for a university of this size and complexity, and compared with other universities in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally.

Affirmation: *The Panel strongly **affirms** the University's enhancement initiative to invest in its digital learning environment, including in its learning management system.*

Progress on this enhancement initiative will contribute to the recommendation the Panel has made regarding data provision in GS 1. It will also facilitate other planned work; this report highlights areas where modern systems could facilitate better management and reporting of student progress and other academic quality matters.

The University has management and governance committees in place that advise on and oversee capital programme and expenditure prioritisation. All have academic perspectives included in their membership, including the Council's Capital Development Committee,⁶⁹ and the Panel heard positive comments about the willingness of operations and academic portfolios to work together.

Furthermore, the University's Disability Action Plan indicates that Universal Design for Learning principles should inform the review of the LMS and other aspects of the digital (and physical) learning environment.⁷⁰ However, the Panel did not see or hear how Te Tiriti o Waitangi aspirations or becoming a university of the Pacific were included in thinking about the digital learning environment, and recommends that these be included in development and decision making.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** that the University reflect in its physical and digital learning environments its aspirations to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and a university of the Pacific, and embed culturally affirming design in future campus planning.*

Teaching and learning environments should also be culturally safe and affirming. The Panel is pleased to see the University is committed to becoming more culturally competent and is undertaking work in anti-racism, anti-bullying and anti-harassment. It heard frequent mention of engagement with the Te Rito Bicultural Competency Programme.⁷¹

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University for its willingness to address racism and to support participation in bi-cultural competency and anti-racism workshops.*

⁶⁸ SRR, pp. 20-21.

⁶⁹ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/council/committees/committees/capital-development-committee> (Accessed 8 August 2024.)

⁷⁰ FE 4 (Disability Action Plan), pp. 19-20.

⁷¹ SRR, p. 73.

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 a clear delegations schedule that sets out the source of the delegation, its function or power, the delegate, and whether and to whom further delegation is permitted.⁷² This schedule is reviewed annually. Other delegations are included in statutes and regulations. The University also provides professional development opportunities for staff to understand delegations and seeks staff feedback on whether these (and other) responsibilities are understood.⁷³

While the structure for establishing delegations is clear and understood, the Panel was less sure about how the effectiveness of delegations was monitored. Responsibilities for academic misconduct are delegated to PVCs and heads of departments and may be further delegated to associate deans. It heard however that recent work on standardising position descriptions for associate dean roles and a series of meetings across the University gave confidence that delegations were being exercised appropriately and consistently.

GS 5 Academic risk management

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

The University has a mature risk management, business continuity and emergency planning framework, although some of the policies in this framework have not been reviewed for some time. Risks to the quality and continuity of learning and teaching are managed through a risk management framework. This includes “Learning, teaching and the student experience” as a specific category of risk.⁷⁴ The Strategic Risk Register provides an analysis of risks and outlines how risks may affect strategic priorities, the level of residual risk, whether the risk is increasing, static or decreasing, and risk ownership from both governance and management perspectives. A risk associated with artificial intelligence is included in the Register, as are risks associated with the digital learning environment.⁷⁵

Divisions are expected to update their risk plans quarterly. These are reported to SLT and then to the Audit and Risk Committee of Council. The Audit and Risk Committee reports risks to Council.⁷⁶

The University’s Campus Watch has a key role as the first responder to physical emergencies on the Dunedin campus (see further comment in GS 13). A network of emergency phones is connected to a permanently staffed control room. These phones also have speakers that allow emergency messages

⁷² https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/291413/Council-Delegations-2024.pdf (Accessed 7 August 2024.)

⁷³ SRR, p. 24.

⁷⁴ https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/291331/risk-management-framework-658065.pdf (Accessed 7 August 2024.)

⁷⁵ FE 14.

⁷⁶ SRR, p. 25.

to be broadcast to all or specific parts of the campus. The University is aware that students need more information about what to do in response to an emergency.⁷⁷

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's objectives for the enhancement theme aligned with existing commitments in its Māori Strategic Framework and a recommendation from its Cycle 5 academic audit report "that the University consider how it identifies students at risk of under-performance early in their studies and how it ensures that all students receive useful and timely feedback on their performance". Specific initiatives focused on:

- developing a series of flags to identify and follow up with Māori students (and Pacific students) at risk of underperformance in Health Sciences First Year (HSFY)
- contacting Māori students (and Pacific students) who had received an academic warning letter to connect them with support services that could help get their studies 'back on track'.⁷⁸

The University's enhancement theme work was absorbed into its Learner Success Plan (LSP).⁷⁹ The LSP includes, *inter alia*, actions to:

- pilot a co-ordinated system of early indicators to lift engagement, attendance and provide targeted support
- optimise mid-year progress interventions.

The getting-back-on-track approach can be seen in how the University approaches advice for students failing to meet academic progress standards (see GS 10).

The LSP also sets targets to attain parity of educational achievement for all learners by 2030 and recognises that investment in the digital learning environments and the ability to develop timely and available data is needed to support this work.⁸⁰ The Panel has made a recommendation about data in its comments on the development of the digital learning environment (GS 1). The LSP also identifies pedagogy as an enabling factor. Developing and embedding a university-wide te ao Māori pedagogy will require working with the newly appointed DVC Māori to increase the numbers of academic Māori staff at levels of seniority able to lead curriculum development. The Panel suggests that evaluating the impact of a te ao Māori pedagogy, including pilot initiatives, should utilise a kaupapa Māori evaluation methodology.

Although parity of attainment for Māori students has not yet been achieved, the Panel can see that initiatives included in the University's enhancement theme plan are being adopted more widely, and that the LSP provides ongoing focus for this work. The Panel also heard that support for Māori students was readily available and accessible, particularly through Te Huka Mātauraka and kaiāwhina

⁷⁷ SRR, p. 26.

⁷⁸ SRR, p. 27.

⁷⁹ SRR, p. 28.

⁸⁰ KD 7 (LSP).

in academic divisions. It gained a sense of a widespread commitment across the University to achieving equity of outcomes for tauira Māori.

Affirmation: *The Panel affirms the university's ongoing commitment and initiatives underway to achieve equity of outcomes for tauira Māori.*

GS 7 Progress on the Enhancement Theme (Pacific students)

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

The University's enhancement theme projects for Pacific students were:

- an analysis of first-year students' surveys to identify challenges for (predominantly HSFY) Pacific students as part of the early indicator programme
- a bridging programme for Pacific students.

The Panel heard how better understanding of Pacific students' and their families' aspirations for success in health sciences had informed support and transition programmes for students who were unable to progress in health sciences beyond first year.

A bridging programme—Kickstart 101—is a free programme for Pacific students delivered through two weeks of online study and four weeks' campus-based learning in a residential college. It includes academic, pastoral and community-building components.⁸¹ Other examples of early attention to community building (and supporting transitions to university) include establishing homework centres in South Auckland.⁸² The Panel heard that the University's Pacific Islands Centre (PIC) played a major role in continuing to provide community for Pacific students.

A similar initiative developed for tauira Māori (Kia Ita) has been combined with Kickstart to form KIKS.⁸³ The LSP indicates that the pathway programme will be evaluated, along with a level 5 diploma. The Panel heard that funding for this programme is limited. Having data to support an evidence-based assessment of its contribution will be useful in prioritising future resourcing.

The Panel can see evidence of initiatives progressed as part of the enhancement theme continuing to support Pacific students. Ongoing attention to closing equity gaps in achievement for Pacific students is also signalled in the LSP. The Panel affirms the University's commitment to achieving equity in outcomes, and promoting a pan-university culture of belonging and inclusiveness, where Pacific identities and cultures are respected and valued by the University.

Affirmation: *The Panel affirms the University's ongoing commitment and initiatives underway to achieve equity of outcomes for Pacific students.*

The Panel has already commented (GS 1) on the need for a senior leadership role to support the University's aspirations to be a university of the Pacific and reiterates the need for that leadership here. A senior Pacific leadership role will be important in guiding the use of Pacific pedagogies, Pacific student success, and overseeing the increase in Pacific staff capacity needed for this. The

⁸¹ SRR, p. 29.

⁸² FE 26.

⁸³ SRR, p. 29; FE GS 7.

Panel anticipates that the redevelopment of the Pacific Strategic Framework to align with Vision 2040 and Pae Tata will support student success, increased Pacific staff capacity and culturally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy development. It affirms the University's intentions to appoint a senior Pacific role and align the Pacific Strategic Framework with Pae Tata. The senior Pacific role should be a member of SLT.

Affirmation: *The Panel **affirms** the University's intent to appoint a senior Pacific role and align the Pacific Strategic Framework with Pae Tata. The senior Pacific role should be a member of SLT.*

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 provided to enable successful transitions.

Of the 18,960 EFTS enrolled at the University in 2023, almost 80% were enrolled in undergraduate programmes, 61% were female and 0.6% gender diverse.⁸⁴ Almost 14% of domestic EFTS were Māori students and 7% were Pacific students.⁸⁵ The proportions of both Māori students and Pacific students have increased steadily since the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University.⁸⁶ Seventy-seven per cent of students were aged under 25 in 2023.⁸⁷

The University has had a consistent record of achieving the highest educational performance indicators (EPIs) among universities in Aotearoa New Zealand for first-year retention, qualification completion, course completion and progression from sub-degree programmes to undergraduate study for domestic students.⁸⁸ The Panel considers this is a track record worthy of commendation, especially given the challenges the University and its students have faced over recent years.

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University for its outstanding track record in achieving the highest educational performance indicators for domestic students.*

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 has targets for the educational preparedness of new students. In 2023, almost 96% of commencing undergraduate students had achieved NCEA level 3 or an equivalent qualification.⁸⁹

Regulations for entry to the University are set out in the Admission to University Statute 2011 with guidance provided in an Undergraduate Prospectus, Guide to Enrolment and on the University website. Schools Liaison staff, including dedicated Māori liaison and Pacific liaison staff based in Dunedin, Auckland and Wellington, provide further advice.⁹⁰ Support services, including the Māori Centre | Te Huka Mātauraka, the Pacific Islands Centre, and Disability Information and Support can also provide advice for prospective students.⁹¹ Information about credit transfer and recognition of prior learning is available through a range of channels including the AskOtago advice hub.⁹²

Access is also supported through a series of outreach programmes which provide the opportunity for prospective students to spend time on the University campus. These include Whai Wheako i Ōtākou,

⁸⁴ AR23, p. 142.

⁸⁵ SRR, p. 7.

⁸⁶ FE 10.

⁸⁷ FE 10.

⁸⁸ SRR, p. 8.

⁸⁹ AR23, p. 66.

⁹⁰ SRR, p. 31.

⁹¹ SRR, pp. 31-32.

⁹² <https://ask.otago.ac.nz/knowledgebase/article/KA-10003941> (Accessed 12 August 2024.)

