Report of the 2023 Academic Audit of the University of Waikato – Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato
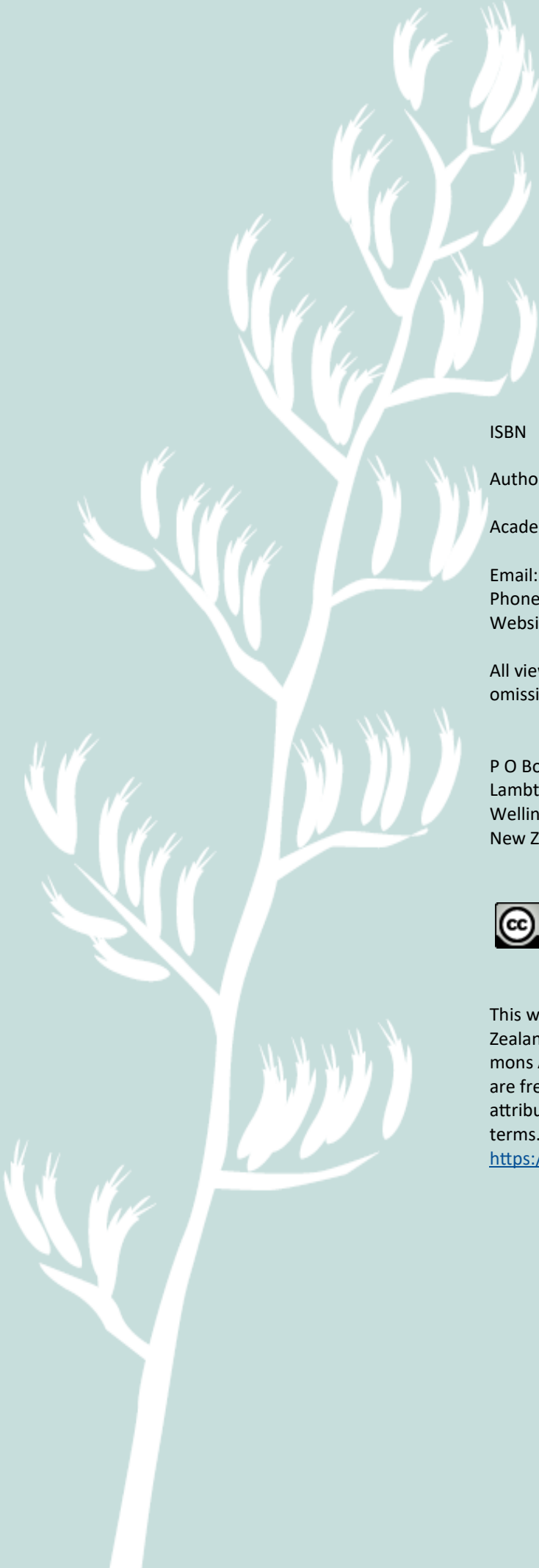
Cycle 6 academic audit undertaken by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

December 2023

Te Pokapū Kounga Mātauranga
mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa

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For New Zealand Universities

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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. Ko te wahanga tuarua o te huringa tuaono ko tētahi arotake i tētahi anga o ngā tauākī aratohu toru tekau. Ka aromatawai ngā whare wānanga i a rātou anō ki taua anga arotake ka tukuna ai tētahi pūrongo arotake mōna anō me tētahi kōpaki taunaki. E wātea ana ngā kōrero anō mō ngā arotake mātauranga tae ana ki ngā pūrongo arotake nō mua ki te pae tukutuku o AQA.

I tukuna e Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato tāna kōpaki arotake i a ia anō i te 15 o Haratua 2023, ā, i tukuna hoki ētahi whakamārama anō i tonoa rā e te Paewhiri i te 2 o Hereturikōkā 2023. E ai ki te Paewhiri, he whānui te arotakenga, ā, i tautokona pai e ngā taunakitanga. E rua ngā hui a te Paewhiri (ā-ipurangi) i mua i tā rātou toro ā-tinana ki te Whare Wānanga mai i te 4 ki te 6 o Hepetema 2023. I te wā o te toronga, i whakahaere te Paewhiri i ngā uiuinga e 23, ā, i hui ki ngā kaimahi e 74 me ngā tauira e 29. He tāpiritanga ngā kōrero i tīkina i ngā uiuinga ki ā rātou i roto i te kōpaki arotake.

I tū te Tātari ā-Kura Wānanga o te Huringa 6 a Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato i roto i te horopaki o ngā pānga tonutanga o te mate urutā KOWHEORI-19 me te horopaki pūtea e kaha herea ana mō ngā whare wānanga. Kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te Whare Wānanga mō ngā huarahi i urupare ai ki te KOWHEORI-19, i ako mai i taua wheako, ā, i whakauru ai i ngā ritenga hou, i arotakea rānei, i puta i taua wheako.

Ko ētahi atu āhuatanga horopaki e pā ana ki tēnei tātaritanga ko te whakaurunga o Te Tauākī o Te Tiriti o Waitangi a te Whare Wānanga me te whakatūnga o tētahi hōtaka mahi whānui (Te Aurei), e aro ana ki te whakatutuki i ngā putanga mai i te pūrongo a te Rōpū Mahi, me tētahi Rautaki Whare Wānanga e aro ana ki te whakaora i ngā pānga o te KOWHEORI-19 me te whakarite kia pūmau te anamata o te Whare Wānanga. Ko te āhua o ngā papanga-maha o te Whare Wānanga, ki Kirikiriroa, ki Tauranga, me tētahi whare whakaurunga ngātahi ki Hāngzhou, Haina, e tāpiri ana ki te horopaki o tēnei tātaritanga, perā i te tini o ngā tauira Māori kua whakaurua ki te Whare Wānanga. Kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te Whare Wānanga mō tōna ōritenga ki te wheako tauira puta noa i ngā papanga o te Whare Wānanga me te whakarite kia whiwhi ai ngā kaimahi kei tāwāhi i tētahi tukanga whakaurunga e whakaata ana i te Whare Wānanga me te horopaki motuhake o tō rātou papanga me tā rātou hōtaka. He tini nō ngā tauira Māori i te Whare Wānanga i taunakihia ai te Whare Wānanga kia whakaarohia ngā patanga o ngā kaupapa oranga Māori mō ngā tauira Māori.

Ko te wāhanga tuatahi (A) o te anga tātari e pā ana ki te hautūtanga me te whakahaeretanga o te whakaako, o te ako, me te kounga ā-kura wānanga. He wāhi kaha tēnei mō te Whare Wānanga, ā,

kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te Whare Wānanga mō tōna anga whakamahere rautaki mārama, tana whakapau kaha ki te whakawātea i ngā raraunga, kia ārahi ai i te mahere me te pūrongo, me ngā whanaketanga ki ngā taiao ako tinana, ā-matihiko hoki. Mai i tana tātari ā-kura o mua, kua whakatuwhera te Whare Wānanga i te papanga o Tauranga me Te Pā ki te papanga o Kirikiriroa, ā, kua whakawhanake i tētahi aratau tuku ngāwari. He aronga matatau tō te Whare Wānanga ki te whakahaere tūraru ki te kounga me te haere tonutanga o te whakaako me te ako, ā, kua whakapumau te Paewhiri i tētahi kaupapa whakapakari kia waihanga ai i tētahi Rēhita Tūraru Ākonga.

Kua mahi tahi pai te Whare Wānanga me te Uniana Tauira o Waikato (WSU) ki te whakatū i tētahi pūnaha kanohi akomanga whānui, ā, kua tautokona. Kua whakapumautia e te Paewhiri te whanaketanga me te whakatinanatanga o tētahi Anga Hoa Mahi i waenganui i te Whare Wānanga me te WSU. Heoi, ka tūtohu ia kia ōrite te whakangungu me te tautoko mō ngā mema tauira o ngā kōmiti me ngā poari puta noa i te Whare Wānanga.

Ka arotakengia hoki te kaupapa whakapai ake i tēnei wāhanga. Kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te ahunga whakamua a te Whare Wānanga ki te whakapiki i te urunga me te angitu mō ngā tauira Māori mā roto i tētahi huarahi whārahi pūnaha (Ōritetanga) ki te angitu akonga, ā, kua whakapumau i tōna whakapau kaha ki te waihanga i tētahi wāhi noho mō ngā tauira nō Te Moananui-a-Kiwa me tētahi tauira tautoko katoa hei whakapiki i te angitu mō ngā tauira nō Te Moananui-a-Kiwa.

Ko te wāhanga tuarua o te anga tatari – ko te hurihanga ora te tautoko me te oranga o te tauira; - he wāhanga pakari hoki o te Whare Wānanga. Ka whakamihi te Paewhiri i tā te Whare Wānanga tautoko i ngā whakawhitinga i te Whare Wānanga me tana ū ki te whakauruuru-mahi ako e whakapakari nei i ngā whakawhitinga ki te whaimahi. Ka whakamihi hoki Te Whare Pukapuka mō tana manawanui ki te ahunga rautaki o te Whare Wānanga me tana aro tapatahi ki te tauira. Kia hāngai ki ngā mahi i tēnei wāhanga, ka whakatau te Paewhiri i te mahere kia whakapakari ai i te pūnaha Whakahaere Pāhekoheko Kiritaki (CRM) hei tautoko anō i te haere tonutanga o ngā ritenga tohutohu Mātauranga. Te whakaurunga o te Mahere Whakatutuki Hauā a te Whare Wānanga, me te kaupapa whakangako ki te whakawhanake i ngā tukanga āwhina mō ngā whakatau amuamu hei tā te tirohanga Moananui-a-Kiwa.

Ko te wāhanga tuatoru (C) o te anga tātari ka titiro ki te marautanga, ngā aromatawai me te tukunga, ā, kei te whakamahere te Whare Wānanga i ētahi kaupapa whakarite, kei te haere rānei i tēnei wāhanga. Kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te Anga Hoahoa Marautanga (CDF), e whakarato ana i tētahi hang-anga whānui mō ngā tohu mātauranga, me te arotake a te Whare Wānanga i tēnei anga kia ū tonu ki te kaupapa. Ka whakamahia te CDF i te aromatawai i ngā tono hōtaka hou, ā, kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te Whare Wānanga, te Poari Mātauranga Māori, me te Komiti Rautaki Moananui-a-Kiwa mō tā rātou tirohanga kaha ki ngā tono mātauranga e tautoko ana i te ahunga whakamua o te Whare Wānanga. Heoi, e tūtohu ana kia whakaratohia ētahi aratohu anō hei āwhina i te arotake hoa o ngā tono (nō ētahi atu whare wānanga) ka tukuna ki te Komiti mō ngā Hōtaka Akoranga o te Whare Wānanga.

E whakaata ana i te takune a te Whare Wānanga kia ōrite te wheako o ngā tauira, kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te Whare Wānanga mō tāna whakamahinga ōrite o te whakataurite puta noa i ngā tari, ā, e tautoko ana i tētahi kaupapa whakapai ake ki te arotake i ngā tikanga whakataurite. E tautoko ana hoki ia i ngā kaupapa whakapai ake kia kitea ake (ā, kia whai hua) ngā tohu paerewa o ngā paetahi, ki

te arotake i ngā aratohu aromatawai me ngā rauemi, ā, ki te arotake i te kaupapahere a te Whare Wānanga mō te Whakamahi i te Reo Māori mō te Aromatawai. E whakaaro ana te Paewhiri kua whakatakoto te Whare Wānanga i tētahi huarahi whānui ki te mana o te mātauranga tae ana ki te mātauranga, te hoahoa aromatawai, te tautoko, me te pūrongo. E akiaki ana i te Whare Wānanga kia haere tonu te whakawhanake i ōna whakaaro mō te whakamahi i te atamai hangahanga whakatipuranga me ētahi hangarau hou e pā ana ki te mana o te Mātauranga.

Ka arotake te wāhanga tuawhā (D) o te anga tātari i te Kounga Whakaako ā ka whai wāhi mai ko te kimi kaimahi, te whakatau, te whakawhanake me te āhukahuka. Kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te Whare Wānanga me Te Puna Ako mō te whānuitanga o ngā whai wāhitanga whanaketanga whakaako e wātea ana me ngā huarahi e tautoko ai ēnei i ngā kaupapa rautaki a te Whare Wānanga. Heoi, e tuku ana hoki te Paewhiri i ētahi tūtohutanga mō tēnei wāhanga ā e tohutohu ana kia arotake te Whare Wānanga i ōna paearu mō te whai wāhi a ngā kaimahi ki ngā hōtaka whakatau me ngā hononga i waenga i ngā tūmanako whakaako me te whakawhanaketanga ngaio hei tautoko i te hanganga kaha me te āheinga. E tautoko ana hoki i ngā kaupapa a te Whare Wānanga hei whakapiki i te maha o ngā kaimahi Māori me te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa me te tūtohu kia tika te mōhio ki ngā mahi a ngā kaimahi Māori me te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa i roto i te tautoko i ngā tukanga kimi me te whakatau. E tautoko ana hoki i ngā panonitanga a te Whare Wānanga ki te pūnaha whakatairanga ā-ako, inā koa te whakauru mārama o te Mātauranga Māori ki te kōrero whakaako tūmanakohia. Hei whakamutunga, e pā ana ki tēnei wāhanga, e tūtohu ana te Paewhiri kia mahi te Whare Wānanga hei whakanui i ngā ōrau whakautu mō ngā aromatawai a ngā tauira i ngā pepa me ngā whakaako.