Hands-On at Otago—a six-day residential programme held during the school summer break—and a Science Academy with two residential science programmes held in January and July. Feedback indicates that both programmes encourage participants to pursue further study.⁹³

Scholarships provide further support for access. In 2023, over 500 Māori or Pacific students were awarded entrance scholarships.⁹⁴

Admission information for international students includes advice on when University staff will be visiting countries; and an international team is also available to respond to enquiries. An English Language Centre provides both language and pastoral support for predominantly international students.⁹⁵

Although most (domestic) students access university through NCEA, access is also available through university-run pathway programmes. These were transferred into the University in 2021 and include an NZQCF level 4 Foundation Studies Certificate and Level 5 Diplomas. The University intends to review these qualifications, and the Panel affirms this intent.⁹⁶ In particular, the Panel heard that the existing programmes were quite dated and could be more purposefully developed to support Māori students' and Pacific students' access to the University.

Affirmation: *The Panel affirms the University's planned review of pathway programmes to see how they might be more purposefully developed to support Māori and Pacific students.*

Overall, the Panel considers the University has effective processes and available information and support to enable equitable access for students. However, further analytics to assess the effectiveness of access pathways would be useful.

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 was commended in the Cycle 5 academic audit for its emphasis on student transitions, its relationship with residential colleges and the support services available for priority and equity students.⁹⁷ The arrangements that were in place or planned at that time are now led from the Student Services Division.⁹⁸

Transitions into university are supported by a first-year students' website and the residential colleges. A 'Locals Collegiate Community' provides a virtual equivalent for non-residential first-year students. Tailored support for students returning to study after time away from further education is also available.⁹⁹ The University monitors student feedback on a range of services that support

⁹³ SRR, pp. 32-33; AR23, p. 38; FE 25.

⁹⁴ AR23, p. 70.

⁹⁵ SRR, p. 33.

⁹⁶ SRR, p. 33.

⁹⁷ <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/University%20of%20Otago%20Report%20Cycle%205.pdf>, p. 18 (Accessed 12 August 2024.)

⁹⁸ KD 9 (Cycle 5 Update), p. 26.

⁹⁹ SRR, p. 34.

transitions and pays attention to differences in responses between first-year and later-year students.¹⁰⁰

Transitions support for tauira Māori is provided by THM, working with Associate Deans Māori in academic Divisions. An orientation for tauira Māori (Turāka Hou) facilitates awareness of and connection to support services and tuakana-teina relationships help first-year students navigate the university. Tauira Māori in first-year health sciences are also supported by the Māori Health Workforce Development Unit.¹⁰¹

A dedicated orientation is also in place for Pacific students and the PIC coordinates an academic mentoring programme that supports Pacific students at all levels of study. Further support is provided by Associate Deans (Pacific) and a Centre for Pacific Health helps students transition to university, prepare for HSFY, and transition to the health workforce.¹⁰²

International students need to undertake an orientation seminar before their enrolment can be completed. An online option is available for distance students. Ongoing support is provided by International Student Advisors.¹⁰³

Transitions to employment are supported by the Career Development Centre (CDC). The CDC offers a range of services including developing interview skills, mentoring by alumni, and an online 'OtagoExtra' programme designed to build employability skills. Recently, CDC has examined how it can improve the content and delivery of its services for Māori students.¹⁰⁴ This follows earlier work on career guidance and support for Pacific students.¹⁰⁵

Transitions to employment are also supported by work-integrated learning, volunteering and social impact opportunities. Work-integrated learning options include practicum, internship, clinical placement, industry placement or work experience and fieldwork.¹⁰⁶ These are predominantly 'within curriculum' options and the University is alert to, and concerned about, the financial impact of work-integrated learning requirements on students. Some financial support is available for them through a Student Hardship Fund. However, the Panel considers there is a need for more consideration of how the financial strains of work-integrated learning requirements can be ameliorated for students.

The University assesses effectiveness of transitions to employment through its Graduate Opinion Survey (GOS) which is administered approximately 18 months after students complete their qualifications.¹⁰⁷ Ninety-six per cent of Bachelor's degree graduates completing between 2021 and 2023 were either employed full-time or undertaking further study. This compares well with national and Australian benchmarks.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁰ FE 5.

¹⁰¹ SRR, p. 35.

¹⁰² SRR, p. 35.

¹⁰³ SRR, p. 35.

¹⁰⁴ SRR, pp. 35-36.

¹⁰⁵ SD 13, p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ SRR, p. 36.

¹⁰⁷ SRR, p. 35.

¹⁰⁸ SD 15.

The Panel is pleased to see that the University's attention to and support for transitions, which was commended in the Cycle 5 academic audit, has continued. This support is holistic and includes academic, residential, cultural, and pastoral elements.

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University for its continued attention to and comprehensive support for student transitions through their programmes and into employment.*

Overall, 26% of Bachelor's degree graduates from 2021-2023 were studying full-time 18 months after graduation. This proportion is higher for graduates from Sciences programmes (43%) and (much) lower for graduates from Commerce programmes (4%).¹⁰⁹

The Panel appreciates that not all graduates studying full-time will have continued study at the University of Otago. Nonetheless, it heard mixed views on the extent to which students were encouraged to progress to further study, particularly tauira Māori and Pacific students transitioning into postgraduate research study. The Panel recommends the University strengthen pathways and support for students enrolled in postgraduate research studies, especially for tauira Māori and Pacific students.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** the University strengthen pathways and support for students enrolled in postgraduate research studies, especially for tauira Māori and Pacific students.*

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 an established policy in place for student advising. It also seeks feedback on and has an oversight committee for student advising.¹¹⁰ The Student Advising policy includes two key principles: that "holistic advising is integral to the quality of student learning ..."; and "advising shall be impartial and focus on students' needs".¹¹¹

Advising begins before enrolment and connects through to careers advice. Central university academic advice is provided by a specialised student advice unit. Staff within this unit meet regularly with staff in the academic divisions and with staff providing services to priority groups, e.g., Te Huka Mātauraka and the Pacific Islands Centre. Advice is also available from designated advisors in academic departments.¹¹²

Course advice and degree planning materials are available online, although the online degree planning tools are rather static and generic.¹¹³ Information about papers follows a standard

¹⁰⁹ SD 15, p. 4.

¹¹⁰ SRR, p. 37.

¹¹¹ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/staff/policies/student-advising-policy> (Accessed 14 August 2024.)

¹¹² SRR, p. 37.

¹¹³ https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/304367/2024-degree-and-timetable-planners-829844.pdf (Accessed 14 August 2024.)

template. The University intends to collect information about papers that include te ao Māori and Pacific topics, as well as sustainability, and details of papers available for distance study.¹¹⁴ This will support the Learner Success Plan, the refresh of the Teaching and Learning Plan, and the University's intent to increase interdisciplinary study options. While the Panel supports this initiative, it suggests the University should also consider the importance of the future digital environment for collecting information about teaching and learning. Maintaining this information will be challenging in the absence of a curriculum management system or similar (see GS 3). However, the Pae Tata priority to streamline educational offerings will assist students in programme planning and should simplify course advice.

Feedback from students about advising services is sought through the Student Opinion–Support Services Improvement survey. The University has identified that disabled students are less satisfied than other cohorts with the quality of advice provided. The Panel notes that this feedback contrasts with the higher levels of satisfaction reported with the dedicated services provided by Disability Information and Support.

All students are strongly encouraged to meet with a student advisor.¹¹⁵ However, students who do not meet academic performance standards are required to meet with a designated advisor as part of 'getting back on track'.¹¹⁶ Māori students and Pacific students are over-represented among students not meeting academic performance standards. An intervention approach, trialled as part of the University's enhancement theme objectives (GS 6), involves an advisor meeting with students to discuss progress and make sure students are connected to appropriate support services. Information is shared with residential colleges so that students can be supported there too.

The University has identified an enhancement initiative to "Monitor and track the effectiveness of an Academic Warning as a mid-year progress intervention for underachieving students. A key focus of this initiative is delivering timely and appropriate support for Māori and Pacific students, who are disproportionately represented among those students subject to academic progress provisions".¹¹⁷ The Panel endorses this enhancement initiative. However, it considers efforts should be made to develop a systematic approach to identifying and providing support for students at academic risk *before* they have reached a point of failure. Both the following affirmation and recommendation would be facilitated better by a student management system (SMS) that can help identify students at academic risk earlier than mid-year (i.e., before they have failed a paper), record interventions, track further progress and develop an evidence base for the effectiveness of interventions for different groups of students.

Affirmation: *The Panel **affirms** the University's enhancement initiative to monitor and track the impact of mid-year progress interventions on students' progress, including for Māori students and Pacific students.*

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** the University develop a systemic approach to identifying and supporting students at academic risk before a mid-year progress assessment.*

¹¹⁴ SRR, p. 37.

¹¹⁵ SRR, p. 37.

¹¹⁶ SRR, p. 38.

¹¹⁷ SRR, p. 88.

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.

Complaints, appeals and grievances are governed by Student Academic Grievance Procedures and an Appeals Statute.¹¹⁸ The Procedures apply to all students and indicate that a student should attempt to raise a grievance directly with the staff member(s) concerned in the first instance. They then set out steps for escalation, and provide guidance on where support and further advice may be found.¹¹⁹ The Appeals Statute covers complaints that cannot be resolved through the Student Academic Grievance Procedures. Relatively low numbers (10 or fewer) of appeals reach the Appeals Board of Council in any year.¹²⁰

The SRR suggests that a relatively low level of student satisfaction with “access to support in matters of grievances” could indicate that most students do not require support in this area. However, the SRR also indicates that complaints processes are difficult for students to understand, and that the University does not have a university-wide process for recording complaints.¹²¹ This is consistent with comments heard by the Panel, which further indicated a lack of confidence in the University’s complaints, grievances and appeals processes.

The Panel is pleased to see that the University is responding to the issues it has identified. The response includes developing an accessible complaints system, improving advice through a new student complaints webpage, and potentially reviewing the Appeals Statute to make it more accessible to students.¹²² The Panel endorses these initiatives and further recommends that the University work with students to increase students’ awareness of, and trust and confidence in, the University’s systems for complaints, appeals and grievances. This recommendation also applies to postgraduate research students.

Recommendation: *The Panel recommends that—in improving access to and resolution of academic complaints, appeals and grievances—the University work with both undergraduate and postgraduate students to improve awareness and build trust and confidence in these processes.*

GS 12 Learning support

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

The University provides a range of services that support student learning. Its holistic approach means that services may have both learning support and pastoral and wellbeing roles. This guideline statement addresses learning support, and pastoral and wellbeing support is considered in GS 13.

¹¹⁸ SRR, p. 40.

¹¹⁹ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/policy-collection/student-academic-grievance-procedures> (Accessed 15 August 2024.)

¹²⁰ SRR, p. 40.

¹²¹ SRR, p. 41.

¹²² SRR, p. 41.

Learning support is available through:

- Student Learning Development (SLD)—including academic skills workshops, one-to-one consultations, and peer-assisted study sessions (PASS)
- the library—including workshops with SLD, one-to-one consultations for postgraduate students, and a range of digital learning tools¹²³
- residential colleges—including tutorials
- IT Training and Development—which offers self-paced IT training using Goskills.com
- units providing support for priority learners, including Te Huka Mātauraka, the Pacific Islands Centre, Disability Information and Support | Te Pokapū Hāpai Huka Hauā (DI&S).¹²⁴

Te Huka Mātauraka, the Pacific Islands Centre and residential colleges all run tutorials, liaising with academic departments to find appropriate tutors. The Panel heard that Māori students and Pacific students appreciate these tutorials as they provide both peer and cultural support. THM, PIC and residential colleges also help to connect students to other learning support services.¹²⁵

The University has a 30-year plus history of providing support for disabled students. A Disabilities' Coordinator role was first established by the University in 1992, with a Disability Office formed shortly after. The Disabilities Office became Disability Information and Support in 2000.¹²⁶ In 2023, over 10% of students disclosed a disability that affected their ability to study.¹²⁷ The most recent review of DI&S commended the level of support provided to individual students and its contribution to fostering a university-wide culture of equity and inclusion.¹²⁸

The Panel also heard that DI&S is proactive in contacting students and that COVID-19 had contributed to increased awareness and support for students with disabilities across the University. The University's Disability Action Plan includes a series of planned actions designed to improve inclusiveness and accessibility, and to remove barriers for disabled students.¹²⁹ However, the Panel heard there were still opportunities to better align scholarships to be more inclusive of the range of disabilities, to include disabled students in academic decision-making (committees) and to clarify how reports from DI&S are considered in PhD progress reporting.

Learning support is also available to students on other campuses and for students studying by distance. Student Learning Development has staff based on other campuses and DI&S is developing formalised agreements to help connect services for disabled students with students on other campuses. The library also has libraries and provides support for students on other campuses and distance students.

The University collects usage and satisfaction data from students and analyses whether significant differences exist between different student groups. Students report high levels of satisfaction with learning support services, particularly those provided by THM, PIC, DI&S and the library.¹³⁰ However, systems for monitoring use more operationally and referring students between services are largely

¹²³ SRR, p. 23.

¹²⁴ SRR, pp. 43-46.

¹²⁵ SRR, p. 43.

¹²⁶ SD 19.

¹²⁷ FE 4 (Disability Action Plan), p. 10.

¹²⁸ SRR, p. 44.

¹²⁹ FE 4.

¹³⁰ SRR, pp.43-46.

manual and rely on a high level of collegiality and communication between individual staff members. The total system does work well but is inherently fragile. It is another reason why investment in information systems that allow a student-centric view of service usage and tracking of interventions and their impact should be prioritised. This would allow the University to assess and provide evidence of the effectiveness of these services on academic outcomes. An enabling digital infrastructure would further strengthen the University's very good learning support services.

Commendation: *The Panel commends the range of learning support services provided by the University and the ways in which the providers of these services ensure cultural appropriateness and respect for different groups of students and foster connections between services.*

GS 13 Safety and wellbeing

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

The University has a range of services to support student safety and wellbeing. As noted above, services targeted at particular groups of students provide both learning and wellbeing support. The Panel considers this to be a highly student-centric approach. The University's further commitment to student wellbeing is reflected in the inclusion of 'belonging' as a success indicator in Pae Tata, the Pacific Strategic Framework and the Learner Success Plan. Belonging is included in the College and First Year Students' feedback survey and will be included in other student surveys from 2024.

Safety, wellbeing and pastoral care services include:

- Te Huka Mātauraka
- Pacific Island Centre
- residential colleges
- Uniflats
- The Locals Collegiate Community
- The International Office
- Campus Watch
- Student Health Services
- Caring Universities—a research initiative to improve tertiary student health
- Te Whare Tāwharu (sexual violence support and prevention centre)
- Recreation services
- Food and Beverages
- Chaplaincy Service—and prayer and meditation rooms for people of all faiths and no faiths
- Childcare.¹³¹

OUSA, Te Rōpū Māori, OUPISA and other students' associations also offer wellbeing services and support.

The University's Campus Watch is part of the Proctor's office and has a pastoral and wellbeing role supporting safety on campus. Five teams operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week; teams operate

¹³¹ SRR, pp. 46-50.

across campus and the wider area, and in the control room. In addition to safety and security on campus, they also assist academic departments with secure delivery and return of examination papers.¹³² The Panel heard appreciation of their responsiveness to queries from other campuses, as well as for their work on the Dunedin campus.

Culturally affirming support is provided by THM and PIC. Chaplains and counsellors are based in THM and PIC. THM also coordinates support with residential colleges. Other 'connector' roles and networks have been established to intentionally connect and coordinate support services. For example, Hauora Connectors are based in the library and PIC, but also attend campus events and make themselves accessible on campus.

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University's robust and comprehensive pastoral care network. Te Whare Tāwharu, the Pacific Islands Centre, Disability Information and Support, Student Health, Te Huka Mātauraka, and Campus Watch reflect strong staff commitment to a student-centric and relational approach to supporting the wellbeing of different cohorts of students. The residential colleges also make a major contribution to student safety, wellbeing and academic achievement.*

Wellbeing support is available on other campuses through a mix of dedicated on-campus services, contracts with local third-party providers and outreach from the Dunedin campus. The Panel heard that the University understood that safety and wellbeing issues may be different for students on the Christchurch and Wellington campuses. There is also a recognition that students on other campuses may not have the same level of access to the range of support services available in Dunedin, including those provided through students' associations.

The Panel heard that the University also supported rainbow community students and staff had undertaken training in allyship and how to support rainbow students. However, it did not meet with a group of rainbow community students specifically. The perspectives of these students are not consistently reflected in survey data but are included in the College and First Year Students' survey.¹³³

The Code has focused further attention on pastoral care and wellbeing. The University's work on the Code is aligned with its Learner Success Plan. However, two initiatives arising from its Code work are included as enhancement initiatives. They are to:

- create a one-stop student wellbeing hub on the Dunedin campus and ensure that associated online services are available to University of Otago students based elsewhere
- establish a Pastoral Care Network to link the many providers of pastoral care services across the University and to promote the visibility of these services among teaching staff so they can better direct students towards the support services they need.

The Panel affirms these initiatives and suggests the University be explicit about how all campuses are involved. It heard that other single contact points for services were being trialled on other campuses. It again notes that these single contact point models need to be underpinned by systems that allow

¹³² <https://www.otago.ac.nz/proctor/campus-watch> (Accessed 16 August 2024.)

¹³³ SD 6.2.

information to be accessed by different service providers and reduce the emotional burden on students from having to retell their story.

Affirmation: *The Panel **affirms** the initiatives to develop a student wellbeing hub and a university-wide pastoral care network.*

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. Much of the University's work programme outlined in the Introduction to this report is relevant to the guideline statements in this section, particularly rationalising papers and programmes (to reduce complexity), incorporating te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies in learning and teaching, refreshing the University Graduate Profile, and developing a curriculum framework. An increase in online and distance delivery and an increase in taught postgraduate programmes will also have implications, as will work indicated by the Disability Action Plan to embed Universal Design for Learning principles in teaching. This is a significant programme of work, and the Panel has already made a recommendation about managing change (GS 1).

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 has clear and well understood processes for programme and paper approval, amendments, change in delivery mode, and deletion. Comprehensive advice is available on a website with further support available from specialists in each academic division.¹³⁴ Market research is undertaken for higher risk proposals. Proposals are developed in academic divisions and progress through the relevant Divisional Board, either BUGS or BoGS, before being considered by Senate. The Director, Distance Learning is a member of BUGS and BoGS, and students are represented on both boards.¹³⁵

Proposals for new programmes need to include a statement indicating how the proposal is “consistent with the University's commitment to the principles of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi”.¹³⁶ This statement must be developed in consultation with the Associate Dean Māori in the Division. The Panel anticipates this statement will be updated to better reflect both the University's aspirations to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and good practice in referring to the provisions or articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, rather than the principles. In addition, proposals need to consider the needs and aspirations of Pacific students.

Given the University's aspiration to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and to incorporate te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies in learning and teaching, the expectations for these issues to be considered in programme and paper approval appear rather under-developed. Further, the Panel could not see where, apart from in discussions with Associate Deans Māori, the expertise to assess Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitments, te ao Māori content and pedagogy, or Pacific pedagogies, existed in BUGS or BoGS. It heard there was an expectation for developers of proposals to work with the Office for Māori Development (OMD), but this expectation was not codified and, from the reciprocal

¹³⁴ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/academiccommittees/proformas> (Accessed 16 August 2024.)

¹³⁵ SRR, p. 51.

¹³⁶ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/academiccommittees/new-programme-proposal-formerly-form-1> (Accessed 16 August 2024.)

perspective, the OMD is not resourced to support this work. The appointment of the DVC Māori will provide academic leadership, and the appointment of a Chief Te Tiriti Officer should facilitate the inclusion of mātauraka-a-iwi in curricula.¹³⁷ The responsibility for coordinating Pacific pedagogies and input should also be provided by the University's senior Pacific position, along with other Pacific staff.

These enhancements could be included in the University's plans to redevelop academic processes and decision-making structures.¹³⁸ The Panel recommends the University build on its robust paper and programme approval processes to support the work needed to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and to incorporate te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies in learning and teaching. This work will require increasing and supporting staff able to undertake this work. Further comment on staffing is made in Section D.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** the University build on its robust paper and programme approval processes and resources to support systematic curriculum development that addresses the University's aspirations to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and to incorporate te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies in learning and teaching.*

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 uses student evaluations of teaching (SET) and surveys for monitoring the quality of programmes and papers.¹³⁹ The class representative system provides another opportunity for students to provide feedback on their teaching and learning experiences.¹⁴⁰

Student evaluations of teaching are conducted through an online process. There are no explicit requirements for how frequently evaluations should be conducted, and there are variations across the University in this regard. However, the University is confident that at least 95% of papers are evaluated every three years. Heads of Department receive reports on the evaluations that have been conducted, which allows them to monitor (and address) papers that have not been recently evaluated. Teaching evaluations are also reported to PVCs and staff with responsibilities for teaching quality.¹⁴¹

In common with experiences of many other universities, response rates to student evaluations of teaching (SET) questionnaires have declined with the move to an online system. However, the University has sufficient longitudinal data to retain confidence in the validity of the data. It also undertakes analyses to evaluate any differences in responses from different groups of students.¹⁴² The University has tried to assess whether known biases in student evaluations of teaching are

¹³⁷ FE 6.

¹³⁸ KD 2 (Pae Tata), p. 56.

¹³⁹ SRR, p52.

¹⁴⁰ SRR, p. 19.

¹⁴¹ SRR, p. 76.

¹⁴² FE 17.

present in these data.¹⁴³ However, the underlying systems do not provide for or allow access to the necessary data on the ethnicity or gender of academic staff.