Ka aro te wāhanga whakamutunga (E) o te anga tātari ki ngā tauira rangahau tohu paerunga. Kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te Whare Wānanga mō tōna urupare tere ki ngā pātai tīmatanga mai i ngā tauira kairangi PhD me te whai haere i ēnei tauira ki te rēhita me te whakataunga. Kua tīmata te Whare Wānanga ki te arotake i ngā tohu Paerua me Paetahi Honore me te wheako tauira, ā, e tautoko ana te Paewhiri i tētahi kaupapa whakapai ake ki te whakatinana i ngā tūtohutanga i puta mai i tēnei arotake. E tautoko ana hoki i ngā kaupapa hei tautoko i te ōritetanga mō ngā rōpū kāore i tino mahia, inā koa ngā tauira Māori me ngā tauira nō Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, i roto i ngā rangahau paerunga. Ahakoa e whakaaro ana te Paewhiri he ōrite ngā rauemi me te tautoko mō ngā tauira rangahau paerunga ki ngā tikanga e tūmanakohia ana, e tūtohu ana kia whakauru te Whare Wānanga i ngā pātai mō te tika o ngā rauemi me ngā hiahia ā mua i roto i ngā pūrongo ahu whakamua mō ngā tauira PhD.

Ka tonoa hoki e te anga tātari Whare Ako Huringa 6 kia huritao ngā whare wānanga ki ō rātou takohanga i raro i te Tiriti o Waitangi, te whirinakitanga o ngā rangahau whare wānanga me te ako me te wāhi ki ngā whare wānanga hei arohaehae hei arotika o te porihanga. Me āmio te aromatawai arotake i ngā tauira katoa, ngā ara tuku katoa me ngā kaimahi katoa e pīkau, ka tautoko rānei i ngā mahi whakaako, hōmiromiro rānei. E pā ana ki te Tiriti o Waitangi, kua whakamihi te Paewhiri i te Whare Wānanga mō ngā huarahi e whakatinanatia ai tōna Whakapuakanga o te Tiriti o Waitangi puta noa i te Whare Wānanga me te whakatūnga o Te Aurei. E whakaaro ana te Paewhiri kua whai pānga te hononga rangahau-ako ki ngā whakaakoranga me ētahi atu whanaketanga ā, i rongo te tautoko mō te tūranga a te Whare Wānanga hei arohaehae, hei arotika o te porihanga. E pā ana ki ngā wāhanga whānui o te angamahi arotakenga, e mārama ana te Paewhiri kei te urupare te Whare Wānanga ki ngā hiahia o tōna tauira kanorau. He mahere motuhake, he kaupapa rānei tōna hei tautoko i ngā tauira Māori, Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, tauira o tāwāhi me ngā tauira hauā. I kitea te

whanaungatanga pai, te ngākau nui ki te Whare Wānanga me te angitū o ngā tauira nā ngā kaimahi, ā, e whakaaro ana te Paewhiri kei te aro te Whare Wānanga ki ngā ara tuku.

I runga i ngā taunakitanga i wātea mai ki a ia i te wā o te arotakenga, e whakatau ana te Paewhiri kua kapi katoa i te Whare Wānanga o Waikato ngā hiahia o Huringa 6 o te Angamahi Arotake ā-Kura Wānanga. He nui ngā wā i kapi noa atu te Whare Wānanga i ngā putanga me ngā paerewa i tōna tikanga me whakaatu e tētahi whare wānanga tū tika i te ao. Nō reira, kua tutuki i te Whare Wānanga ngā tūmanakohanga o te Angamahi Arotake ā-Kura Wānanga. Kua hanga e te Paewhiri e iwa ngā whakamihinga tekau mā iwa, e tekau mā rima ngā whakatūturutanga me ngā tūtohutanga tekau mā tahi e tautoko ana, e whakatenatena ana hoki i ngā tikanga mahi pai, ā, he mea whakaaro nui hei āwhina i te Whare Wānanga i a ia e koke ana i tōna aronga 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.[1] The second phase of Cycle 6 is an audit against a framework of 30 guideline statements. Universities undertake a self-assessment against the audit framework and present a self-review report and portfolio of supporting evidence. Further information about academic audits, including previous audit reports, is available on the AQA website.[2]

The University of Waikato submitted its self-review portfolio on 15 May 2023 and provided further information requested by the Panel on 2 August 2023. The Panel found the self-review to be comprehensive and well-supported by evidence. The Panel met twice (online) before undertaking an in-person site visit to the University from 4-6 September 2023. During the site visit, the Panel held 23 interview sessions and met with 74 members of staff and 29 students. Information gained through the interviews supplements that contained in the self-review portfolio.

The Cycle 6 Academic Audit of the University of Waikato took place in the context of ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and an increasingly financially constrained environment for universities. The Panel commends the University for the ways in which it responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, learnt from its experience, and embedded new or revised practices arising from the experience.

Other contextual factors relevant to this audit include the University's adoption of a Treaty of Waitangi Statement and the establishment of a comprehensive work programme (Te Aurei). This seeks to progress outcomes from the Taskforce report, and a University Strategy focused on recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring a sustainable future for the University. The multi-campus nature of the University—with campuses in Hamilton and Tauranga and a joint institute in Hangzhou, China—provide further context for this audit, as does the relatively high proportion of Māori students enrolled at the University. The Panel commends the University for its commitment to equivalence of student experience across the multiple campuses of the University and for ensuring that staff based offshore receive an induction process that reflects both the University and the specific context of their campus and programme. Given the high proportion of Māori students at the University, the Panel recommends that the University consider how Māori models of wellbeing would better support Māori students.

The first section (A) of the audit framework is concerned with leadership and management of teaching and learning, and academic quality. This is an area of strength for the University and the

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[1] https://www.enhanceunz.com/
[2] www.aqa.ac.nz

Panel commends the University for its coherent strategic planning framework, commitment to making data available to inform planning and reporting, and developments to the physical and digital learning environments. Since its last academic audit, the University has opened the Tauranga campus and The Pā on the Hamiliton campus and developed a flexible mode of delivery. The University has a mature approach to managing risks to the quality and continuity of teaching and learning and the Panel affirms an enhancement initiative to create an Academic Risk Register.

The University has worked effectively with the Waikato Students' Union (WSU) to establish a comprehensive and supported class representative system. The Panel affirms the development and implementation of a Partnership Framework between the University and the WSU. It recommends, however, that training and support for student members of committees and boards is consistent across the University.

Progress on the enhancement theme is also assessed in this section. The Panel commends the University's progress in improving access and achievement for Māori students through a whole-of-system (Ōritetanga) approach to learner success and affirms its commitment to creating a sense of belonging for Pacific students and a holistic support model to improve success for Pacific students.

The second section of the audit framework—Student life cycle, support and wellbeing—is also an area of strength for the University. The Panel commends the University's support for transitions into the University and its commitment to work-integrated learning in strengthening transitions to employment. It also commends Te Whare Pukapuka – The Library for its commitment to the strategic direction of the University and its student-centric approach. With respect to work underway in this section, the Panel affirms plans to develop the University's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to further support consistent academic advising practices, the implementation of the University's Disability Action Plan, and an enhancement initiative to develop facilitated processes for complaints resolution within a Pacific cultural context.

The third section (C) of the audit framework examines curriculum, assessment and delivery. The University has a series of initiatives planned or underway. The Panel commends the Curriculum Design Framework (CDF), which provides an overarching structure for qualifications, and the University's review of this framework to ensure its ongoing fitness for purpose. The CDF is used in assessing new programme proposals and the Panel commends the University, the Māori Academic Board of Studies, and the Pacific Strategic Committee for their robust scrutiny of academic proposals that contribute to strategic direction for the University. It recommends however, that further guidance be provided to assist with peer review of proposals (from other universities) submitted to the Committee on University Academic Programmes.

Reflecting the University's commitment to equivalence of student experiences, the Panel commends the University's consistent use of moderation across campuses and affirms an enhancement initiative to review moderation practices. It also affirms enhancement initiatives to make graduate profiles more visible (and useful), to review assessment guides and resources and to review the University's policy on Use of Māori for Assessment. The Panel considers the University has a comprehensive approach to academic integrity that includes education, assessment design, support and reporting. It encourages the University to continue to develop its thinking on the use of generative AI and other emerging technologies that may have implications for academic integrity.

The fourth section for the audit framework (D) examines teaching quality and includes staff recruitment, induction, development and recognition. The Panel commends the University and Te Puna Ako for the range of teaching development opportunities available and the ways in which these support the University's strategic priorities. However, the Panel also makes several recommendations in this section and suggests the University review its criteria for staff participation in induction programmes and the relationships between teaching expectations and professional development to support capacity and capability building. It affirms the University's initiatives to increase the numbers of Māori and Pacific staff employed at the University and recommends that the work that Māori and Pacific staff undertake in supporting recruitment and induction processes is recognised appropriately. It also affirms changes the University has made to the academic promotions system, particularly explicit inclusion of Mātauranga Māori in the expected teaching narrative. Finally in this section, the Panel recommends the University take steps to increase response rates for student evaluations of papers and teaching.

The final section (E) of the audit framework focuses on postgraduate research students. The Panel commends the University's timely responsiveness to initial enquiries from prospective PhD students and the follow-through with these students to enrolment and orientation. The University has reviewed Master's and Honours qualifications and student experience, and the Panel affirms an enhancement initiative to implement recommendations arising from this review. It also affirms initiatives to support equity for under-served groups, particularly Māori and Pacific students, in postgraduate research studies. While the Panel considers resourcing and support for postgraduate research students to be consistent with expected practices, it recommends the University include questions about the adequacy of resourcing and future needs in progress reporting for PhD students.

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. With respect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Panel commends the University for the ways in which it is enacting its Treaty of Waitangi Statement across the University and the establishment of Te Aurei. The Panel considers that the research-teaching nexus informs both teaching and other developments and heard support for the University's role as critic and conscience of society. With respect to the scope components of the audit framework, the Panel recognises the University is responsive to the needs of its diverse student body. It has specific plans or initiatives and support for Māori, Pacific, international and disabled students. It gained a sense of positive collegiality and commitment to the University and to student success from staff and considers the University is paying attention to delivery modes.

Based on the evidence available to it at the time of the audit, the Panel considers the University of Waikato meets, and in several instances exceeds, the outcomes and standards a university of good international standing would be expected to demonstrate. It therefore meets the expectations of the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework. The Panel has made nineteen commendations, fifteen affirmations and eleven recommendations that support and encourage good practices and are intended to assist the University as it progresses its strategic direction.

The University of Waikato 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.

Contents

List of Key Terms and Acronyms

ABC	Academic and Business Case
AD, KD, SD	Additional document, key document, supporting document (part of the SRP)
AQA	Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities – Te Pokapū Kounga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa
CUAP	Universities New Zealand Committee on University Academic Programmes
CDF	Curriculum Design Framework
(the) Code	Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
EFTS	Equivalent Full-Time Student(s)
FMIS	Te Pua Wānanga ki te Ao Faculty of Māori and Indigenous Studies
GDS	Graduate Destination Survey
GPA	Grade point average
GYR	Graduating Year Review
NZUWI	University of Waikato Joint Institute at Zhejiang University City College in China
ODR	Objectives, development and review
Panel	Unless otherwise specified, "the Panel" refers to the Academic Audit Panel engaged by AQA to conduct the 2023 audit of the University of Waikato
The PGCert (TertiaryT&L)	Postgraduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning
PGRC	Postgraduate Research Committee (sub-committee of the Research Committee)
PGSA	Postgraduate Students' Association
PVC	Pro Vice-Chancellor
SGR	Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research
SMS	Student management system
SR, SRR, SRP	Self-review, Self-review report, Self-review portfolio
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
Te Puna Ako	Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning
UDL	Universal design for learning
UE	University Entrance
WIL	Work-integrated learning
WSU	Waikato Students' Union
ZUCC	Zhejiang University City College

Introduction

Academic audits for universities in Aotearoa New Zealand are undertaken by the *Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities – Te Pokapū Kounga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa* (AQA). AQA is an operationally independent external quality assurance agency that is recognised as being fully aligned with the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education Guidelines of Good Practice.[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 twelve months in response to COVID-19.

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 Waikato (the University) submitted its self-review on 15 May 2023.[7] The self-review report (SRR) was both in hard copy and loaded onto an AQA OneDrive site. Key and supporting documents were provided electronically. The University also provided the Panel with

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[3] https://www.inqaahe.org/ggp-aligned-agencies. (Accessed 23 February 2022).

[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).

logins for the University to access internal material. The Panel found the self-review report (SRR) and supporting portfolio to be comprehensive. The SRR was well-supported by evidence.

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 4-6 September 2023.