Monitoring data at the degree (programme level) is collected through graduate and student opinion surveys. Results from these surveys are aggregated into a series of reports for qualifications, departments, schools and divisions. The reports are disseminated to these groups, senior management and other stakeholders, and discussed in an annual round of survey presentations made by the Quality Advancement Unit to departments and other stakeholder groups, including students.¹⁴⁴

New programmes are also subject to an annual programme report (in preparation for their Graduating Year review (GYR)). Evidence is collected to assess whether graduate attributes and learning outcomes are being achieved. The template has recently been updated to include monitoring of Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitments and integration of mātauraka Māori and Pacific content into programme curricula.¹⁴⁵

Student survey data indicates that students do feel they have opportunities to provide feedback. It is less clear however whether changes made in response to student feedback are communicated to students. Advice is available for staff on how to obtain student feedback, but not on how to close the loop on that feedback, although a series of initiatives were outlined in the follow-up report on the University's response to Cycle 5 recommendations.¹⁴⁶

GS 16 Review

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

The first review of a new programme is the GYR required by the Universities New Zealand Committee on University Academic Programmes as part of the programme approval process. The University's GYR handbook outlines the process and provides guidance on evaluation practice, and a workshop provides further information.¹⁴⁷

Ongoing requirements for programme reviews are set out in a Quality Advancement Review Policy¹⁴⁸ and/or determined by professional accreditation requirements. The Quality Advancement Review Policy ensures that every aspect of university operations is reviewed at least every 10 years. Programmes (qualifications, major and minor subjects) that are the responsibility of a department or school are reviewed as part of the review of that department or school. Interdisciplinary

¹⁴³ See, for example, Troy Heffernan (2022) Sexism, racism, prejudice, and bias: a literature review and synthesis of research surrounding student evaluations of courses and teaching, *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 47:1, 144-154, DOI: 10.1080/02602938.2021.1888075.

¹⁴⁴ SRR, p. 55.

¹⁴⁵ SRR, p. 56.

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/hedc/evaluate/getting-student-feedback> (Accessed 16 August 2024.); KD 9, pp. 19-20.

¹⁴⁷ SRR, p. 56.

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/policy-collection/quality-advancement-reviews-policy#:~:text=Each%20aspect%20of%20the%20University's,and%20managed%20by%20the%20Quality> (Accessed 13 September 2024.)

programmes may have a dedicated review. The University publishes schedules of completed and upcoming reviews and a comprehensive set of guidance notes on preparing for and undertaking reviews.¹⁴⁹

The guidance for undertaking reviews includes relationships with external stakeholders and members of employer groups, who may also be members of Panels.¹⁵⁰ However, reviews do not have access to the same wealth and quality of information on employer perspectives as those available for student and graduate perspectives. The Panel recommends the University consider reintroducing its 'employer' survey, which was part of a commendation in the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University, to strengthen the data available to review panels.¹⁵¹ It notes however, that it did not hear of any concerns regarding graduate employability.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** the University consider reintroducing its survey of employers to strengthen the information available to internal review panels and the wider university community.*

Review reports are published internally. Heads of department are responsible for monitoring implementation of review recommendations and are required to report on progress to the DVC(A) at the six-month, two year and mid-point in the review cycle. Feedback is also sought from heads of areas that have been reviewed on their experience of the review process.¹⁵²

The University considers its review processes to be effective and can point to specific instances where reviews have identified issues that need to be addressed or that have led to major changes, such as the creation of a new department.¹⁵³ The issues that led to current work on anti-racism, anti-bullying, and anti-harassment were also surfaced through internal reviews.

The University is about to undertake a more strategic review of its programmes and papers as signalled in Pae Tata (streamlining educational offerings).¹⁵⁴ The University has identified an enhancement initiative to "progress the work of the Programmes and Papers workstream by prioritising the development of a curriculum framework for Otago qualifications to reduce curriculum complexity and embed our graduate profile". The Panel affirms this initiative.

Affirmation: *The Panel **affirms** the University's enhancement initiative to progress its Programmes and Papers workstream and develop a curriculum framework to guide this work.*

The Panel appreciates that existing review arrangements have served the University well. However, it is not convinced that these are sufficiently agile or focused on implementing the strategic direction set out in Pae Tata. At the same time as progressing the Programmes and Papers workstream and Curriculum Framework, the University is seeking to include te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies,

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/quality/reviews/information> (Accessed 16 August 2024.)

¹⁵⁰ https://otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0031/303898/programme-review-guidelines-2020-731437.pdf (Accessed 16 August 2024.)

¹⁵¹ <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/University%20of%20Otago%20Report%20Cycle%205.pdf>, p. 25. (Accessed 22 August 2024.)

¹⁵² SRR, p. 58.

¹⁵³ SRR, p. 57.

¹⁵⁴ KD 2 (Pae Tata). P. 18.

increase the number of culturally relevant programmes, reflect Te Tiriti o Waitangi aspirations in curricula, and increase the options for online delivery. The University already has a portfolio of review options, and the Panel recommends it consider a further option focused on ensuring curricula continue to meet strategic objectives. This should have a shorter timeframe than the existing review cycle.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** the University consider whether its existing departmental and organisational review arrangements are sufficiently agile, timely and focused on the strategic programme changes sought, together with the need for responsiveness to changing market demand.*

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 has a graduate profile set out in the Teaching and Learning Plan, plus other profiles for postgraduate research degrees.¹⁵⁵ The University places emphasis on the Graduate Profile as an important driver of curriculum design. New programme proposals are expected to specify how the attributes in the University Graduate Profile will be developed, and new course templates help link course/paper learning outcomes to the graduate profile.¹⁵⁶ The Panel heard consistent commentary about the need to align assessment to learning outcomes linked to specific graduate profile attributes, especially in disciplines where constructive alignment is also required by professional accreditation bodies.

Students are advised about the Graduate Profile in *Guidelines for Learning*.¹⁵⁷ Student perceptions of the extent to which attributes are developed and achieved are sought through the GOS and reported against targets in the University's annual report.¹⁵⁸ Despite this attention to developing and assessing graduate attributes, the University recognises that students still report that they do not receive adequate information about the graduate profile and graduate attributes during their studies.¹⁵⁹

The University has identified an enhancement initiative to "Refresh the University of Otago Graduate Profile and associated graduate attributes in alignment with our values and areas of distinctiveness".¹⁶⁰ This initiative seems to reflect a sense that the current graduate profile has too many attributes and that not all attributes will necessarily be developed across all degrees. The development of a new graduate profile is aligned with the development of the curriculum framework and reflects a need for greater consistency in the development and attainment of

¹⁵⁵ https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0028/294391/teaching-and-learning-plan-027123.pdf; https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/329263/graduate-profiles-for-university-of-otago-postgraduate-research-degrees-122601.pdf (Accessed 17 August 2024.)

¹⁵⁶ SRR, p. 59.

¹⁵⁷ https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0032/289418/guidelines-for-learning-616123.pdf (Accessed 17 August 2024.)

¹⁵⁸ SRR, p. 59.

¹⁵⁹ SRR, p. 60.

¹⁶⁰ SRR, p. 88.

graduate attributes. The Panel is pleased to hear about the engagement with students, the DVC Māori and acting Director Pacific at the early stage of this work.

Affirmation: *The Panel affirms the University's enhancement initiative to refresh the University Graduate Profile and associated graduate attributes.*

GS 18 Assessment

Assessment is appropriate and effective.

The University's *Guidelines for the Assessment of Student Performance* were revised in 2022. They comprise four principles:

1. Assessments will centre on essential knowledge and skills.
2. Assessment will be criterion-referenced; each student's work will be judged on its own merits with grades awarded on the basis of demonstrated achievement against established learning outcomes and standards.
3. All internal assessment will have a formative component and inform learning.
4. The workload associated with assessment requirements will be reasonable and the tasks will be fully described at the start of the paper to give students time to fit them in alongside their other commitments.¹⁶¹

The second principle (criterion referencing) replaced a principle that included the expectation that a final examination would usually be necessary.¹⁶² The Guidelines are accompanied by a best-practice guide. Further advice on good practices in assessment is available through workshops offered by the Higher Education Development Centre (HEDC).¹⁶³

Examinations are governed by the Administration of Final Examinations Policy. Following an internal review in 2022, a new (internal) website was established to improve staff access to information about examination processes.¹⁶⁴

The University seeks feedback on student perceptions of assessment in student evaluations of teaching and surveys but does not systematically collect data on the types of assessment used.¹⁶⁵ Longitudinal data indicate some variation in students' perceptions of the appropriateness of assessment. The University suggests this is attributable to differing assessment practices and has foreshadowed an intent to review this part of the survey.¹⁶⁶

The Disability Action Plan is not explicit about assessment but does signal an intent to review the Special Consideration and Alternative Arrangements Policies.¹⁶⁷ The Panel heard comments that students experienced a lack of cultural understanding in some requests for special consideration.

¹⁶¹ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/policy-collection/guidelines-for-the-assessment-of-student-performance> (Accessed 17 August 2024).

¹⁶² SRR, p. 61.

¹⁶³ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/hedc/staff/teaching#assessment-in-higher-education-programme> (Accessed 17 August 2024.)

¹⁶⁴ SRR, p. 63.

¹⁶⁵ SRR, p. 62; FE GS 18a.

¹⁶⁶ SRR, p. 62.

¹⁶⁷ FE 4.

More broadly, reviews of these policies would provide an opportunity to improve the cultural safety and inclusiveness of special consideration and alternative arrangements (and associated practices).

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** that future reviews of special consideration and alternative arrangements policies consider how the cultural safety and inclusiveness of these policies could be strengthened.*

More broadly, the Panel recommends that, as graduate attributes and curricula are reviewed to include Te Tiriti o Waitangi aspirations, te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies, there will also be a need to review assessment practices. These actions will enable assessment practices to reflect the aspirations of Pae Tata, Māori Strategic Framework, the Pacific Strategic Framework and the Disability Action Plan.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** that assessment include the strategic inputs from Pae Tata, the Māori Strategic Framework, the Pacific Strategic Framework and the Disability Action Plan.*

GS 19 Assessment standards

Assessment and outcome standards are appropriately set and moderated.

Assessment standards are set and moderated through:

- initial approval processes that include the types of assessment to be used to assess the learning outcomes of a paper and moderation processes
- team teaching
- pre-moderation of examinations
- post moderation of results in examination boards
- some use of external assessors, particularly for postgraduate papers
- professional accreditation processes.

Departmental processes for pre-moderation of assessment reflect good practice. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, all postgraduate papers were externally moderated every year. The Panel considers this good practice and was impressed with the reports it was able to view.¹⁶⁸ They contained useful comments on curricula and assessment practice as well as standards. Departments were expected to indicate how they were responding to external assessors' reports. Summary reports were also developed for consideration by academic committees.

Requirements for external moderation were suspended for three years during the pandemic and again in 2023 while the University undertook a review of moderation processes.¹⁶⁹ The Panel was advised that the University was likely to reduce the frequency of external moderation, which was previously an annual expectation. The Panel is aware that external moderation of taught papers is not widely used in Aotearoa New Zealand. However, it is not convinced that this low level of local practice is an appropriate external reference point. The University has established benchmarking activities with other members of the of the Matariki Network and these would provide appropriate international

¹⁶⁸ FE 29 – FE 32.

¹⁶⁹ SRR, p. 63.

comparators of practice.¹⁷⁰ The Panel recommends the University reconsider expectations for external moderation at both undergraduate and postgraduate level taught papers.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** the University reconsider expectations for external moderation of assessment for both undergraduate and postgraduate taught papers.*

GS 20 Academic integrity

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

Expectations about academic integrity are set through an academic integrity policy and student academic misconduct procedures.¹⁷¹ The policy establishes academic integrity as “the basis for ethical decision-making and behaviour in an academic context” and sets out responsibilities for the University, staff and students.¹⁷² The Procedures define levels of academic misconduct, types of misconduct and the procedures to be followed.¹⁷³ The academic integrity policy has been recently reviewed and will be reviewed again, along with the academic misconduct procedures, to align with a new policy on the use of Generative-AI (Gen-AI) in teaching and learning.¹⁷⁴

In addition to policy and procedures, further information and guidance is available online, including education modules for staff and students. Staff and students also have access to workshops and university communications advise staff of developments.¹⁷⁵

The University has a dedicated academic integrity advising role that oversees academic activity and works with the Academic Integrity Advisory Group. This group provides a cross-university forum to discuss emerging challenges and risks. It also helps the University to remain abreast of research and best practice in academic integrity.¹⁷⁶

The academic integrity advisor role is also responsible for reporting levels 2 and 3 misconduct investigations. This includes reporting to the University Council and allows trends to be identified.¹⁷⁷

In common with other universities, increasing attention is being paid to the implications of Generative-Artificial Intelligence (Gen-AI) for academic integrity (and academic endeavours broadly). The University is in the process of establishing new roles that will provide further guidance. It has also added new student opinion survey questions to assess students’ understanding and use of Gen-AI. The Panel is pleased to see these developments.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁰ SRR, p. 75.

¹⁷¹ SRR, p. 64.

¹⁷² <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/academic-integrity-policy> (Accessed 18 August 2024.)

¹⁷³ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/policy-collection/student-academic-misconduct-procedures> (Accessed 18 August 2024.)

¹⁷⁴ SRR, p. 66; <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/policy-collection/use-of-generative-artificial-intelligences-and-autonomous-content-generation-in-learning-and-teaching-policy> (Accessed 18 August 2024.)

¹⁷⁵ SRR, p. 65.

¹⁷⁶ SRR, p. 64.

¹⁷⁷ SRR, p. 64.

¹⁷⁸ SRR, p. 66.

Affirmation: *The Panel affirms the work the University is undertaking to consider the current and future role(s) of Generative-Artificial Intelligence in universities.*

The University's (new) policy acknowledges disciplinary differences in the use of Gen-AI. However, the Panel heard that, in practice, expectations varied from paper to paper for reasons that may not be clear. It considers that more detailed and consistent advice is needed on the use of Gen-AI as practice and use is evolving rapidly. Monitoring the types of use would also be valuable.

Recommendation: *The Panel recommends the University develop more detailed and consistent guidance on the use of Generative-Artificial Intelligence and monitor its use.*

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 policy (Ngā Kaupapa mō te reo Māori | Māori Language Policy) and supported by procedures.¹⁷⁹ The policy is scheduled for review in 2025 and will be informed by research into “practices and aspirations of staff and students for a te-reo-positive university”.¹⁸⁰

Requests for assessment, including for theses, in te reo Māori are monitored centrally by the University. The numbers of requests are relatively low and there are barriers for students seeking to be assessed in te reo Māori, including the need to give advance notice. The Panel understands that this is a pragmatic requirement to allow time for it to respond positively to requests. Nonetheless, it does constitute a barrier for students. The Panel heard that some students also felt they would be inconveniencing their lecturers by asking to submit in te reo Māori and did not wish to do this.

However, the Panel also heard that the University was considering how to improve awareness and normalisation of assessment in te reo Māori. This could include providing this information in course outlines or having support for writing in te reo Māori as part of learning support resources. The University is taking steps to increase its capacity to undertake thesis examinations in te reo Māori and has recently appointed three new convenors of doctoral examinations who are fluent in te reo Māori. The Panel affirms these developments and again notes there will be implications for staffing resources and support.

Affirmation: *The Panel affirms the upcoming review of Ngā Kaupapa mō te reo Māori | Māori Language Policy and the University's work to increase awareness and normalisation of assessment in te reo Māori.*

¹⁷⁹ SRR, p. 67.

¹⁸⁰ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/news/newsroom/Te-Poutama-Maori-grants-for-Humanities#Manaakitia> (Accessed 18 August 2024.)

Section D: Teaching quality

This section of the audit framework focuses on teachers and teaching. The University employed 1,610 FTE academic and research staff in 2023 out of a total of 4077 FTE. In 2023, 53% teaching and research FTE and 34% professorial FTE were female.¹⁸¹ The University does not publish more detailed information about the composition of its workforce. The Panel understands that numbers and percentages of both Māori academic staff and Pacific academic staff have increased since 2015 but are still below comparable population proportions.

The “Our People” domain of Pae Tata is relevant to the guideline statements in this section of the audit framework. Its priorities include:

- enhancing a culture of working together and supporting diversity
- supporting staff to succeed and grow
- building the capability of [University] leaders.¹⁸²

The University has already undertaken some action and initiated other work to support a culture that supports diversity, and the Panel has commented on aspects of this (see GS 3). The Panel is pleased to hear that further planned action includes establishing Māori and Pacific leadership roles in Human Resources. These roles are expected to provide valuable, and necessary, capacity and capability to ensure that HR processes are culturally appropriate.

Affirmation: *The Panel **affirms** the establishment of senior Māori and senior Pacific advisor roles in Human Resources.*

Supporting evidence for this section of the audit framework was relatively sparse compared with the survey data that are available for other sections. The Panel understands that the presence of different University information systems makes it more difficult to provide consistent staff data.

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.

Responsibilities for staff recruitment are devolved to divisions.¹⁸³ They are guided by strategic imperatives—including the MSF and PSF, and an HR toolkit—and convenors of recruitment panels have training in how to avoid unconscious bias. Standard position descriptions for academic roles have been developed.¹⁸⁴

The Panel heard that strategic documents, including the MSF and the PSF, do guide recruitment decisions. However, workforce planning is an area for further development, particularly for the Māori workforce and Pacific workforce. The Panel also heard that the need to enhance the financial sustainability of the University presented a challenging environment in which to talk about staff recruitment. The Panel heard of mixed success in recruitment practice. On the positive side, some

¹⁸¹ FE 1 (AR23), pp. 145-146.

¹⁸² KD 2 (Pae Tata), pp. 30-35.

¹⁸³ SRR, p. 69.

¹⁸⁴ SRR, p. 69.

parts of the University were prepared to commit to group hires that could provide cultural support for one another, while on the other, there were examples of Māori candidates who were perceived to be appointable not being offered roles.

The Panel believes that to achieve its strategic priorities—becoming a Te Tiriti-led university and incorporating te ao Māori, tikanga Māori, te reo Māori and mātauraka Māori into teaching and learning¹⁸⁵—the University will need to increase the number of kaimahi Māori throughout the whole University. The MSF provides guidance to support the influence success and wellbeing of kaimahi Māori intentionally and deliberately.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** that the University continue to increase the number of kaimahi Māori at all levels and throughout the whole University, and to support their influence, success and wellbeing.*

Giving effect to being a university of the Pacific and incorporating Pacific pedagogies in curricula will require an increase in Pacific staff. The PSF provides direction to support their influence success and wellbeing.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** that the University continue to increase the number of Pacific staff at all levels and throughout the whole University, and to support their influence, success and wellbeing.*

The University has recognised the need to build the cohorts of both kaimahi Māori and Pacific staff in Pae Tata.¹⁸⁶ Even with increased numbers of kaimahi Māori and Pacific staff, there will be pressure on these staff to assist other colleagues to contribute directly to achieving these goals and support others to contribute.

The recommendations above encompass both academic and professional staff.

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.

Information for new staff is consolidated on a dedicated suite of webpages.¹⁸⁷ Onboarding is a structured programme, expected to take place over three to six months. Induction is predominantly an interaction between the new staff member and their manager. The Panel heard of mixed experiences among new members of staff: many experiences were very welcoming, but this was not consistent for all. Staff values are included as part of the online information, but the Panel did not gain a sense that there was either a consistent approach to ensure that induction experiences were culturally affirming or that new international staff were supported to become familiar with the

¹⁸⁵ KD 1 (Vision 2040), p. 8.

¹⁸⁶ KD 2 (Pae Tata), p. 39.

¹⁸⁷ <https://onboarding.otago.ac.nz/> (Accessed 18 August 2024.)

history and context of being a university in Aotearoa New Zealand and a university of the Pacific.¹⁸⁸ Experiences of support to become familiar with new University processes and systems also varied.

The University does make provision for new staff to become established in their roles. New academic staff have reduced teaching loads. However, the Panel was not surprised to hear of some variability in how this guideline was operationalised, given that a common workload model is not in place across the University.¹⁸⁹ A confirmation path process for new staff has recently been disestablished, to support these staff and reduce stress. Instead, development for new academic staff is now part of the annual Academic Performance Review process.¹⁹⁰ The University has work underway to retain valuable aspects of the confirmation path process for new staff.¹⁹¹

An academic orientation programme for new staff is run by the HEDC. It includes a two-and-a-half day 'Introduction to University teaching' and a two-day academic staff conference. These sessions are available to staff on other campuses and some support may be available to support staff travel.¹⁹² The Panel considers that these opportunities should be available to all new staff, irrespective of campus. The numbers of staff reported as attending Introduction to University Teaching in 2022 seem low in comparison with the number of academic staff appointed (22 vs 378), even assuming not all new academic staff will be new to university teaching.¹⁹³ Attendance at university induction courses is key to understanding the broader institution, its values, roles and responsibilities.

The Panel appreciates the University has work underway to consider how different units work together to provide development opportunities for staff. It comments further in GS 24. However, more systematic and evaluative data on staff experiences with processes and programmes would be useful.

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.

The University has a comprehensive range of opportunities for staff to develop their teaching, research, leadership, cultural and technical capabilities:

- HEDC provides workshops, formal qualifications and individual consultations, plus workshops for supervisors with the GRS
- medical education units provide support for the Division of Health Sciences
- CALT administers the University's Teaching Development grants and hosts a teaching innovation speaker series

¹⁸⁸ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/humanresources/working-at-otago/staff-values> (Accessed 19 August 2024.)

¹⁸⁹ FE Clarification point 10.

¹⁹⁰ SRR, p. 21.

¹⁹¹ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/humanresources/training/academic-staff/academic-pdr/confirmation-path> (Accessed 29 September 2024.)

¹⁹² <https://corpapp.otago.ac.nz/training/hedc/course/16017/subject/new-teachers-programme/> (Accessed 19 August 2024.)

¹⁹³ SD 12, p. 4; FE 27, p. 24.

- HR Learning and Development (L&D) offers Te Tiriti o Waitangi responsiveness training, access to bicultural competency training
- L&D also collaborates with ITS to offer courses and provide other resources to support staff to make the best use of University IT systems, for example the LMS
- the Academic Leadership Development Programme has courses and workshops for academic leaders, new Heads of Department, and a policy and practice series open to all staff.¹⁹⁴

The Panel is impressed with the emphasis placed on leadership development at the University. It heard many positive comments about the University's long-standing Academic Leadership and Development Programme, including its commitment to cultural competency.

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University's Academic Leadership Development Programme.*

However, the Panel also heard that Māori staff felt the need to develop their own leadership, innovative pedagogies, technologies and support mechanisms. Their capabilities were often drawn on to provide support for non-Māori staff, but opportunities to develop their own teaching (and other) capabilities as Māori were less apparent.