During the site visit the Panel held 23 interview sessions and met with 74 members of staff and 29 students. Most interviewees were able to attend face-to-face meetings, with fifteen attending via 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 Waikato was established in 1964 in response to lobbying from Hamilton locals. Its "special character" is set out in the University Charter. The University's motto 'Ko Te Tangata' (For the People) reflects its philosophy that the University is in, of, and for the community.[8]

The University describes its relationship with the Kīngitanga and Waikato-Tainui as longstanding. An advisory group to the University Council, Te Rōpū Manukura, "sits in partnership with the University Council as the Kaitiaki (guardian) of the Treaty of Waitangi for the University".[9] The structure of Te Rōpū Manukura was under review at the time of the audit. The review is intended to reflect changes to Iwi in terms of their evolution as post-settlement entities, the changing make-up of the student body, and mana whenua relationships in Tauranga.

The University's main campus is in Hamilton (Hillcrest) on land in the title of first Māori King, Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, and leased to the University by Waikato-Tainui.[10] The University also has a campus in Tauranga where the mana whenua relationship is with the hapū Ngāi Tamarāwaho, and in Hangzhou with Zhejiang University City College (ZUCC).[11] The Tauranga campus was opened in 2019 and the University has been delivering papers in Tauranga since 1990.[12] The University has had a relationship with ZUCC since 2002 and opened a Joint institute in 2017 (NZUWI).[13] Other agreements provide access to specific University of Waikato programmes in Shanghai, Shijiazhuang and Hanoi.[14] The University operates student accommodation on its Hamilton and Tauranga campuses.[15]

The University adopted a 'Treaty of Waitangi and the University of Waikato' statement (the Treaty Statement) in February 2022.[16] This sets out the University's interpretation of and commitment to

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[8] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/charter (Accessed 9 October 2023.)
[9] SRR, p. iv.
[10] SRR, p. iv.
[11] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/nzuwi (Accessed 15 September 2023.)
[12] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/tauranga-campus/project-timeline (Accessed 15 September 2023.)
[13] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/international/partnerships/zhejiang-university-city-college/key-milestones (Accessed 15 September 2023.)
[14] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/international/partnerships/offshore-programmes (Accessed 15 September 2023.)
[15] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/accommodation (Accessed 15 September 2023.)
[16] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/university-of-waikato-treaty-statement (Accessed 22 September 2023.)

Te Tiriti o Waitangi.[17] The Treaty Statement is set out in a bilingual document. However, the Panel did hear that common use of the English language 'Treaty' created ambiguity for some staff.

The current University Strategy 2022-2024 deliberately has a short time horizon and focuses on recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring a sustainable future for the University. It has six goals:
1. a whole-of-university focus on student recruitment
2. improving student retention through higher levels of learner success and innovation in teaching content and practice
3. progressing the objectives of the Taskforce (see below)
4. creating, and being known for, research outcomes that embody excellence, impact, relevance and resilience
5. investing in facilities that support academic developments, student recruitment and campus life
6. promoting sustainable futures by advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in every aspect of University operations.[18]

The Taskforce (Goal 3) was commissioned by the University of Waikato Council to respond to an independent review of public claims of systemic racism at the University.[19] The SRR sets out the three major outcomes of the Taskforce:[20]
- that systemic and casual racism no longer have a place
- that the Treaty of Waitangi is at the heart of the life and work of the University
- that Mātauranga Māori is treasured.

The University is seeking to progress towards these outcomes through a comprehensive work programme (Te Aurei), its Treaty of Waitangi Statement, and explicit objectives in University strategies and plans.[21] Progress on the University strategy is reported in annual reports.[22] Further comment is made on other plans that support the University strategy, its Treaty Statement and Te Aurei in GS 1.

Beyond the timeframe of the current strategic plan, the University has also signalled an aspiration to develop a graduate entry medical school to help address longstanding workforce shortages of medical doctors, in particular primary care doctors and doctors outside major population centres in Aotearoa New Zealand.[23] This requires Government support to progress. However, the University has begun to develop an organisational structure and complementary programme portfolio that would also support this development. It is a long-term initiative, but the Panel heard references to it

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[17] This report uses both the terms Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Treaty of Waitangi. AQA's Cycle 6 audit framework refers to obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the University uses the Treaty of Waitangi and the Treaty in English language text. To ensure this report reflects the University within its own context, the University's terminology is used in reference to University initiatives and developments.
[18] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy (Accessed 31 October 2023.)
[19] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/686762/Report-of-the-Taskforce-April-2021.pdf (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[20] SRR, p. x.
[21] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/te-aurei/ (internal site). (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[22] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/annual-report/ (Accessed 31 October 2023.)
[23] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/major-projects/medical-school (Accessed 31 October 2023.)

across its meetings and gained an initial sense of the influence of a new area of activity across the University.

The University is governed by its Council and the Academic Board is a committee of Council.[24] A Māori Academic Board of Studies, a Pacific Strategic Committee, Research Committee, Education Committee and four Divisional Boards are sub-committees of Academic Board.[25] Subcommittees of the Education Committee include the Academic Quality Committee, Curriculum Committee and Student Discipline Committee. A Postgraduate Research Committee (PGRC) is a sub-committee of the Research Committee.[26]

The University's academic departments are organised into: Te Pua Wānanga ki te Ao Faculty of Māori and Indigenous Studies (FMIS) and four divisions, plus the University of Waikato College and Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research (SGR).[27] The divisions are:
- Te Wānanga o Ngā Kete – Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences
- Te Wānanga Pūtaiao – Division of Health, Engineering, Computing and Science
- Te Wānanga Toi Tangata – Division of Education
- Te Wānanga o te Raupapa – Waikato Management School.

This Faculty and Divisional structure was adopted in 2019 following a 2018 review. FMIS is led by a Dean who reports to the DVC Māori. Divisions are led by Pro Vice-Chancellors who report to the Vice-Chancellor.[28] The Dean of the SGR reports to the DVC Research and the University of Waikato College relationship is managed by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Te Whare Pukapuka – The Library and Te Puna Ako – Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning are important in supporting teaching, learning and postgraduate research. Te Puna Ako (through the PVC Teaching and Learning) and the Library report to the DVC Academic.[29]

Each Division has an Academic Registrar, Associate Dean Māori, Associate Dean Academic and Associate Dean Research. FMIS does not have a separate faculty board, however, two of its staff are elected members of the Divisional Board for Te Wānanga o Ngā Kete – Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences. The Faculty of Law has a separate faculty board and also contributes to Te Wānanga o Ngā Kete Divisional Board.[30]

The Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences is the largest in terms of total EFTS and the Division of Health, Engineering, Computing and Science has the most research-based postgraduate EFTS and the highest number of staff (full time equivalents).[31]

The PVCs, Senior DVC, DVCs Māori, Academic and Research plus the Director of the Vice-Chancellor's Office, the Director Student Services, Chief Information Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Director International, Director of People and Capability, and Director Tauranga Campus Operations form the

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[24] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/academic-board (Accessed 22 September 2023.)

[25] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/committees (Accessed 1 December 2023.)

[26] SRR, p. vii.

[27] SRR, p. vi; https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/structure (Accessed 22 September 2023.)

[28] SD A14.

[29] KD 13.

[30] SD A14.

[31] SRR, pp. 86-88.

University's Executive Leadership Team. While this is a large team, it is characterised by longer periods of tenure among the senior members, including the Vice-Chancellor. The Panel considers this contributes to the collegiality it detected across the University.

Student numbers at the University have grown since the Cycle 5 Academic Audit to 13,136 students in 2022 (10,119 EFTS). Twenty-one percent of students in 2022 were Māori and this percentage and number of Māori students has increased steadily since 2016. Pacific student numbers grew from 2016 to 2021 but dropped in 2022 from 751 to 726 (heads). Overall international student EFTS dropped by 30% from 2019 to 2022 although the University did almost treble the number of international EFTS studying offshore over this period.[32] The proportion of domestic students reporting a disability on enrolment has been consistently between eight and nine per cent since 2017. The proportion of international students reporting a disability on enrolment has also remained consistent but at the much lower level of around 1%. In contrast, the proportion of gender diverse students reporting a disability on enrolment was 41% (in 2021) but has otherwise been in the 20-30% range from 2019.[33]

Student: staff ratios have increased from 15.6:1 in 2016, peaking at 17.2:1 in 2018 and declining again to 16.2:1 in 2022. In part, this is attributed to the development of a partnership for the delivery of sub-degree EFTS and these numbers include students enrolled through the partnership but not staff.[34]

Context for this Audit

The Panel recognises that understanding the context in which a university has prepared its self-review portfolio (SRP) and in which the audit, including the site visit, occurs is important. It has set out above its understanding of the University at the time of the audit, including the multi-campus nature of the University and its offshore operations. It has also summarised the University's strategic planning framework and will refer to this again in the report. Other overarching contextual factors evident in this audit were the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the government responses to the pandemic; the development of the Te Aurei initiative in response to the Taskforce report; the Ōritetanga Learner Success Programme; and the Curriculum Enhancement Programme. The Panel will comment further on the Ōritetanga Learner Success Programme and the Curriculum Enhancement Programme in sections B and C of this report, respectively.

The University's partnerships and operations in China provided early information and experience for responding to the pandemic. Teaching in the NZUWI and with other partners moved fully online in February 2020. The University was able to learn from this experience when it needed to move to online teaching at the end of March 2020.[35] The University has reported fully on its experience and lessons learned in a Good Practice Assessment undertaken by AQA in 2021.[36] The Panel is pleased to

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[32] SRR, pp. 84-87.
[33] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/disability-action-plan/UoW-Disability-Action-Plan-2023-2025.pdf, p. 5. (Accessed 1 October 2023.)
[34] SRR, pp. 87-88.
[35] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/academic-office/quality/Covid19-good-practice-assessment (internal document). (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[36] https://www.aqa.ac.nz/node/369 (Accessed 23 September 2023.)

see how teaching (including the FLEXI delivery mode)[37] and support responses developed in response to COVID-19 have matured and become part of good practice.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for the ways in which it responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, learnt from its experience, and embedded new or revised practices arising from the experience.*

COVID-19 continues to exert financial pressure on the University, from cost increases and the decline in revenue from international students studying in Aotearoa New Zealand.[38] The Panel heard references to financial pressure facing both staff and students, in particular challenges in filling roles. Despite these pressures, the University has been able to complete major infrastructure projects and maintain progress towards its strategic objectives. The Panel notes however, that the University considers its constrained financial position due to the impact of COVID-19 presents a "significant academic risk".[39]

This report
This report presents the Panel's findings based on the evidence it has considered. Where possible it makes use of publicly available information in footnotes. The Panel has commended areas of effective or good practice, affirmed practice that should result in enhancements to the quality assurance system for New Zealand universities and made recommendations where it considers attention needs to be paid to enhancing practice.

A draft of this report was submitted to the Board of the Academic Quality Agency for a quality assurance check on 7 November 2023 and to the University for a review of matters of factual accuracy on 15 November 2023. 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 University of Waikato was last audited in 2015 and the report from the Cycle 5 academic audit is available on the AQA website.[40] The University has reported twice on its progress in responding to recommendations; first, one year after the release of the report; and second, in an inter-cycle report in 2019. Finally, the University provided an update on two recommendations with work remaining after the inter-cycle report in its Cycle 6 SRR.

The two outstanding recommendations were a review of academic practices across the University to facilitate consistent quality (recommendation 1) and a review of processes around data gathering on student experiences (recommendation 8). Some work on the latter recommendation continues (see GS 2 and GS 25). Overall, the Panel considers the University has made good progress in responding to recommendations made in its Cycle 5 academic audit report. It will comment where aspects of these are relevant to guideline statements in the Cycle 6 audit framework.

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[37] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/study/flexible-delivery (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[38] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/861214/5474-UOW-Annual-Report_WR.pdf, p. 55. (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[39] SRR, p. 11.
[40] https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Waikato%20Cycle%205%20academic%20audit%20report.pdf (Accessed 23 September 2023.)

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.[41]

> **GS 1   Planning and reporting**
> The university gathers and uses appropriate and valid data and information to establish objectives, plan, assess progress and make improvements in its teaching and learning activities.

In addition to the University's Treaty of Waitangi Statement,[42] Report of the Taskforce on Racism,[43] Te Aurei, and the University Strategy 2022-2024, the main documents in the University's strategic planning framework relevant to this audit are:[44]

- Te Rautaki Māori / Māori Advancement Plan 2022-2026
- the Academic Plan 2022-2026
- the Research Plan 2022-2026
- the Pacific Strategic Plan 2021-2025
- Learner Success Plan (Ōritetanga)[45]
- Disability Action Plan 2023-2025.

Plans are inter-related with Te Rautaki Māori, the Academic Plan and Research Plan being developed alongside one another. The strategic planning framework advises that initiatives and projects should make explicit their contribution to university strategy and goals. The Panel heard how plans and initiatives developed in divisions and other parts of the University drew on and reflected university strategies and plans, including the University's Treaty Statement. The Panel is pleased to see the Treaty Statement begin to be operationalised across the University. For example, the Disability Action Plan explicitly sets out its alignment with the University's Treaty Statement.[46] The Panel considers the University is achieving a balance between cohesiveness in setting clear objectives and flexibility in how different parts of the University will contribute to objectives.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for its coherent strategic framework, including how the University's Treaty of Waitangi Statement is informing plans.*

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[41] AQA (2020). Guide to Cycle 6 Academic Audit. p. 3.

[42] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/university-of-waikato-treaty-statement (Accessed 22 September 2023.)

[43] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/major-projects/taskforce (Accessed 22 September 2023.)

[44] Unless otherwise referenced, key plans and documents are all available through https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning (Accessed 16 September 2023.)

[45] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/learner-success/ (internal site). (Accessed 22 September 2023.)

[46] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/disability-action-plan/UoW-Disability-Action-Plan-2023-2025.pdf (Accessed 5 October 2023.)

This commendation is a clear improvement from the Cycle 5 academic audit, which had made a recommendation about the inter-relatedness and consistency of objectives between plans.[47] A further recommendation in the Cycle 5 academic audit report was concerned with data gathering.[48] The University has again made substantial progress here, although its self-assessment is that it has further work to do in gathering data from and about Master's and Honours students and their experiences.[49]

The University has changed its model for providing data since the Cycle 5 academic audit. It now has a data warehouse and new tools to improve access to data.[50] Widening (internal) access to data has been accompanied by training so questions referred to the Planning, Performance and Analytics Team are reportedly now more sophisticated. The Panel heard consistent comments about the availability (including daily updates), coverage and usefulness of data to inform both planning and reporting. They also heard balance in the enthusiasm for data with reminders that there are individual people behind the numbers and that more qualitative insights also add value.

The development of a Learner Success Dashboard has been given particular attention. The University is continuing to refine this to add greater depth to the data available. The availability of data for different aspects of the University (for example, accommodation), performance of processes such as admissions processing, and activities (for example, data for Boards of Examiners) are listed on a data availability page.[51] This also has links to guides and training.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for its commitment to data availability and usage to inform planning and reporting.*

Metrics are developed for objectives in the University Strategy and supporting plans. These are consolidated and reported up to Council for monitoring progress on the strategy. The Planning, Performance and Analytics Team oversees these activities and monitors the quality of data. The 2022 Annual Report provides aggregate reporting against the new University Strategy.[52]

The data the Panel saw and heard about was primarily oriented to student data. This is of course important, but the Panel suggests that having data on staff is also important in assessing progress towards University objectives, for example, capability and capacity to embed Mātauranga Māori in the curriculum. Staffing data could also provide alerts to situations such as multiple fixed-term appointments for individual staff and allow assessment of whether such appointments continue to provide the best opportunity for the University as well as the individual. It would also help monitor compliance with professional development expectations. The Panel encourages the University to continue to develop its data-informed approach and include qualitative data and data on teaching and learning practices and initiatives.

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[47] https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Waikato%20Cycle%205%20academic%20audit%20report.pdf, p. 9. (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[48] https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Waikato%20Cycle%205%20academic%20audit%20report.pdf, p. 42. (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[49] SRR, p. 92.
[50] SRR, p. 2.
[51] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/my-reports/reporting-data (internal site). (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[52] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/1005315/8206-2022-Annual-Report-v4.4_WR.pdf (Accessed 31 October 2023.)

> **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 engages with student voices through surveys, student evaluations of teaching, a class representation system, student membership of committees, boards and projects, and is developing a student-staff partnership framework with the Waikato Students' Union (WSU).[53] Information about how student voices are sought, and examples of responses are clearly available on a webpage.[54]

The University undertakes two comprehensive surveys—a biennial Student Barometer Survey and an annual graduate destination survey. The student barometer provides the University with an external frame of reference for interpreting results, as well as longitudinal data. The Student Barometer Survey has been used since 2014. More specific reports that present data for Divisions and the University of Waikato College were developed in 2021.[55] The Panel notes that FMIS was not included in the reports it was able to see, nor were the experiences of Māori students or Pacific students differentially reported. The University does comment that surveys are monitored to ensure "students are represented to similar percentages of enrolments" but did not provide evidence that this is achieved.[56] Overall, the University compares well on international reference points in the Student Barometer Survey.[57]

The Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) was introduced in 2017. The Cycle 5 academic audit had recommended that the University develop a "graduate feedback mechanism".[58] The GDS is sent to graduates approximately a year after their graduation.[59] The student barometer and graduate destination survey are supplemented with surveys that focus on new students and the first-year student experience.[60]

Student evaluations of teaching are managed through Te Puna Ako and are required at least every second occurrence of a paper. This requirement also applies to papers delivered offshore.[61] The Panel heard some concerns about very low response rates for student evaluations of teaching, with consequent scepticism about the robustness and usefulness of the data generated. The Panel appreciates that this challenge is not unique to the University of Waikato. Nonetheless, this issue was identified in the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University and the Panel is aware of other

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[53] SRR, p. 3.

[54] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/advice-and-support/student-voice (Accessed 24 September 2023.)

[55] SD A3.

[56] SRR, p. 4.

[57]https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/861214/5474-UOW-Annual-Report_WR.pdf, p. 22. (Accessed 6 November 2023.)

[58] https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Waikato%20Cycle%205%20academic%20audit%20report.pdf, p. 43. (Accessed 23 September 2023.)

[59] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/advice-and-support/student-voice (Accessed 24 September 2023.)

[60] SRR, p. 3.

[61] SRR, p. 3; https://www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/docs/evaluation-of-teaching-and-papers-policy (Accessed 24 September 2023.)

universities that do achieve higher response rates. The Panel will make further comment on this issue in GS 25 and encourages the University to continue to address this important issue.

Any changes to a paper resulting from student feedback are expected to be communicated in the outline for the next offering of the paper. The Panel heard that this can be a slow process as the next offering of the paper can be prepared before the results from the previous evaluation are available. This may contribute to a perceived lack of responsiveness and to low response rates, although the University presented survey evidence that showed most students perceive their feedback is taken seriously.[62] However, the Panel considers there would be value in the University considering how it can better demonstrate responsiveness to student evaluations of papers and teaching in a timely and transparent manner.

More immediate changes can be pursued through the class representative system. While the University, in conjunction with the WSU, has a comprehensive class representative system, the Panel heard that changes in response to student feedback depended on the responsiveness of individual lecturers. However, the Panel did also gain the sense that Departments and Divisions met regularly with class representatives and valued their contribution. Overall, the Panel is impressed with the class representative system, which includes almost 1000 students who have role descriptions, training sessions and opportunities for consolidated feedback throughout the trimester.[63] WSU also seeks feedback from class representatives on their experience.[64] Offshore arrangements differ but still provide opportunities for students to provide feedback.[65] For example, programme representatives rather than class (or paper) representatives may be appointed.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for its work with the Waikato Students' Union to establish a comprehensive and supported class representative system.*

In addition to surveys, evaluations and class representatives, students are also members of several committees and working or project groups on specific initiatives. The terms of reference for the Academic Board, Divisional Boards, Māori Academic Board of Studies and Pacific Strategic Committee provide for multiple student members while other committees have just one student member. Having multiple student members of committees and boards allows diversity in the student voices that can contribute. Although the Panel is pleased to see student membership of Boards and committees, it heard that training and support for student members of boards and committees ranged from "great" to "nothing". Training is important for both student members of committees and boards and for other members of committees to be able to support student members.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that training and support for student members of committees and boards be provided consistently across the University.*

The University and WSU are jointly developing a student-staff partnership framework. This differentiates between different types of engagement and is intended to foster a partnership approach across multiple areas of activity. The Panel affirms this development and suggests

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[62] SRR. p. 4.
[63] SRR, p. 4.
[64] SD A8.
[65] Further evidence, p. 5.

responsibilities for training and support for student members of committees be included in the framework.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the development and implementation of the Student-Staff Partnership Framework between the University and the Waikato Students' Union.*

Postgraduate student voices are represented through the Postgraduate Students' Association (PGSA).[66] A postgraduate student is appointed to the Postgraduate Research Committee,[67] but it is not clear that the PGSA has a role in this appointment. The University has recognised the need to strengthen processes through which Master's and Honours students are engaged as partners on matters concerning their specific needs.[68]

GS 3   Teaching and learning environments
Teaching and learning activities are supported by appropriate learning environments (infrastructure, spaces, media, facilities and resources).

Substantial development in teaching and learning environments has occurred since the last academic audit of the University, guided by the University's strategic plans. The University Strategy, Academic Plan, Disability Action Plan and other documents refer to investment in facilities, flexible and inclusive environments.[69] Major physical developments since the Cycle 5 academic audit include the Tauranga campus, NZUWI and The Pā on the Hamilton (Hillcrest) campus. Digital developments include the move to online teaching and the development of FLEXI papers.

The Tauranga campus was recognised for its learning design in the Learning Environments Australasia's Annual Awards in 2020. The award recognises "the importance and opportunity for educational buildings to fully and comprehensively understand and engage with their cultural context".[70] Bi-culturalism was included in the brief for the project and the design team worked in partnership with Ngāi Tamarāwaho artist Whare Thompson.[71] As a new campus it will take time for the student experience and student culture to develop. The Panel heard that at this stage in its development the Tauranga campus worked well for staff, but not so well for students due to challenges associated with being a central city site (see also GS 13).

The University has replicated aspects of the Tauranga campus in their development of the NZUWI campus at ZUCC. This included the development of more flat and flexible teaching spaces so that the teaching and learning experience reflects the Aotearoa New Zealand experience. The Panel appreciates the intent of this but has some questions about taking cultural aspects of the design out of the context they were designed for into a context with a different history and relationships.

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[66] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/study/postgraduate-studies/pgsa (Accessed 12 October 2023.)

[67] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CtDTF2WvLFqlsns0LN1P63aoifXjNedQ/view, pp. 49-50. (Accessed 12 October 2023.)

[68] SRR, p. 77.

[69] SRR, p. 6.

[70] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/news-opinion/media/2020/university-of-waikato-tauranga-campus-wins-top-australasian-award (Accessed 25 September 2023.)

[71]
https://learningenvironments.awardsplatform.com/gallery/PMklPQpb/xKzNzlAK?search=e38d4f1a6ec8f833-19 (Accessed 25 September 2023.)

However, it appreciates how cultural considerations can positively enhance the learning experience for students.

Campus development in Hamilton is guided by a 2019 masterplan.[72] This is supplemented with projections of student numbers and technology needs to develop priorities and ten-year capital plans.

The Pā, opened by Kīngi Tūheitia in July 2023, has been the major development on the Hamilton campus.[73] The Pā is a multi-functional space that includes a new marae, a student hub, teaching and social spaces, and the ability to host large events including graduations. A cultural narrative links The Pā to the history of the site, and to relationships with "the Kīngitanga, Waikato-Tainui and iwi communities throughout the University's extended catchment".[74]

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for its development of The Pā and the Tauranga campus as valuable additions to the teaching and learning environment of the University.*

The Panel heard that other spaces on the Hamilton campus provided culturally affirming spaces for Pacific students and that consideration was being given to what could be provided in Tauranga. However, the Panel also heard that culturally affirming practices even within dedicated spaces for Pacific students were limited.

Accessibility is also being considered as learning and teaching spaces are redeveloped. For the physical environment, this includes accessibility audits of spaces, and for the digital environment accessibility is a key consideration in the planned upgrade of the Learning Management System (LMS). The Panel heard that Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles were being utilised to support the best possible learning experiences for students. The upgrade of the LMS will also enable greater reflection of te reo Māori and te ao Māori in online learning environments.

While the Panel considers the University is paying careful attention to accessibility in its formal learning environments, it notes that learning also occurs in workplaces and field trips and these environments also need to be part of accessibility considerations. It notes the University has signalled it intends to explore opportunities for disabled students in work-integrated learning practice[75] and suggests that some further attention might be paid to other non-campus based face-to-face learning.

The digital learning environment is consistent across the University, including offshore. This does not mean that everything is the same but that the University utilises 'base' models to promote

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[72] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/456333/Campus-Masterplan-Overview-Feb-2019.pdf (Accessed 25 September 2023.)
[73] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/news-opinion/media/2023/university-of-waikato-opens-the-pa-mau-maku-ma-tatou-katoa (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[74] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/news-opinion/media/2023/university-of-waikato-opens-the-pa-mau-maku-ma-tatou-katoa (Accessed 23 September 2023.)
[75] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/disability-action-plan/UoW-Disability-Action-Plan-2023-2025.pdf, p. 16. (Accessed 25 September 2023.)

consistency. While this has benefits from efficiency and support perspectives, the University is conscious that it also needs to promote innovation in teaching and learning environments.

The development of FLEXI papers was prompted by the need to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and has been retained as an ongoing option to increase access to University education. FLEXI papers are available both on-campus (face-to-face) and online and students can move between on-campus and online modes.[76] In 2023, just over a quarter of all paper occurrences were expected to be offered in FLEXI mode and in 2022 this reflected 38% of enrolments.[77]

The future development of FLEXI is now part of the University's strategic direction.[78] The University has undertaken an initial review of FLEXI papers and is planning further work.[79] The Panel heard thoughtful comment about how flexible learning might develop further at the University and serve future needs.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University's development of flexible learning (FLEXI papers)—which has provided resilience for the University and supported accessibility for students—and encourages its further development.*

The Panel was interested in the interaction between pedagogy and teaching and learning environments as this had been the subject of a recommendation in the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University. The SRR states "design of new spaces must always be informed by pedagogical goals and needs" and the Panel heard this perspective reflected in the discussions it held. The University has established a Teaching and Learning Strategic Advisory Group to ensure that Information Technology Services assists teaching and learning.[80] The Panel also heard that support for users, including from Te Puna Ako, is embedded in major IT projects.