Similar issues were heard for Pacific staff, with the further complexity of considering the diversity of Pacific cultures. Options for supporting teaching development for Pacific staff include a Pacific Leadership Group¹⁹⁵ and informal networks.

Strategic reviews undertaken by the University have suggested:

- a need to reorient the work of HEDC to support more directly the University's strategic direction, particularly in the development of digital skills¹⁹⁶
- an opportunity to co-locate units and people who provide professional (including teaching) development, as part of a future, integrated organisational development plan. This integrated plan would include professional development requirements for Māori staff, Pacific staff and staff from equity groups.¹⁹⁷

The Panel agrees with the decision to reorient HEDC and is pleased to see the University is taking steps to increase staff capability to lead thinking on the impact of new technologies for teaching and learning. The research-led approach to teaching development served the University well in a more stable environment.¹⁹⁸ However, teaching development now needs to be more intentionally aligned with the University's strategic priorities. Teaching development can continue to be research-led, with the research and programmes offered reoriented to support strategic priorities.

Other work indicates a need to build cultural capabilities, particularly in the development and use of te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies. This point was also made in the Cycle 5 academic audit of the

¹⁹⁴ SRR, pp. 72-74.

¹⁹⁵ SRR, p. 43.

¹⁹⁶ SD 7.

¹⁹⁷ SD 23, p. 4.

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/University%20of%20Otago%20Report%20Cycle%205.pdf>, p. 51. (Accessed 20 August 2024.)

University.¹⁹⁹ There are aspects of capabilities being developed in some areas and the Panel heard that options for a 'Māori and Pacific Teaching Unit', which could be co-led, had been discussed. The Panel considers there is an urgent need to resolve these discussions, to establish an appropriate structure, and to invest in capability.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** the University resolve its debate about how teaching development support to embed te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies in curricula will be provided and set out a timeline for implementing this support.*

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.

Guidelines for Teaching at Otago set out principles of quality teaching and indicators of a strong teaching culture at individual, department, programme and institutional levels.²⁰⁰ The SRR outlines how evidence for the institutional level indicators aligns with the Cycle 6 academic audit framework. This includes:

- a clearly identified graduate profile, and internal processes that ensure graduate attributes are embedded in curricula, and assessed accordingly—GS 1 (Teaching and Learning Plan), GS17
- clear policies and procedures concerned with course design, teaching methods and assessment—GS 14, GS 18
- an evaluation system for the University in which regular, planned and systematic evaluation of teaching and papers, and achievement of graduate outcomes is undertaken—GS 15, GS 16
- a university committee for teaching and learning that oversees curriculum development and curriculum and teaching quality—GS 1, GS 14
- promotion of strong links between teaching and disciplinary research—GS 24
- promotion of evidence-based teaching—GS 1 (Teaching and Learning Plan)
- appropriate recognition of excellent teaching—GS 26
- benchmarking with other institutions—GS 16, GS 19.²⁰¹

Although the Guidelines and associated indicators are a little dated (for example, there is little mention of digital learning and most references to online are in the context of the availability of online resources), the Panel agrees that the University does demonstrate that it meets its criteria for good teaching at an institutional level. The Panel suggests that when these Guidelines are updated, efforts are made to better reflect te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies and digital, online and blended teaching in indicators of good practice.

Operationally, teaching quality is assessed through student evaluations of teaching, peer review of teaching, student surveys, programme and departmental reviews and accreditations, and academic performance and review processes. Survey results and student evaluations of teaching are reported

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/University%20of%20Otago%20Report%20Cycle%205.pdf>, p. 51. (Accessed 20 August 2024.)

²⁰⁰ SRR, pp. 74-75; https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/304073/guidelines-for-teaching-at-otago-616124.pdf (Accessed 20 August 2024.)

²⁰¹ SRR, p. 75.

to those with responsibilities for teaching quality in divisions.²⁰² Teaching quality is part of the annual academic appraisal process and staff must submit student evaluations of teaching as part of this process.²⁰³

The University identified an enhancement initiative to establish “an Educational Network|Kōkiri ki Tua that will provide a community of practice for kaimahi (staff) with the goal of lifting the bar and shifting the conversation and culture around teaching”.²⁰⁴ It is intended to “connect staff who are passionate about teaching, learning and sharing innovation, ideas and practice”.²⁰⁵ Six Kōkiri ki Tua co-ordinators have been established and the first topic for discussion by the Network is about the future use of artificial intelligence in teaching and learning. The Panel affirms this initiative.

Affirmation: *The Panel affirms the establishment of Kōkiri ki Tua.*

GS 26 Teaching recognition

High-quality teaching is recognised and rewarded.

High teaching quality is recognised and rewarded through:

- academic performance reviews
- academic promotions
- teaching awards.²⁰⁶

Performance reviews for academic staff occur at least biennially and require staff to provide evidence of student evaluations of teaching. Academic staff applying for promotion need to submit a ‘teaching profile’. This takes a reflective approach to teaching, supported by evidence.²⁰⁷ The University monitors the number of promotion applications received and the success rate by division, gender, ethnicity and whether staff are disabled.²⁰⁸

Comprehensive information for staff applying for promotion is available on the University website.²⁰⁹ The Panel noted that contributions to the MSF and PSF were referenced more explicitly in the research and service domains than in the teaching domain.²¹⁰ They were assured, however, that such contributions would be recognised in practice. The Panel considers that contributions to the MSF and PSF could be made more explicit in the guidelines for teaching. This could be addressed in the anticipated re-write of documentation in 2025.²¹¹

²⁰² SRR, p. 76.

²⁰³ https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/312127/APA-Guidelines-2023.pdf, p. 3. (Accessed 20 August 2024.)

²⁰⁴ SRR, p. 88.

²⁰⁵ SRR, p. 16. Note the University identified this enhancement initiative in GS 1. However, the Panel considers it is relevant for GS 25.

²⁰⁶ SRR, p. 76.

²⁰⁷ https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/307755/a-guide-to-the-otago-teaching-profile-705281.pdf (Accessed 20 August 2024.)

²⁰⁸ FE 28.

²⁰⁹ https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/service_divisions/humanresources/training/academic-staff/academic-promotion (Accessed 20 August 2024.)

²¹⁰ https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0034/294874/HR-Academic-Staff-Promotions-1-March-2024-1.pdf (Accessed 20 August 2024.)

²¹¹ FE, Clarification point 11.

The Panel heard that, although training was available for promotions committees, members were not necessarily well equipped to assess the contributions of Māori staff or Pacific staff and at times those who were equipped needed to step out of the room due to perceived conflicts of interest. Criteria for appointments of Māori staff and Pacific staff to promotions committees could be developed by groups representing those communities. Recruitment panels could appoint suitable Māori and Pacific members of promotions committees who meet the criteria and are not perceived as having conflicts of interest.

The Panel heard that progression and/or promotion was less straightforward for professional staff who support teaching and learning. In particular, the cultural loads carried by Māori professional staff and Pacific professional staff were not always recognised. The MSF, PSF and work underway in HR provide opportunities to strengthen progression options for Māori and Pacific professional staff. The Panel has made recommendations that include success for kaimahi Māori and Pacific staff in GS 22 and commented that these recommendations include staff in professional roles. The Panel encourages the university to consider how their work is appropriately acknowledged and valued.

Teaching excellence awards also recognise high-quality teaching. The University makes six awards annually—three in a general category, one in kaupapa Māori, one Pacific and one group award. Awards may be endorsed in distance teaching or teaching with technology. Excellence is also recognised throughout the University and by students with divisional awards and awards by the University of Otago Pacific Island Students Association. The University has a strong record of success in the national Te Whatu Kairangi Ako Aotearoa Tertiary Educator Awards.²¹²

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University for its record of success in the national Te Whatu Kairangi Ako Aotearoa Tertiary Educator Awards.*

²¹² SRR, pp. 77-78.

Section E: Supervision of postgraduate research students

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

In 2023, 1,542 students were enrolled in PhDs or professional doctorates. The number of PhD enrolments has declined from 1,402 in 2019 to 1,340 in 2023.²¹³ The University does not report enrolments in research Master's qualification separately from other Master's qualifications. The proportion of University EFTS enrolled in postgraduate study has dropped slightly from 2021 to 2023. The University reports that a drop in postgraduate research completions over the same period can be attributed to COVID-19 disruptions.²¹⁴ However, the Panel commends the University for the high completion rates achieved.²¹⁵

Commendation: *The Panel commends the University for the high completion rates achieved by postgraduate research students.*

Responsibilities for postgraduate research students are split between the Graduate Research School (GRS) and divisions. The GRS is led by a Dean, who chairs the Graduate Research Committee (GRC) and convenes the Graduate Research Student Liaison Committee (GRSLC). The GRS is responsible for providing policy advice for doctoral and research Master's degrees, targeted support for Māori postgraduates, and oversight of postgraduate researcher and supervisor development. GRS staffing includes a Māori Postgraduate Support Advisor, a Pacific Postgraduate Support Advisor and a Graduate Wellbeing Coach. The GRS works with Associate Deans (Postgraduate) in divisions.

Research Master's degrees are administered by divisions. The Panel heard that the Associate Deans (Postgraduate) were discussing how best to co-ordinate and share best practice. The Panel supports this initiative, but notes that a similar recommendation was made in the Cycle 5 academic audit.²¹⁶ The Panel recommends that the University be more intentional and review guidelines for managing consistency of the requirements for and experience of research Master's students across the University.

Recommendation: *The Panel recommends that the University review its guidelines for coordinating and managing consistency of requirements for and the experience of research Master's students across the University.*

Comprehensive information about research degrees is available in two online handbooks—one for PhDs and the other for research Master's degrees.²¹⁷ Further information for research Master's degrees is available on divisional webpages.²¹⁸

²¹³ FE 1 (AR 23), p. 141.

²¹⁴ FE 1 (AR 23), p. 63.

²¹⁵ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research#:~:text=An%20average%2083%25%20of%20all,time%20candidates%20is%203.4%20years> (Accessed 6 September 2024.)

²¹⁶ <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/University%20of%20Otago%20Report%20Cycle%205.pdf>, p. 56. (Accessed 22 August 2024.)

²¹⁷ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/current-phd-students-digital-handbook>; <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/study/researchmaster> (Accessed 21 August 2024.)

²¹⁸ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/study/overview-of-the-administration-of-research-masters-degrees> (Accessed 21 August 2024.)

Responses for PhD and Masters' students are identified separately in University surveys and feedback is sought on the GRS. The 2023 Graduate Opinion Survey includes the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey, developed by the Higher Education Academy (UK).²¹⁹ The University also administers a PhD completion questionnaire. Results from the GOS indicate that postgraduate research students are generally satisfied with their experience.²²⁰

GS 27 Supervision quality

The quality of postgraduate research supervision is ensured.

Both the PhD and Master's handbooks include advice on the 10 most important qualities of a supervisor, based on CALT-funded research.²²¹ Supervision quality is ensured through regulations specifying supervision requirements, criteria for appointment of supervisors, training and development for supervisors, progress monitoring processes and student feedback. Students can also raise issues with the GRS or through GRSLC.