GS 4   Academic delegations

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

The Cycle 5 academic audit report for the University recommended reviewing consistency and equity of core academic processes.[81] The University had provided detailed comment on each of the areas indicated in the Cycle 5 report in its one-year follow-up report. As a change to the structure of the University was implemented after the one-year follow-up report had been accepted by the AQA Board, the University provided further comment in its inter-cycle report on how a planned review of delegations would ensure responsibilities for academic decision-making were clear. Finally, the

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[76] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/study/flexible-delivery (Accessed 25 September 2023.)
[77] https://mcusercontent.com/9735cd79efa925d5756daa13b/files/c52dd106-f0b4-8805-1170-b8d742d0c81d/Snapshot_of_FLEXI_papers_FINAL.pdf (internal document). (Accessed 25 September 2023.)
[78] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/academic, Objective 3. (Accessed 25 September 2023.)
[79] https://mcusercontent.com/9735cd79efa925d5756daa13b/files/c52dd106-f0b4-8805-1170-b8d742d0c81d/Snapshot_of_FLEXI_papers_FINAL.pdf (internal document). (Accessed 25 September 2023.)
[80] SD A11.
[81] https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Waikato%20Cycle%205%20academic%20audit%20report.pdf, p. 9. (Accessed 23 September 2023.)

University reported in its Cycle 6 SRR that this review had occurred and that the Delegations of Power Statute is regularly reviewed by the Academic Office.[82]

The Delegations of Power Statute has been in place since 2014. It sets out how delegations can be made, where details of delegations can be found, how decisions made under delegation should be reported and responsibilities for monitoring.[83] Specific delegations are set out in position descriptions, terms of reference for committees and boards, and policies.[84] The Panel did not see or hear reference to the academic delegations statute or register that was foreshadowed in the inter-cycle report from the University. A summary does exist for employment-related delegations.[85]

While the University does not have a consolidated record of what academic delegations are held by what roles or committees or means of easily searching for delegations, those the Panel spoke to were clear about the scope and limitations of the delegations they held. The Panel considers the University's setting and management of academic delegations to be consistent with normal practice.

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 manages risk through an Enterprise Risk Management Framework.[86] This sets out "the University's commitment, responsibilities, processes and practices" to manage risk as part of normal business practices. The University also maintains a series of risk registers. The Panel heard how, with the recent appointment of a dedicated role, the University is moving from these relatively static registers to an approach based on dialogue and developing shared understanding of risks and their management. This is supplemented by an internal audit plan[87] and an external assessment of the University's risk maturity.

Risk management is overseen by a Health & Safety, Risk and Assurance committee of the University Council.[88] The University's internal risk report aggregates risks from Divisional and other unit risk registers to form a university-level view that clearly identifies the highest risks.[89] The Panel considers this report to demonstrate good practice. It is particularly pleased to see the inclusion of training as part of risk mitigation actions. It noted a high degree of alignment between the risks identified in the risk registers and report, and the risks highlighted by those it met with.

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[82] SRR, p. 91.
[83] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/calendar-home/delegation-of-powers-statute (Accessed 27 September 2023.)
[84] SRR, pp. 8-9.
[85] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/odw/leadership-and-management-development/delegated-responsibilities (Accessed 10 October 2023.)
[86] SD A19.
[87] SD A27.
[88] SRR, p. 10.
[89] SD A24.

The Enterprise Risk Register reports on academic risks.[90] The University also has an academic integrity risk register[91] and the Academic Quality Committee discusses the risks associated with not meeting standards of academic integrity. However, the University has identified the development of an Academic Risk Register that will include, but not be limited to, academic integrity as an enhancement initiative. The Panel endorses this development.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the University's enhancement initiative to create an Academic Risk Register.*

The Panel was interested in how the University managed risks associated with offshore delivery. It heard the University had established specific roles and processes to mitigate risks to academic quality. The Panel considers the University is aware of and is proactively managing risks inherent in offshore delivery.

Other disruption to the quality and continuity of teaching and learning is managed through Emergency Management, Critical Event and Business Continuity policies, frameworks and plans.[92] The Emergency Management Plan utilises the 4Rs framework—reduction, readiness, response, recovery—and identifies ten hazards mapped in terms of their risk assessment.

Emergency management and business continuity plans and processes were deployed to manage through the COVID-19 pandemic. The University provided a comprehensive report to AQA as part of the Good Practice Assessment and Lessons Learned from the rapid shift to online teaching and learning.[93]

The Panel considers the University has effective risk management, emergency management and business continuity processes to mitigate and manage risks to the quality and continuity of its learning and teaching.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** University's mature approach to managing risks to the quality and continuity of teaching and learning.*

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 aligned its enhancement theme initiatives with two key projects—a data-informed initiative with Ako Aotearoa[94] and a systems approach (the Ōritetanga Learner Success

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[90] SD A24.
[91] SD A23.
[92] SRR, p. 10.
[93]
https://waikatouniversitynz.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/TeHononga/Shared%20Documents/Our%20University/Professional%20Services/Academic%20Office/Quality/University-wide%20reviews/University-of-Waikato-Covid-19-good-practice-assessment-teaching,-learning-and-academic-quality.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=51ezpu (internal document). (Accessed 27 September 2023.)
[94] https://ako.ac.nz/assets/Knowledge-centre/Data-informed-initiatives-to-enhance-Maori-and-Pacific-Student-Achievement/Weaving-the-Mat-NPF19-003-FINAL-REPORT-ST-KH-20-June-2022.pdf (Accessed 28 September 2023.)

Programme)[95] supported by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).[96] A University steering group for the enhancement theme was co-chaired by the DVC Academic and DVC Māori and included student members.[97]

The workstreams for the enhancement theme were:
- data-informed decision-making
- extending the data already collected by the University to move towards predictive analytics
- developing Māori (and Pacific – see GS 7) measures of success
- rethinking targeted support initiatives.[98]

These were progressed in two main phases of work. Phase one focused on building data structures and systems, and phase two on implementing support initiatives.[99] Building from this work, the University has developed a learner success dashboard (see GS 1), implemented a study advising programme, and has now progressed to a third phase of Ōritetanga. Phases four and five are planned.

As part of extending the data available to the University, two new surveys were established. One survey focuses on new students and is designed to identify a wide range of early risk signals so that interventions can be planned. The second survey is about the first-year experience and, in particular, study advising.[100]

Study advising is one of the targeted support initiatives highlighted in the SRR (see GS 10). Te Kāhui Pīrere is a second targeted support initiative for Māori students and a requirement for Māori school leaver scholarship holders. This initiative supports Māori students' transitions into university and is underpinned by whakawhanaungatanga. Once relationships have been established, students are more likely to attend workshops and seek support. The programme of activities in Te Kāhui Pīrere includes both academic and non-academic skills. The programme co-ordinator for Te Kāhui Pīrere also monitors progress via the Learner Success Dashboard.[101]

Jump Start is another transition programme that, while not specific to Māori students, contributes to higher levels of first year retention and academic success for Māori students.[102] This programme allows students to start their university studies early by enrolling in papers offered in the six-week period before the start of the trimester. Available papers focus on preparation for degrees, for example, Pre-Law and General Physics and Mathematics for Engineers, and students also attend sessions on tertiary student skills and understanding university systems.[103]

Other support for Māori students is available through Te Pūoho hubs in FMIS, the Divisions and on the Tauranga campus, dedicated spaces, and scholarships. Te Pūoho hubs also focus on building relationships with more experienced students and provide "academic, pastoral and procedural"

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[95] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/learner-success/ (internal site). (Accessed 28 September 2023.)
[96] SRR, p. 12.
[97] SD A32.
[98] SD A30.
[99] SD A32.
[100] SRR, p. 12.
[101] SRR, pp. 13-14.
[102] SRR, p. 15.
[103] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/study/campaigns/jump-start/ (Accessed 29 September 2023.)

advice. They also provide social, cultural and sporting opportunities throughout the year.[104] The Pā includes dedicated space for Māori students and there are some other spaces on the Hamilton campus. Kaupapa Māori accommodation is also available. Māori students also have access to an increasing range of scholarships, and a range of Māori student associations and clubs.[105] Information for Māori students is consolidated under the Māori ki Waikato webpage.[106]

The University provided data showing that, while the pass rate for Māori students in undergraduate papers had fluctuated, the grade point average (GPA) had increased and the GPA gap between Māori and non-Māori students had decreased, particularly for first-year papers. The gap in pass rates between Māori and non-Māori students is much lower in taught postgraduate papers and in 2021 was almost non-existent. There were some slight declines in GPA from 2021 which the University attributes to a COVID-19 effect that had a greater impact on students from South Auckland.

While the University has made progress on achievement for Māori students, the Panel considers it is realistic in its assessment of the work still to do and the complexity of that work. The University has not set target dates for achieving parity for Māori students as these would not be meaningful without knowing that investment is available to support the work needed. The Panel agrees with this position but considers that having realistic (possibly internal) targets would assist in tracking the effectiveness of initiatives and demonstrate progress.

Nonetheless, the Panel does see evidence of enhancement theme initiatives being embedded in ongoing University practice, while recognising the alignment between the enhancement theme and other initiatives. The University has reported on and disseminated findings from its enhancement theme-associated work. It has also participated in and contributed to enhancement theme symposia and national and international conferences. Reports and updates have also been published by Ako Aotearoa and the TEC.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for the progress it is making in improving access and achievement for Māori students through its data-informed and whole-of-system (Ōritetanga) approach to learner success.*

GS 7   Progress on the Enhancement Theme (Pasifika students)
The university has achieved the objectives in its enhancement theme plan with respect to Pasifika students and successful practice has been embedded and is sustainable.

The University formally launched its enhancement theme alongside the opening of a Pacific space—the Conch—and the launch of the Pacific Plan 2017-2020.[107] The Pacific strand of the enhancement theme was therefore clear from the outset.

The data-informed and holistic approach to support developed in the enhancement theme also applies to Pacific students, as does the Ōritetanga initiative. These are reflected in the Pacific

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[104] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/maori/te-puoho-hubs (Accessed 28 September 2023.)
[105] SRR, pp. 12-14.
[106] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/maori/ (Accessed 29 September 2023.)
[107] SD A32.

Strategic Plan.[108] One of the enhancement theme workstreams was to develop Pacific measures of success. The SRR comments that success for Pacific students "embodies a sense of belonging …[and] is viewed through intergenerational outcomes that disrupt deficit narratives and build equity".[109]

The University has reviewed its services and support initiatives for Pacific students. The study advising programme connects Pacific students with Pacific advisors.[110] There is also a wider community of Pacific 'aunties, uncles and cousins' in the University who are committed to Pacific student success. Other support includes scholarships, social media communications and engagement, and engagement with local cultural associations including churches and schools. [111]

Pacific students also participate in the Jump Start programme and have a dedicated 'Imua' initiative based on a Pacific worldview that includes a pre-orientation event: the Ang (Wind) Academic and Digital Skills Boost. Pacific students who participate in Jump Start normally have higher retention and pass rates than Pacific students who do not. However, the programme did not deliver the same success in 2022.

The Imua initiative was launched in 2021 and has been a requirement for Pacific students holding school-leaver scholarships. It draws on Pacific legacies of 'voyaging and learning', 'work and life balance', and 'leadership and excellence' with a schedule of engagement throughout the year. First-year pass rates for Pacific students completing the Imua programme in 2021 were better than for those who had not completed the programme.[112]

The Panel heard commitment and support for initiatives to address the University's gap in academic performance for Pacific students. However, it notes that for undergraduate students, these gaps in academic performance have persisted, with COVID-19 appearing to contribute to them widening.[113] The Panel heard comments about the need to: support Pacific students to be able to be themselves in the University environments; have opportunities to foster community engagement further; have their feelings of isolation acknowledged; create more comprehensive scholarships; and to have all staff understand the importance of relationships in Pacific contexts. Nonetheless, the Panel considers the University does have initiatives in place to support success for Pacific students and encourages the University to continue to progress these.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the University's commitment to creating a sense of belonging for Pacific students and its data-informed and holistic support model to improve success for Pacific students.*

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[108] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/pacific (Accessed 1 December 2023.)
[109] SRR, p. 17.
[110] SRR, p. 12.
[111] SRR, p. 18.
[112] SRR, p. 18.
[113] SD A44.

Section B: Student life cycle, support and wellbeing

This section of the audit framework focuses on students, their entry to university, successful transitions through and beyond university, and advice and support to enable successful transitions. The Ōritetanga Learner Success Programme discussed under GS 6 and GS 7 also provides useful structure and direction for this section of the audit framework. While this report has previously examined support initiatives targeted to Māori students and to Pacific students, the Ōritetanga initiative has the "overarching aim to increase retention and academic success of all students, with a specific focus on Māori and Pacific learners, and learners with disabilities".[114]

Student numbers and trends were summarised in the Introduction to this report and further comments were made on academic success for Māori and Pacific students in GS 6 and GS 7. The University provided detailed statistics on completions, retention/progression and transitions overall and for specific cohorts of students.[115] These data indicate that, over the long term, progression rates from first to second year of study for all cohorts of students have improved. Against the TEC educational performance indicators for 2022, the University reflected university-sector figures for qualification and course completion rates but was lower than the sector rate for retention of first year students.[116]

The University provides further detail in its annual report. Paper/course completion rates across all cohorts of domestically funded students have decreased since 2020 and the University attributes this to ongoing impacts of COVID-19, including impacts of an amended University Entrance (UE) standard. First-year retention rates have also dropped, particularly for Māori and Pacific students. In addition to COVID-19 impacts, the University suggests that a buoyant employment market has also contributed to this drop.[117] These figures highlight the importance of the Ōritetanga initiative and the challenges of supporting student success in an environment characterised by ongoing effects of COVID-19, strong employment opportunities and high cost of living.

> **GS 8   Access**
> Access to university, including through recognition of prior learning and credit transfer pathways, is consistent, equitable and transparent for students.

The first goal in the University Strategy 2022-2024 is to have a whole-of-university focus on student recruitment.[118] This goal is supplemented by the Academic Plan objectives to increase flexibility of learning and rebuilding pathways for international students. Te Rautaki Māori, the Māori Advancement Plan 2022-2026[119] and the Pacific Strategic Plan[120] include objectives about pathways

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[114] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/learner-success/ (internal site). (Accessed 30 September 2023.)
[115] SRR, pp. 89-90.
[116] https://www.tec.govt.nz/funding/funding-and-performance/performance/teo/epi-reports/interactive-charts/#!/ (Accessed 31 October 2023.)
[117] AR 22, pp. 47-48.
[118] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy (Accessed 1 December 2023.)
[119] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/maori (Accessed 1 December 2023.)
[120] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/maori (Accessed 1 December 2023.)

and recruitment to the University and the Disability Action Plan has an objective of barrier-free access to campuses.[121]

The University's strategic commitment to access is operationalised through the Admissions Statute and regulations including credit transfer and recognition of prior learning, pathway and preparation programmes, and scholarships. Transport initiatives support students' physical access to the University. The University has recently undertaken a review of its enrolment processes.[122]

The University's Admissions Statute provides for an open-entry approach to admission, based on applicants achieving University Entrance through NCEA, plus provision for students to be admitted under discretionary entrance and special admission pathways.[123] The University has relatively few limitations on entry and but does specify additional requirements for some degrees, particularly those with professional accreditation. For example, to be admitted to the Bachelor of Music, a student must have previously studied music to NCEA Level 3, or equivalent. Other professional degrees have requirements set by the professional accrediting body.[124] If places are limited, the University will consider equity in making admission decisions but does not reserve places for specific groups of students.[125]

The University amended its admission requirements during COVID-19. Students admitted below the normal threshold had access to additional learning support. In some cases, student workload was also adjusted.[126]

English language proficiency is also required for admission for applicants whose first language is neither English nor Māori.[127] The University has established a committee to review the equivalencies of English language tests that may be used to meet entry requirements.[128]

Students who have previously studied elsewhere can apply for credit transfer. This includes a series of specified pathways and credit transfer arrangements from qualifications offered by other providers.[129] The University has adopted fifteen credits for undergraduate papers, which facilitates credit transfer between other universities, most of which have fifteen-credit papers or courses.[130] Recognition of prior learning is also available, and the University tracks its usage, although numbers overall are low.[131]

In addition to the Jump Start, Te Kāhui Pīrere and Imua programmes, the University offers a Certificate of University Preparation, through the University of Waikato College, and a Unistart Programme. The Certificate of University Preparation is a one-trimester programme that provides a

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[121] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/disability-action-plan Accessed 30 September 2023.)

[122] SRR, p. 22.

[123] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/admission/admission-statute (Accessed 30 September 2023.)

[124] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/admission/criteria (Accessed 30 September 2023.)

[125] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/admission/limitations (Accessed 30 September 2023.)

[126] SRR, p. 21.

[127] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/admission/criteria (Accessed 30 September 2023.)

[128] SRR, p. 22.

[129] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/academic-office/agreements (internal site). (Accessed 30 September 2023.)

[130] SRR, p. 22.

[131] AD 8.

bridging programme for students who have not gained UE.[132] The Unistart programme enables high-achieving students to begin study for their degree while still at school.[133]

Scholarships are available for school leavers, preparation programmes and international students. Although the University does not have differential admission pathways for priority groups students, it does seek to increase the availability of scholarships to priority groups.[134] A 'Scholarships Finder' page allows easy searching of scholarships offered by the University and provides links to external bodies that also offer scholarships.[135]

Finally, the University has considered how the need to travel to the University creates a barrier to access for some students. Discounts on bus services are offered in conjunction with the Waikato and Bay of Plenty Councils.[136] The University also operates a free shuttle between its Hamilton and Tauranga campuses.[137]

Overall, the Panel considers the University has clearly established criteria for entry to the University, and a range of pathways and support options that help give effect to its objectives for access. It also considers the University is alert to the need to review and amend processes and requirements from time-to-time in response to particular situations.

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.

In addition to the pathway and access programmes commented on in GS 8 and the emphasis placed on study advising in the Ōritetanga Learner Success Programme, the University has a range of services, initiatives and information to support successful transition into university study. They include specific preparation programmes, orientation programmes on Hamilton, Tauranga and offshore campuses, a self-paced, study skills paper and the Waikato Uni App.[138] Services, initiatives and information are tailored to specific groups of students.

Study advising was the focus of Phase 2 of the University's Ōritetanga Learner Success Programme and was implemented in 2021. All first-year, new to university, students are allocated a study advisor. Where possible, Māori students are matched with Māori advisors and Pacific students with Pacific advisors. Survey results indicate that most students knew who their advisor was and how to

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[132] https://pathways.waikato.ac.nz/programmes/certificate-university-preparation (Accessed 30 September 2023.)
[133] SRR, p. 22.
[134] SRR, p. 21.
[135] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/scholarships/search#!/?page=1 (Accessed 30 September 2023.)
[136] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/transport/regional-bus-services (Accessed 30 September 2023.)
[137] SRR, p. 20.
[138] SRR, p. 24; SRR, p. 28; https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/advice-and-support (Accessed 1 October 2023.)

contact them.[139] This is consistent with comments heard by the Panel, although the Panel did hear some variability in the experience.

Study advisors are based in the Faculty and Divisions and are drawn from existing staff across the university and include both academic and professional staff. Training for study advisors is provided through Te Puna Ako. Study advisors monitor students through the Learner Success Dashboard and make contact where there are indications of disengagement. Ongoing support for study advisors is provided through a Moodle page, workshops and other communications.[140]

The University monitors transitions data, undertakes analysis to understand why students either do not complete their applications or leave the University after enrolling,[141] and collects data on students' experiences of pre-arrival and orientation programmes.[142] As noted in GS 2, the University introduced two new surveys focusing on new students and the first-year experience. The Student Barometer Survey also seeks feedback on arrival experiences and the University compares well with international reference points.[143] In addition to the more quantitative data provided through surveys, the University has also undertaken qualitative analysis through a 'student journey mapping' initiative, as part of Ōritetanga.[144]

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for its attention to and support of first-year students' transitions into the University.*

This guideline statement is also concerned with transitions through and beyond study. The University has targeted support for Māori students and Pacific students. Support for Māori students includes Te Pūoho Hubs, leadership programmes, and encouraging further postgraduate study. The University has appointed two new roles to provide ongoing support for transitions for Pacific students into postgraduate study.[145]

The University places particular emphasis on transition into employment. A work-integrated learning (WIL) paper is required in every undergraduate degree (see Section C), which is supported by central and division-based WIL units and dedicated software to facilitate finding WIL opportunities.[146] The Panel heard some variation in student experiences of finding WIL places, but overall considers this to be a strength of the University's student experience and support for transitions to employment. Almost 40% of graduates found work through their WIL placement.[147]

Further support for transitions to employment is provided through Careers and Employability Services which includes another dedicated software platform, appointments with a careers advisor, mock interviews and careers workshops. An 'Employability Plus Award' is a co-curricular programme that helps students to build experience through community involvement (volunteering),

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[139] SD A7.
[140] SRR, p. 29.
[141] SD B5.
[142] SD B8.
[143] SD B6.
[144] SD B5.
[145] SRR, pp. 25-26.
[146] SRR, pp. 26-27.
[147] SD B8, p. 3.

volunteering in university events and participating in skills development workshops.[148] Careers services are available to graduates for two years after completion of their degrees.

Satisfaction with WIL and careers services is monitored through surveys. WIL papers are included in student evaluations of teaching and feedback is also sought from employers. The Panel is impressed by the close working relationship between WIL and careers that supports student transitions to employment.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for its support of transitions to employment and its commitment to work-integrated learning to strengthen these transitions.*

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.

Academic advice begins before a student's enrolment at the University. Information is available on the University website and in a 'degree planner' coordinated by the Marketing team and primarily used by a 'Future Students' Team. The degree planner is a comprehensive guide to Bachelor's degrees offered by the University, including the requirements for each degree. Tailored advice has also been developed for different groups of students, parents and whānau.[149] Initial advice for international students is provided by the International Office and Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research provides advice for postgraduate research students. In addition to Faculty and Division-based study advisors, advice is also available from the Student Centre on the Hamilton campus and the Hub on the Tauranga campus.[150]

Admissions processing includes a review of papers selected by students and, if necessary, advice on the selection.[151] After a student's first year of study, all subsequent paper selections are reviewed and approved within the Faculty or Division. This includes checking that paper selections will meet the requirements of the degree.[152]

The University does not have a specific policy on academic advising but has reviewed mechanisms for ensuring advice is consistent. Records on individual advising sessions are held in the student management system and can be accessed by staff providing further advice or support to a student. The planned development of the University's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system (Ōritetanga Phase 4 and 5) will allow consolidation of SMS and other data and further support consistent advising practices. The University is also refreshing its website to reduce complexity and make the website easier to use.

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[148] SRR, p. 26; https://waikato.careercentre.me/Resources/CustomPage/23384 (internal site), (Accessed 1 October 2023.)
[149] SRR, p. 28; SD B18.
[150] SRR, pp. 28-29.
[151] SRR, p. 28.
[152] SRR, p. 29.

Affirmation: *The Panel **affirms** the University's plans to develop its Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to further support consistent advising practices.*

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.

Provisions for complaints, appeals and grievances are set out in admissions and assessment regulations. More broadly, the University also has a Student Complaints Procedure and Student Discipline regulations. Appeals from postgraduate research students are governed by the Higher Degree Complaints and Appeals Regulations. A Tikanga Māori process is set out in the Student Discipline Regulations. Students in offshore programmes may raise complaints initially with an Associate Dean Academic or appointed office, but otherwise have access to the same provisions as onshore students.[153] The Panel considers the University has a comprehensive set of policy and processes to respond to complaints, appeals and grievances.

The Panel is pleased to see the University has made efforts to ensure its complaints, appeals and grievance provisions and processes maintain consistency with good practice and changing legislative requirements. The University has made changes to both its policy and processes for managing complaints. This included a review of the Student Discipline Regulations in 2020 and introducing a new category of appeal for grade reconsideration based on the impact of COVID-19 conditions. Further review was undertaken to ensure complaints procedures were consistent with the expectations of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 (the Code).[154]

Process improvements involved establishing an online portal for lodging and managing complaints.[155] This allows the University to track and report on complaints, appeals and grievances. The University reports on the numbers and outcomes of complaints, appeals and grievances to relevant committees. For example, the Student Discipline Committee provides an Annual Report to the Education Committee and Academic Board, and the Education Committee also receives an annual report summarising appeals against admission decisions.[156]

Information about how to make a complaint is available on the University website.[157] While this information is communicated to students, inevitably students may remain unaware of it until it is needed, and the Panel heard comments to that effect. The WSU provides both advocacy and administrative support for students in complaints, appeals and grievance processes. The University has sought feedback from WSU to confirm that students do find the online complaint portal easy to navigate, although there could still be further opportunities to make information more 'digestible'.

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[153] SRR, pp. 31-32.
[154] SRR, p. 32.
[155] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/contact-us/complaints (Accessed 3 October 2023.)
[156] SRR, p. 31.
[157] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/contact-us/complaints (Accessed 3 October 2023.)

The University identifies an enhancement initiative to "develop facilitated processes for complaints resolution within a Pacific cultural context". The Panel affirms this initiative which will also contribute to the University's commitment to supporting success for Pacific students (GS 7).

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the University's enhancement initiative to develop facilitated processes for complaints resolution within a Pacific cultural context.*

GS 12   Learning support
Students have timely and equitable access to appropriate learning support services.

The University has increased the centralisation and co-ordination of learning support services since its Cycle 5 academic audit. Learning support services are provided by the Student Learning team in Te Puna Ako and by the Library.[158] On the Hamilton campus, Student Learning and the Library are located in the Student Centre[159] and in Tauranga, student learning, library and other services are provided through the Hub.[160]

The Panel explored learning support for offshore students. Support for offshore students is provided through partner institutions.[161] The Panel learned that arrangements were in place to ensure offshore students had access to learning support and other support for their academic programme. This includes having dedicated liaison roles and exchange staff visits. The Panel is impressed by the efforts the University has made to provide equivalent student experiences across its multiple campuses.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for its commitment to equivalence of student experience across the multiple campuses of the University.*

Both Student Learning and the Library have services for specific groups of students (Māori, Pacific, postgraduate, offshore). Further support for specific groups is available from a range of units and groups, including the University of Waikato College, the Office of the DVC Māori, the Pacific at Waikato team, Accessibility Services, International Student Services, Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research and Accommodation.[162] Disciplinary specific learning support is available in FMIS and divisions.