Doctoral students have a primary supervisor, supported by one or more co-supervisors, and/or a departmental advisory committee. New supervisors can be primary supervisors if they are supported and monitored by another supervisor who takes on at least a third of the supervision load. The Panel appreciates the attention paid to this provision but expects that, in practice, it would be difficult to allocate percentages of supervision load. Only one supervisor is required for research Master's students, with the additional specification that the primary supervisor should be a member of the University staff. Having more than one supervisor helps provide continuity of supervision, and the Panel heard that this was needed by a number of the students with whom it met.

The GRS provides resources for supervisors.²²² New supervisors are required to attend professional development workshops, which are part of the Otago Doctoral Supervision Programme (ODSP) that is co-ordinated by HEDC. Existing supervisors are encouraged to undertake professional development.²²³ Forty standalone workshops are available as part of the ODSP. While feedback indicates participants find workshops valuable, it is not clear to the Panel that there are any compulsory requirements for supervisors nor that the University is able to monitor the currency of supervisors with training. There is no formal accreditation of research supervisors. Information on a potential supervisor's accreditation and recent professional development would be valuable for Heads of Department in assigning supervision responsibilities; or in determining whether a supervisor should be de-accredited. The Panel recommends the University establish compulsory components of training (or accreditation) for new and continuing supervisors.

Recommendation: *The Panel recommends the University specify and monitor completion of and compliance with core training components by new and ongoing supervisors.*

Supervision load is managed at the departmental level. However, the Panel heard of some supervisors, particularly Māori supervisors, with very high supervision loads. This was attributed to a

²¹⁹ SD 6.3, p. 7.

²²⁰ SD 6.3, pp. 30-34.

²²¹ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/current-phd-students-digital-handbook/perspectives-on-quality-supervision> (Accessed 21 August 2024.)

²²² SRR, p. 81.

²²³ SRR, p. 80.

lack of supervision capacity for Māori research topics. The Panel has recommended the University continue to increase and support kaimahi Māori in the University (GS 22). This recommendation also applies to postgraduate supervision.

The University seeks feedback on the quality of supervision in student surveys. These data are further analysed by division, ethnicity, for disabled students and for international students.²²⁴ Both graduates and existing students report a consistently high level of satisfaction with their supervision. Supervision awards also reflect a commitment to high quality supervision.²²⁵

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University for the high satisfaction rates reported by students for postgraduate supervision.*

GS 28 Resourcing of postgraduate research students

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

Expectations of support for PhD and Master's students are set out in specific guidelines and in the PhD and Master's handbooks.²²⁶ The guidelines specify that departments should assess whether resources can be provided. This should occur before a student is accepted or a major change of topic is approved.

Support is also available through scholarships for both PhD and Master's students. Doctoral scholarships are also available for Māori students and Pacific students. Both PhD and Master's students are eligible for publishing bursaries (up to three months for PhD students and two months for Master's) to support submission of journal articles or book chapters after the student has submitted their thesis for examination.²²⁷ Doctoral students are also given \$2000 each for conference funding.²²⁸

Targeted support is available for Māori and Pacific postgraduate research students. This includes writing workshops and some additional conference support. Further programmes support Māori and Pacific postgraduate research students in Health Sciences and all students are supported by Associate Deans Māori and Associate Deans Pacific in divisions. Pacific students can present their work at an annual Pacific Voices Symposium, which has been running for 20 years.²²⁹

The GRS organises and funds an annual Graduate Research Symposium and provides support for students not based on the Dunedin campus to attend. The GRS website lists researcher development opportunities and other support available for postgraduate research students.²³⁰

²²⁴ FE 23.

²²⁵ SRR, p. 82.

²²⁶ SRR, p. 82; <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/policy-collection/resources-for-graduate-research-candidates-guidelines> (Accessed 21 August 2024.)

²²⁷ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/study/scholarships/bursaries> (Accessed 21 August 2024.)

²²⁸ SRR, p. 83.

²²⁹ SRR, pp. 82-82.

²³⁰ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/postgraduate-professional-and-researcher-development> (Accessed 21 August 2024.)

The SRR indicates that resourcing and support arrangements are covered in the Student Supervisor Agreement. The Panel considers the Student Supervisor Agreement covers many important matters, including that funding has been considered and information about resources (point 19). The supervisor expectations checklist does include a point about respective responsibilities for resourcing. However, access to resources is managed by departments and student survey feedback shows variation in satisfaction between departments. This is consistent with comments heard by the Panel. The Panel considers the University could make information about support for postgraduate research students more transparent.

The comment about transparency also applies to other processes, including admissions and enrolment procedures and scholarships. The Panel heard of some processes taking extended periods for what seemed to be straightforward matters and conflicting or no feedback about how decisions had been reached. Process issues have also been identified in feedback received through the doctoral completion questionnaire and discussed by the GRC.²³¹

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** the University improve transparency of processes and decisions for postgraduate research students, including admission and enrolment procedures, scholarships and other financial support available to 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.

The process and requirements for progress reporting are set out in the PhD Handbook.²³² Doctoral students need to provide a progress report every six months until their enrolment has been 'confirmed'. Reporting is then required annually. The student completes a self-review before a meeting. The self-review is uploaded to the University's SMS. The Student Supervisor Agreement should be attached to the first six-month report. The self-review and the student-supervisor agreement are then discussed at the meeting that is chaired by an academic who is not part of the supervisory team. The report from the meeting is also uploaded to the SMS for signoff by designated bodies and reported to the GRS.²³³

At the time of the audit, a system issue with the SMS was limiting the generation of reminders for follow-up reports. These issues have persisted for some time and have introduced uncertainty for students. The Panel encourages the University to address these issues as a priority.

The Chair of the progress meeting should contact both the student and supervisors separately before the meeting to see if there are any issues with the supervisory relationship, or other issues that the student wishes to raise without supervisors being present. Advice is available on dealing with supervisory issues and students have other routes through which to raise confidential issues, including directly with the GRS. The University endeavours to maintain confidentiality, but the Panel heard this did not always occur, contributing to a lack of trust and confidence in these processes. The

²³¹ FE 24.

²³² <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/current-phd-students-digital-handbook/the-reporting-process> (Accessed 22 August 2024.)

²³³ SRR, p. 84.

Panel has made a recommendation in GS 11 with respect to trust and confidence in the University complaints processes. This recommendation is also relevant to postgraduate research students.

Following submission of progress reports, the GRS writes to and congratulates students whose progress is assessed as 'outstanding'. It also contacts students if progress issues have been identified. If there are ongoing concerns about progress (and after having the student first take steps to address them), a student may be placed under review for making unsatisfactory progress.²³⁴ These processes recognise that being placed under review will cause stress for students. Students are advised of support services and an independent person they can consult. An 'Under review memorandum' sets out the duration of the review period, work to be completed and the standard to which it needs to be completed. It also sets out assistance that will be provided and the possible outcomes from the review. Outcomes can include transfer into another qualification or cancellation of the enrolment and need to be confirmed by the GRC. Students can appeal these decisions.²³⁵

The University also sets expectations for operational management of progress. For example, supervisory meetings should take place at least every two weeks. Survey feedback indicates that this happens for almost 90% of students.²³⁶

Progress reporting requirements for research Masters' students vary. The use of student supervisor agreements is encouraged, but not required.²³⁷ This variability is something that should be included in the recommendation above—that the University review its guidelines for managing consistency of the experience for research Master's students across the University.

GS 30 Thesis examination

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

Requirements and processes for thesis examination are set out in the PhD and Master's handbooks. Doctoral examinations are managed by the GRS and Masters' examination by the division.²³⁸ However, these may be further delegated to schools or departments. This variability is a further area where the Panel considers there would be value in considering the consistency of the experience of research Master's students across the University.

The Panel considers the examination processes are robust and consistent with good international practice. They include a requirement for an oral examination and processes for resolving differences between examiners. The oral examination can be held via videoconference. The Panel is also pleased to see the University makes provision for oral examinations for Māori PhD students to be held on a

²³⁴ SRR, p. 84.

²³⁵ <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/under-review-procedure-for-doctoral-candidates-making-unsatisfactory-progress#:~:text=Under%20Review%20Process,Review%20Procedure%20should%20be%20initiated>. (Accessed 22 August 2024.)

²³⁶ SRR, p. 84.

²³⁷ SRR, p. 85.

²³⁸ SRR, p. 86.

marae. The University is developing guidelines for embedding tikanga Māori in PhD examination processes.²³⁹

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the University for enabling oral examinations for Māori PhD students to be held on a marae.*

The University monitors examination times and outcomes for PhD students. It intends to extend this process to Masters' students. Survey data indicate that students understand the requirements for thesis examination.²⁴⁰

²³⁹ SRR, pp. 86-87.

²⁴⁰ SD 6.3, p. 33.

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 addressing the guideline statements in the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework, universities are expected to reflect:

- university obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- the close interdependence of university research and teaching
- universities' role as critic and conscience of society.²⁴¹

The audit framework 'obligations' language referring to Te Tiriti o Waitangi is now a little dated. The University aspires to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led, and this aspiration is reflected throughout this report. The Panel has made recommendations where it considers further attention is warranted, particularly with respect to curriculum and teaching development.

The interdependence of teaching and research was also apparent throughout the self-review portfolio, including the use of research-based practice. This interdependence was also reflected in discussions with people the panel met.

The University's role as critic and conscience of society is set out in the University's Vision 2040. It has taken steps to support staff contributing to this function, including providing media training for staff. The Proctor becomes involved with any incidents of staff harassment. The University anticipates further work in this area, which will be welcomed by staff who do not feel confident speaking publicly in their areas of expertise.

With respect to the scope components of the audit framework, the University is clearly aware of and is responsive to the needs of different groups of students, particularly Māori students, Pacific students and disabled students. The Panel also heard how the University considered the needs of students on the Christchurch and Wellington campuses and students studying at a distance. The University has a large programme of work underway, arising from Pae Tata and pursuing the goals of the Māori Strategic Framework and Pacific Strategic Framework. This will help the University pay further attention to the needs of different groups of staff. Attention to different modes of delivery will become increasingly important for the University and, again, it has work underway here.

Enhancement initiatives

Identification of enhancement initiatives is an important component of the self-review process as the University assesses whether it meets the guideline statements in the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework. The University identified nine enhancement initiatives.²⁴² The Panel has commented on and endorsed the direction of all the University's enhancement initiatives. It also has made affirmations with respect to other initiatives or work.

²⁴¹ Guide to Cycle 6 Academic Audit, p. 11.

²⁴² SRR, p. 88.

Summary of commendations, affirmations and recommendations

The Panel considers the University does meet, and in several instances exceeds, the outcomes and standards a university of good international standing would be expected to demonstrate in respect of the guideline statements. It therefore meets the expectations of the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework.

The University has strengths in student support and in achieving very good educational outcomes. These outcomes are reflected in strong employment rates and educational performance indicators. The University recognises work is required to put a modern digital learning environment in place and to implement data systems, analytics, more dynamic reporting and targeted evaluation of interventions and initiatives. Further capacity and capability building will be needed to progress the University's aspirations to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and to embed te ao Māori into curricula. Capacity and capability building will also be required to be a university of the Pacific and to embed Pacific pedagogies into curricula. The University has appointed leadership roles for its Te Tiriti and Māori strategic directions and needs to appoint senior leadership for its vision to be a university of the Pacific.