The Library has undertaken steps to ensure it remains strategically aligned with the University, including explicitly with the University's Te Aurei goals of anti-racism, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Mātauranga Māori, and with student needs. A functional restructure in 2021 positioned the Library to indigenise and improve its range of services. New roles in 2022 focused on development and support for Māori and Pacific students and staff, and the Library took a strategic approach to the recruitment of these staff so that they were appointed as a group. A co-design/partnering approach

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[158] SRR. p. 34.
[159] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/advice-and-support/student-centre (Accessed 3 October 2023.)
[160] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/advice-and-support/the-hub (Accessed 3 October 2023.)
[161] SRR, p. 34.
[162] SRR, pp. 35-36.

to service design helps ensure the Library remains abreast of and responds to changing student needs.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel* **commends** *Te Whare Pukapuka – The Library for its commitment to the strategic direction of the University, including Te Aurei, and its student-centric approach to meeting student needs*.

Accessibility Services provide support for students with "impairments, disabilities and medical conditions".[163] Students can register with Accessibility Services at any time. The co-location of Accessibility Services with Student Learning should make these services easy to find. The Panel heard that this was not always the case but once students became aware of and accessed accessibility services, they were positive about the support they received. This anecdotal comment is reinforced by Accessibility Services ranking highly in the Student Barometer Survey.[164]

The University monitors engagement with learning support and these data contribute to learner success dashboards in Ōritetanga.[165] Student Barometer Survey data indicate the University compares well internationally for satisfaction with learning support[166] and that first-year students had high levels of awareness of student learning services.[167]

GS 13 Safety and wellbeing

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

Safety and wellbeing are overseen by the Health & Safety, Risk and Assurance committee of the University Council and guided by a series of policies and the Code.[168] The University's self-review against the Code led to the development of a Learner Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan.[169] The Panel considers this sequence of review-plan-act demonstrates the University's commitment to a continuous improvement approach to safety and well-being. The Learner Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan is also consistent with the University's planned approach to working in partnership with students (GS 2).

Twenty-four-hour security and safety services are provided on the Hamilton and Tauranga campuses by campus Security and Unisafe teams. Unisafe will assist with a range of situations including defusing situations or walking people to their hall of residence or car. The University conducts an annual review of physical safety on the Hamilton campus.[170] Overall, survey data indicate that students do feel safe and secure,[171] although the Panel did hear of some concerns on the Tauranga campus. The Panel appreciates that Tauranga is a city campus with different challenges and its

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[163] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/disability-action-plan/UoW-Disability-Action-Plan-2023-2025.pdf, p. 10. (Accessed 5 October 2023.)
[164] SD B6.
[165] SRR, p. 36.
[166] SD B6.
[167] SD A7.
[168] SRR, pp. 37-38.
[169] SD B29.
[170] SRR, p. 38.
[171] SD B31.

relative newness may mean that norms of bystander intervention are not as well developed as on the Hamilton campus. The relative newness of the Tauranga campus, coupled with COVID-19 restrictions on the ability to meet and study in person, may also have contributed to comments the Panel heard about a sense of belonging among students being slower to develop on the Tauranga campus.

Information about health and wellbeing services for students is on the University website.[172] The Panel is impressed with the ways in which University health services have adapted to changing needs to offer more support for mental health and how relationships with other health providers have been leveraged to provide good pathways for referral when needed and access to online health services. The Student Health team has changed its approach to triaging cases and ensures that crisis appointments for mental health are always available. The Tauranga Student Health service is also connected to local health care providers and a nurse who can triage and support cases.[173]

Detailed data is available on student use of health services, student participation in training (for example, "Consent matters"), engagement with wellbeing programmes and events[174] and satisfaction with services. Satisfaction is monitored through the Student Barometer Survey, and this indicates that satisfaction with student health and counselling, and mental health services, is high and has increased since 2017.[175]

The Panel sees that health and wellbeing services have innovated and adapted to continue to meet new challenges and student needs. Some targeted services for specific groups are available, particularly in the health promotion activities. The Panel wonders whether, given the high proportion of Māori students at the University and supporting Māori to achieve success as Māori, consideration has been given to utilising Māori models of health and wellbeing in service design, consistent with Te Aurei and the University's Treaty of Waitangi Statement.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that the University consider how Māori models of wellbeing would better support Māori students.*

The Panel did hear some of contrasting experiences with respect to Pacific students, including difficulties for Pacific students in raising mental health issues in their communities. A lack of reflection or acknowledgement in some classes contributed to some Pacific students feeling they needed to adopt a second persona and their university life was separate from their cultural life. The Panel acknowledges this might be the experience of a few students but encourages the University to remain alert to whether Pacific students are always able to bring their authentic selves to their University experience.

COVID-19 presented particular challenges for student wellbeing. Over the 2020 lockdown, every student was contacted by a staff member to check on their wellbeing and to confirm they could access online learning. The University communicated daily with students at the start of the lockdown and then frequently as the first lockdown continued and then in subsequent lockdowns. The University also used the Student Barometer to seek feedback on its response to COVID-19. The

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[172] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/health-and-wellbeing (Accessed 4 October 2023.)
[173] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/health/tauranga (Accessed 4 October 2023.)
[174] Further evidence, pp. 13-19.
[175] SD B31.

results show that higher proportions of University of Waikato students (93%) were satisfied with the University's response compared with the global proportion (81%).[176]

COVID-19 has had lasting impacts. Some of these have positive aspects—such as the greater availability of online services and support, and an increased preparedness to seek support for mental health. Others, however, present ongoing challenges and the Panel heard that financial hardship was affecting students' ability to access education. This is not entirely a COVID-19, nor a University issue and it is undoubtedly a matter the University is aware of. However, the Panel suggests there would be value in working further with the WSU to develop some joint approaches to financial hardship.

The Panel paid attention to how health and wellbeing were supported for offshore students. The University provided evidence that student safety and wellbeing was addressed in agreements between the University and its partners. Although the University has developed online options for health care, the Panel appreciates that jurisdictional constraints on professional practice may prevent these being made available to offshore students.

Safety and wellbeing for disabled students is supported through the Disability Action Plan[177] and Accessibility Services work with other parts of the University to support disabled students. The Disability Action Plan is a comprehensive document that makes explicit reference to other plans and identifies priorities. Implementation of this plan will contribute to the University being an inclusive and welcoming university for disabled students.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the implementation of the University's Disability Action Plan across teaching, learning, assessment and support activities.*

While the Panel considers that the Disability Action Plan establishes clear linkages with other plans, it suggests some other plans, such as the Learner Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan, could make further reference to the Disability Action Plan. It appreciates however, that this may be a matter of timing.

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[176] SD B31.
[177] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/disability-action-plan/UoW-Disability-Action-Plan-2023-2025.pdf (Accessed 2 November 2023.)

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.

At the time of the audit, the University offered 110 qualifications, from Foundation Studies (offered through the University of Waikato College) to Doctor of Philosophy and other named doctoral degrees. Most qualifications are offered on the Hamilton campus: 38 qualifications are offered at Tauranga, 17 online and 5 offshore.[178]

Qualifications are offered across broad discipline areas of arts, social science, business, law, engineering, health, education, science, computing and design. Interdisciplinary qualifications, for example a Bachelor of Climate Change, are also offered. The University has signalled plans for new qualifications in business, global studies and a Juris Doctor, and aspirations to develop a graduate entry medical school and other health professional programmes.

Thirty-three qualifications or programmes offered by the University are accredited by nine professional bodies. The Waikato School of Management is also accredited by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) and the Association of MBAs (AMBA).[179]

The Academic Plan 2022-2026 provides direction for this section of the audit framework. It has six objectives: [180]
1. Embed Mātauranga Māori into teaching and learning.
2. Make the University a more inclusive teaching and learning environment for all (see GS 3).
3. Evaluate the University's current efforts to offer students greater flexibility in where and how teaching and learning take place (see GS 3).
4. Develop future-focused high-quality academic programmes that attract students.
5. Continue to grow work-integrated learning opportunities that both engage students and prepare them for successful lives and careers (see GS 9).
6. Develop, maintain and rebuild pathways and offshore programmes for international students.

Each of the objectives has a series of actions the University will take to achieve the objective. The Academic Plan refers to indicators of success being set out in the University's Investment Plan 2022-2024.[181] However, while the Panel could see correspondence between activities in the Academic and Investment Plans, a clear articulation between activities and indicators of success was not yet available. The Panel was advised that indicators of success are reported to the University Council.

A Curriculum Enhancement Programme, underway at the time of the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University, led to a Curriculum Design Framework (CDF), which sets out curriculum design principles, university-level graduate attributes (see GS 17), and a common architecture for degrees, diplomas

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[178] SRR, pp. 93-95.
[179] SD C13.
[180] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/academic (Accessed 16 September 2023.)
[181] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/investment/UoW-Investment-Plan-Summary-2022-2024.pdf (Accessed 6 October 2023.)

and certificates.[182] The CDF was updated in 2018 to include postgraduate programmes and has five curriculum design principles:

1. curriculum that is future-oriented, research-led, socially and culturally responsive, and dynamic, preparing students for their working lives, to participate fully in their communities both locally and globally, and to become lifelong learners

2. flexible delivery modes that are responsive to student and societal needs

3. a world-class student experience for on-campus and online students that is distinctive to the institution

4. clear and purposeful pathways from undergraduate to postgraduate studies—within the University and through joint national and international provision

5. nurturing new and emerging academics, providing them with opportunities to develop their expertise in research, teaching and leadership.[183]

The common architecture for Bachelor's degrees includes a disciplinary foundations paper (first year), a cultural perspectives paper (second year) and a work-integrated learning paper (third year).[184] While this is a common architecture, flexibility is supported through having a range of papers able to meet each of the requirements. The CDF is a distinctive feature of the University and supports consistency in curricula.

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 comprehensive guidance for developing academic proposals[185] and reviewed its academic development process in 2020.[186] Proposals for new qualifications or major subjects begin with an Academic and Business Case (ABC) proposal. This needs to be completed before the academic proposal is developed.

The purpose of the ABC is to allow the University to evaluate whether a proposal will "have value and relative priority compared to alternative initiatives that the University could progress".[187] It

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https://waikatouniversitynz.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/TeHononga/Shared%20Documents/Our%20University/ Professional%20Services/Academic%20Office/Quality/University-wide%20reviews/UoW-Curriculum-Design-Framework-approved-010316-revised-160418.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=bfehq4 (internal site). (Accessed 1 December 2023.)

183

https://waikatouniversitynz.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/TeHononga/Shared%20Documents/Our%20University/ Professional%20Services/Academic%20Office/Quality/University-wide%20reviews/Masters-and-Honours-final-report-Jan-2023-v.2.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=0IsyhH (internal site) (Accessed 1 December 2023.)

184 SRR, p. ix.

185 https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/academic-office/developments (internal site). (Accessed 6 October 2023.)

186 SRR, p. 43.

187

https://waikatouniversitynz.sharepoint.com/sites/TeHononga/SitePages/OurUniversity/ProfessionalServices/A cademicOffice/Developments.aspx?web=1ces/AcademicOffice/Pif-process.aspx (internal site). (Accessed 1 December 2023.)

requires an articulation of the fit of the proposal with University plans and confirmation that the proposal will comply with the CDF. The ABC process includes meetings with internal stakeholders whose comments are attached to the proposal as it progresses. The ABC template also asks proposers to identify other key stakeholders to be consulted in the development of the proposal. The ABC template is to be considered by academic committees before an academic proposal is developed.

If the ABC is approved, an academic proposal will be developed. The University has templates for different categories of proposal. The academic proposal is again considered by academic committees progressing. The Academic Office facilitates the consideration of proposals by divisional boards, the Māori Academic Board of Studies, the Pacific Strategic Committee, Curriculum Committee, Education and Academic Board. Dates for each committee to consider proposals are set out as part of the advice and guidance.[188]

The Panel appreciates the University is 'on a journey' to embed Mātauranga Māori in teaching and learning. It heard that this is a genuine and thoughtful commitment, and that the University took the opportunity to embed Mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori whenever papers and programmes were reviewed. The Māori Academic Board of Studies contributes to substantive scrutiny of Mātauranga Māori in academic proposals. The Academic Plan demonstrates that the University is conscious of and seeks to alleviate additional demands on Māori staff members that embedding Mātauranga Māori is likely to entail.[189]

Universities also have a role in the approval of academic proposals at the sector level through the Universities New Zealand Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) peer review process. The Panel heard that this could involve a large volume of work and more guidance on what should be considered would be useful, particularly for the Māori Academic Board of Studies and the Pacific Strategic Committee.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that the University review how it communicates expectations and provides guidance for engaging with the peer review of proposals (from other universities) submitted to the Committee on University Academic Programmes.*

The Pacific Strategic Committee reviews proposals that include Pacific knowledge(s) and approaches in teaching and learning. It also reviews proposals from the perspective of whether there is adequate Pacific content in proposals. Promoting, developing and increasing Pacific curricula, perspectives and content is an action planned to achieve Objective Four in the Pacific Strategic Plan – Promote and deliver high-quality teaching and learning support.[190]

The University suggests the effectiveness of its programme approval system is demonstrated by CUAP approval of all proposals submitted over the past five years. The Panel agrees with this

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[188] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/academic-office/developments/pif-process (internal site). (Accessed 6 October 2023.)
[189] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/academic/Academic-Plan-2022-2026-26-Nov-2021-FINAL.pdf, p. 3. (Accessed 6 October 2023.)
[190] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/pacific, p. 6. (Accessed 1 December 2023.)

assessment and also suggests that scrutiny against the CDF and by the Māori Academic Board of Studies further contributes to the effectiveness of programme approval processes.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University, the Māori Academic Board of Studies, and the Pacific Strategic Committee for their robust scrutiny of academic proposals that contribute to strategic direction for the University.*

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 Cycle 6 audit framework treats monitoring as distinct from review. Monitoring "is expected to be an ongoing, or at least frequent, process through which the university assures itself that course/paper content remains current, that feedback through course evaluations or other processes is considered..." while "review is a less frequent, but more substantial, assessment".[191]

The University has well established processes to monitor papers and programmes to be offered in the upcoming year. For papers, this is known as the 'Prescription Round' and a comprehensive guide is available to support this process.[192] Although this is an important process, the Panel gained the view that it was administratively oriented and did not require engagement with either student evaluations of the paper or student academic success in the paper. These factors are considered elsewhere and are likely to have informed any proposed changes to a paper. The University is undertaking a project to transition its paper monitoring process (the prescription round) to an online platform.