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

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:

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| | C1 | <i>The Panel commends the University's new and aspirational strategic direction to become a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led university and university of the Pacific, its new ikoa Māori and the appointment of the University's first DVC Māori.</i> |
| | C2 | <i>The Panel commends the University for maintaining strategic impetus through a period of significant change in senior leadership</i> |
| GS 1 | C3 | <i>The Panel commends the coherence and consistency of guidance provided across the University by strategic documents, including the Māori Strategic Framework and Pacific Strategic Framework.</i> |
| GS 3 | C4 | <i>The Panel commends the University for its willingness to address racism and to support participation in bi-cultural competency and anti-racism workshops.</i> |
| Sec B | C5 | <i>The Panel commends the University for its outstanding track record in achieving the highest educational performance indicators for domestic students.</i> |

GS 9	C6	<i>The Panel commends the University for its continued attention to and comprehensive support for student transitions through their programmes and into employment.</i>
GS 12	C7	<i>The Panel commends the range of learning support services provided by the University and the ways in which the providers of these services ensure cultural appropriateness and respect for different groups of students and foster connections between services.</i>
GS 13	C8	<i>The Panel commends the University's robust and comprehensive pastoral care network. Te Whare Tāwharu, the Pacific Islands Centre, Disability Information and Support, Student Health, Te Huka Mātauraka, and Campus Watch reflect strong staff commitment to a student-centric and relational approach to supporting the wellbeing of different cohorts of students. The residential colleges also make a major contribution to student safety, wellbeing and academic achievement.</i>
GS 24	C9	<i>The Panel commends the University's Academic Leadership Development Programme.</i>
GS 26	C10	<i>The Panel commends the University for its record of success in the national Te Whatu Kairangi Ako Aotearoa Tertiary Educator Awards.</i>
Sec E	C11	<i>The Panel commends the University for the high completion rates achieved by postgraduate research students.</i>
GS 27	C12	<i>The Panel commends the University for the high satisfaction rates reported by students for postgraduate supervision.</i>
GS 30	C13	<i>The Panel commends the University for enabling oral examinations for Māori PhD students to be held on a marae.</i>

Affirmations

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

GS 2	A1	<i>The Panel affirms the University's commitment to strengthen and formalise engagement with student voices and encourages the University to ensure its commitments to being Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and a university of the Pacific are embedded in this work, together with other diverse student voices.</i>
GS 3	A2	<i>The Panel affirms the enhancement initiative to progress the work of the Timetabling project.</i>

GS 3	A3	<i>The Panel strongly affirms the University's enhancement initiative to invest in its digital learning environment, including in its learning management system.</i>
GS 6	A4	<i>The Panel affirms the university's ongoing commitment and initiatives underway to achieve equity of outcomes for taura Māori.</i>
GS 7	A5	<i>The Panel affirms the University's ongoing commitment and initiatives underway to achieve equity of outcomes for Pacific students.</i>
GS 7	A6	<i>The Panel affirms the University's intent to appoint a senior Pacific role and align the Pacific Strategic Framework with Pae Tata. The senior Pacific role should be a member of SLT.</i>
GS 8	A7	<i>The Panel affirms the University's planned review of pathway programmes to see how they might be more purposefully developed to support Māori and Pacific students.</i>
GS 10	A8	<i>The Panel affirms the University's enhancement initiative to monitor and track the impact of mid-year progress interventions on students' progress, including for Māori students and Pacific students.</i>
GS 13	A9	<i>The Panel affirms the initiatives to develop a student wellbeing hub and a university-wide pastoral care network.</i>
GS 16	A10	<i>The Panel affirms the University's enhancement initiative to progress its Programmes and Papers workstream and develop a curriculum framework to guide this work.</i>
GS 17	A11	<i>The Panel affirms the University's enhancement initiative to refresh the University Graduate Profile and associated graduate attributes.</i>
GS 20	A12	<i>The Panel affirms the work the University is undertaking to consider the current and future role(s) of Generative-Artificial Intelligence in universities.</i>
GS 21	A13	<i>The Panel affirms the upcoming review of Ngā Kaupapa mō te reo Māori Māori Language Policy and the University's work to increase awareness and normalisation of assessment in te reo Māori.</i>
Sec D	A14	<i>The Panel affirms the establishment of senior Māori and senior Pacific advisor roles in Human Resources.</i>
GS 25	A15	<i>The Panel affirms the establishment of Kōkiri ki Tua.</i>

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:

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| GS 1 | R1 | <i>The Panel recommends the University consider the full range of models, levers and capabilities available to support strategy implementation and change.</i> |
| GS 1 | R2 | <i>The Panel recommends that the University's new digital learning environment should include as integral elements, the data and reporting systems needed to support and monitor strategy implementation and other initiatives.</i> |
| GS 3 | R3 | <i>The Panel recommends that the University reflect in its physical and digital learning environments its aspirations to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and a university of the Pacific, and embed culturally affirming design in future campus planning.</i> |
| GS 9 | R4 | <i>The Panel recommends the University strengthen pathways and support for students enrolled in postgraduate research studies, especially for tauira Māori and Pacific students.</i> |
| GS 10 | R5 | <i>The Panel recommends the University develop a systemic approach to identifying and supporting students at academic risk before a mid-year progress assessment.</i> |
| GS 11 | R6 | <i>The Panel recommends that—in improving access to and resolution of academic complaints, appeals and grievances—the University work with both undergraduate and postgraduate students to improve awareness and build trust and confidence in these processes.</i> |
| GS 14 | R7 | <i>The Panel recommends the University build on its robust paper and programme approval processes and resources to support systematic curriculum development that addresses the University's aspirations to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led and to incorporate te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies in learning and teaching.</i> |
| GS 16 | R8 | <i>The Panel recommends the University consider reintroducing its survey of employers to strengthen the information available to internal review panels and the wider university community.</i> |
| GS 16 | R9 | <i>The Panel recommends the University consider whether its existing departmental and organisational review arrangements are sufficiently agile, timely and focused on the strategic programme changes sought, together with the need for responsiveness to changing market demand.</i> |

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| GS 18 | R10 | <i>The Panel recommends that future reviews of special consideration and alternative arrangements policies consider how the cultural safety and inclusiveness of these policies could be strengthened.</i> |
| GS 18 | R11 | <i>The Panel recommends that assessment include the strategic inputs from Pae Tata, the Māori Strategic Framework, the Pacific Strategic Framework and the Disability Action Plan.</i> |
| GS 19 | R12 | <i>The Panel recommends the University reconsider expectations for external moderation of assessment at for both undergraduate and postgraduate taught papers.</i> |
| GS 20 | R13 | <i>The Panel recommends the University develop more detailed and consistent guidance on the use of Generative-Artificial Intelligence and monitor its use.</i> |
| GS 22 | R14 | <i>The Panel recommends that the University continue to increase the number of kaimahi Māori at all levels and throughout the whole University, and to support their influence, success and wellbeing.</i> |
| GS 22 | R15 | <i>The Panel recommends that the University continue to increase the number of Pacific staff at all levels and throughout the whole University, and to support their influence, success and wellbeing.</i> |
| GS 24 | R16 | <i>The Panel recommends the University resolve its debate about how teaching development support to embed te ao Māori and Pacific pedagogies in curricula will be provided and set out a timeline for implementing this support.</i> |
| Sec E | R17 | <i>The Panel recommends that the University review its guidelines for coordinating and managing consistency of requirements for and the experience of research Master's students across the University.</i> |
| GS 27 | R18 | <i>The Panel recommends the University specify and monitor completion of and compliance with core training components by new and ongoing supervisors.</i> |
| GS 28 | R19 | <i>The Panel recommends the University improve transparency of processes and decisions for postgraduate research students, including admission and enrolment procedures, scholarships and other financial support available to students.</i> |

Follow-up report

The Panel invites The University of Otago — Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka 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 Sonia Mazey
Chair of the Panel

Principal, Arcady Hall
Adjunct Professor, Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha |
University of Canterbury

Hon. Luamanuvao Dame Winnie Laban,
DNZM, QSO

Assistant Vice-Chancellor Pasifika
Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington

Catherine Dunphy (Taranaki Iwi)

Kaikōkiri Rautaki Māori
Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland

Dr Jeanette Baird

Tertiary education consultant
Based in Melbourne, Australia

Rā Neilsford-Jones (Ngati Porou)

Student
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury
University of Waikato

Secretariat:

Sheelagh Matear

Contract Audit Director
Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

Rochelle Gribble

Acting Executive Director
Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

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The translation of the Summary into Te Reo Māori was undertaken by Ōkupu.

Thanks also to Sharon Cuzens for proofreading this report.

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.²⁴³

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.

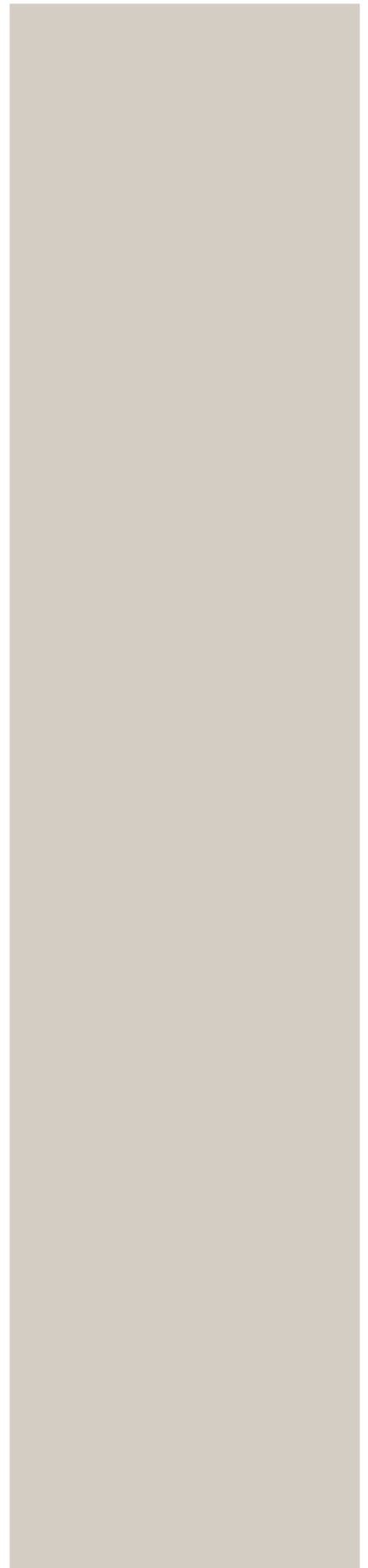
Quality assurance principles

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.

²⁴³ AQA (2020), Constitution. Available at <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/AQA%20Constitution%20Amended%20Oct%202020.pdf>. (Accessed 23 February 2022).





Level 3, 69 The Terrace
PO Box 5787, Wellington 6145, New Zealand
p + 64 4 801 7924 | e admin@aqa.ac.nz | w www.aqa.ac.nz



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For New Zealand Universities