Programmes are monitored through an annual report summarising actual compared with planned enrolments. The Panel again suggests that the University has a wealth of other data that is expected to be used in reviews (GS 16) and could also be used to inform monitoring of programmes.

GS 16   Review
Curriculum relevance and quality is assured and enhanced through regular reviews of programmes and courses/papers and which include input from students, staff and other stakeholders.

The SRR outlines a series of review processes. These are:
- graduating year reviews (GYR) (as required by CUAP)
- academic programme reviews on a seven to ten year cycle
- accreditation reviews as required by professional bodies
- benchmarking reviews

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[191]
https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Guide%20to%20Cycle%206%20Academic%20Audit_June%2021%20reprint.pdf, p. 19. (Accessed 7 October 2023.)

[192]
https://waikatouniversitynz.sharepoint.com/sites/TeHononga/SitePages/OurUniversity/ProfessionalServices/AcademicOffice/NewPapers.aspx? (internal site), p. 5. (Accessed 1 December 2023.)

- university-wide reviews.[193]

The different categories of review share common features, including being based on self-review, having independent chairs and panel members external to the University, and involving students and other stakeholders. The University publishes a composite schedule of upcoming GYRs and academic programme reviews[194] and provides an annual report to CUAP on the reviews it has undertaken.[195]

Terms of reference for benchmarking reviews vary according to the nature of the benchmarking exercise. The University provided examples of two such reviews conducted by OneHE and Online Peer Solutions.[196] The advantage of these benchmarking reviews is that they provide exposure to good practice in multiple institutions. For example, the Global Benchmarking Review of academic advising, first-year advising and retention, and student wellbeing and safety involved seventeen institutions from six countries.[197]

University-wide reviews are undertaken in response to particular issues. These have included a review of Master's and honours programmes, the COVID-19 good practice assessment and the review of the CDF.[198] An initial review of FLEXI papers has been completed and a full review is underway.[199]

The University initiated a review of the papers in the CDF in 2021. Disciplinary Foundations papers were reviewed (see GS 15) first,[200] then Cultural Perspectives papers in 2022-2023, with WIL papers to follow.[201] In this review, each paper is either endorsed as meeting the CDF for a further five years, endorsed subject to recommendations being addressed, or not endorsed. The Panel considers evidence for the robustness of this process is provided through the University making decisions that some papers were not meeting requirements and being prepared to make changes to the framework.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for the creation of the Curriculum Design Framework and the review to ensure its ongoing fitness for purpose.*

The terms of reference for academic programme reviews include reference to the University strategy and plans. However, this reference is quite generic, and the Panel considers there would be an opportunity to more explicitly consider objectives in the Academic Plan in programme reviews. While it heard reference to opportunities being taken to embed Mātauranga Māori in reviews (GS

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[193] SRR, p. 45.

[194] https://waikatouniversitynz.sharepoint.com/sites/TeHononga/SitePages/OurUniversity/ProfessionalServices/AcademicOffice/Quality.aspx (internal site). (Accessed 1 December 2023.)

[195] For example, https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/950533/Report-to-CUAP-University-of-Waikato-Programme-Review-List-2022-v2.pdf (Accessed 7 October 2023.)

[196] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/academic-office/quality/benchmarking-and-reviews (internal site). Accessed 7 October 2023.)

[197] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/675655/Global-Review-Final-Report-Final-25-01-21.pdf (Accessed 7 October 2023.)

[198] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/academic-office/quality/university-wide-reviews (internal site). (Accessed 7 October 2023.)

[199] SRR. p. 46.

[200] SD C5.

[201] SRR, p. 44.

14), this expectation was not apparent in the terms of reference for academic programme reviews. Similarly, an expectation to consider the development of flexible options is not explicit in the terms of reference.

Once a review report has been received, the Faculty Dean or PVC reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic (and through the DVC Academic, the Academic Board and Faculty or Division staff), on processes and timelines to determine which recommendations are to be supported and how those recommendations will be addressed.[202] The sponsor of the review is usually responsible for responding to recommendations made in university-wide reviews. An implementation framework from the review of Master's and honours programmes sets out where a recommendation intersects with other workstreams or projects, what committees are likely to be involved and where responsibility lies for progressing the recommendation. Scrutineers' reports on GYRs have also led to changes.[203]

Overall, the Panel considers the University has a clear, comprehensive, responsive model of paper and programme reviews. It suggests however, that expectations of how papers and programmes contribute to the Academic (and other) Plan could be strengthened.

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.

Along with common components of curricula and structure of degrees, the Curriculum Design Framework also established five university-level graduate attributes.[204] These are expressed as the qualities or competencies all graduates should develop. Graduates should be:
- disciplinary and professional thought leaders
- innovative and creative critical thinkers
- communicators and collaborators
- culturally competent citizens
- ethical and reflective citizens.[205]

The disciplinary foundations, cultural perspectives and work-integrated learning papers required to implement the CDF are expected to develop these competencies.

All qualifications also have a graduate profile that builds on the University graduate attributes.[206] Graduate profiles are considered as part of the programme approval (GS 14) and review (GS 16) processes. The Panel heard commentary on the mapping of course learning outcomes to

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202
https://waikatouniversitynz.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/TeHononga/SitePages/OurUniversity/ProfessionalServices/AcademicOffice/ProgrammeReviews.aspx (internal site). (Accessed 1 December 2023.)
203 SRR, p. 46.
204 SRR, p. 47.
205 https://www.waikato.ac.nz/study/why-study-at-waikato (Accessed 7 October 2023.)
206 SRR, p. 47.

qualification graduate profiles, although this did seem to be more evident with respect to professionally accredited degrees.

Monitoring the attainment of graduate attributes occurs mainly at the paper level when students are asked about achieving paper learning outcomes, although a graduate destination survey asks about perceptions of degree quality. Neither of these processes assess whether the qualification or university graduate profiles are met. The Panel does note however, that students it met with were able to articulate in their own way the attributes they felt they were developing in their studies.

The University has identified an enhancement initiative to increase awareness of graduate profiles. This will build on a project initiated in 2022 and the Paper Information Project, which should allow paper learning outcomes and their contribution to a graduate profile to be recorded and made available for analysis.[207] In making the profiles at paper level more visible and auditable the University is in a better position to review progress towards achieving the graduate attributes. The Panel endorses these developments and recognises that the University understands it will take ongoing work to ensure that curricula remain connected to graduate profiles.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the University's Paper Information Project and the enhancement initiative to make graduate profiles more visible and auditable.*

In making graduate profiles more visible and accessible, the Panel suggests the University might consider whether recent strategic developments, in particular the University's Treaty of Waitangi Statement and the Te Aurei initiative, have implications for the University's graduate attributes.

GS 18   Assessment
Assessment is appropriate and effective.

The adequacy of assessment is considered in the approval processes for new and revised papers. The new paper template requires information on how assessment contributes to paper learning outcomes and the amount of time students are expected need to complete assessments.[208]

The University has paid attention to how it thinks about assessment and the resources and guides available to support good assessment practice. Assessment regulations are explained for students in the 'Student Assessment Guide'[209] and for staff in the 'Staff Assessment Handbook'.[210] Workshops and other professional development (see GS 24) provide further support for good assessment practice.

A 'White Paper on Assessment'[211] led to six overarching principles for assessment being adopted in 2021.[212] The principles are that assessment should:

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[207] SRR, p. 48.
[208] SRR, p. 50.
[209] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/student-assessment/ (Accessed 8 October 2023.)
[210] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/assessment-handbook/ (Accessed 8 October 2023.)
[211] SD C12.
[212] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/teaching-development/teaching-resources/uow-teaching-related-links/principles-of-assessment (Accessed 8 October 2023.)

1. have an explicit purpose that is communicated clearly to all involved. That purpose may be formative and/or summative
2. be designed in ways that consider the diversity of learners and the ways in which they learn. Students' entitlement to submit work in te reo Māori should be upheld
3. be designed in a way that helps students learn and/or measures their achievement in respect of learning objectives or outcomes
4. generate productive dialogues amongst and between educators and students
5. enable educators to recognise the effectiveness of their curriculum and teaching and shape their practices accordingly
6. involve judgements on progress and achievement that are based on reliable evidence.

The Disability Action Plan notes that the most frequently requested form of support is for test/exam support. A small-scale research study referenced in the Disability Action Plan suggested that accessibility of assessment felt "more like an afterthought". The white paper and the principles do reflect aspects of UDL and the white paper comments that it is intended to "sit alongside other projects".[213] The Panel suggests the University consider making the connections between principles of assessment and its work on UDL more explicit.

Further strategic development by the University, including the Report of the Taskforce, has led to the Academic Plan including objectives that direct the University to "embed Mātauranga Māori into teaching and learning", consider "how to also enable Pacific knowledge to be reflected", and evaluate "more flexible approaches to teaching, learning and assessment".[214]

Together the principles for assessment and strategic developments reflected in the Academic Plan have implications for the future of assessment. The University recognises this by identifying an enhancement initiative to review assessment resources to "determine if the Principles of Assessment are being reflected within the University's resources and guides". The Panel endorses this initiative and suggests the review also considers how UDL is being used to shape assessment and implications from the Report of the Taskforce.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the University's enhancement initiative to review assessment guides and resources to ensure they reflect the University's principles for assessment.*

GS 19   Assessment standards
Assessment and outcome standards are appropriately set and moderated.

The University has processes for internal and external moderation to ensure assessment standards are met. Boards of Examiners (which are sub-committees of the Education Committee) are responsible for the academic performance of students in undergraduate and graduate degrees, diplomas and certificates. Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research is responsible for assessment standards in research degrees (see GS 30).[215]

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[213] SD C12, p. 5.
[214] SRR, p. 49.
[215] SRR, p. 51.

Divisions have moderation guidelines. The review of assessment guides and resources (GS 18) will include moderation and consider whether greater alignment of practice is required across the University.[216]

Papers delivered offshore or on the Tauranga campus are internally moderated. Programmes offered on the Tauranga campus are also reviewed annually by a panel that includes external members.[217] External moderation is required for some professional accredited degrees.

The Panel considers the University has a clearly defined approach to moderation of papers and programmes across campuses and is consistent in its use of moderation. It also endorses the University's enhancement initiative to examine moderation processes further.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University's consistent use of moderation across campuses.*

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the University's plan to review moderation practices.*

GS 20   Academic integrity
Universities promote and ensure academic integrity and demonstrate fairness, equity and consistency in addressing concerns.

Comprehensive information about academic integrity is available on the University's website.[218] This provides guidance for both students and staff, including explaining the regulatory framework and an interactive module on academic integrity for students. Further education and support opportunities for both students and staff are provided by Te Puna Ako[219] and principles of academic integrity are part of the disciplinary foundations papers required for all undergraduate students.[220] The WSU also provides information about academic integrity. Assignments submitted through the LMS are submitted through Turnitin and students tick a declaration to confirm they are submitting their work. The Panel considers the University has a strong educative approach to promote academic integrity.

The White Paper on Assessment considered both the online context for assessment experienced over the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications of assessment design for academic integrity.[221] The Staff Assessment Handbook provides advice on assessment design to limit opportunities for academic misconduct.[222] This includes advice on the potential use of generative AI tools in academic misconduct. Guidelines for students on the use of generative AI have also been developed and students the Panel met with were aware of these guidelines.[223] The Panel is sure the University appreciates that there will be a need for ongoing advice on this issue.

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[216] SRR, p. 52.
[217] SRR, pp. 51-52.
[218] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/academic-integrity/ (Accessed 8 October 2023.)
[219] SRR, pp. 53-54.
[220] SRR, p. 53.
[221] SD C12.
[222] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/assessment-handbook/academic-integrity (Accessed 8 October 2023.)
[223] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/978104/Guidelines-for-student-use-of-generative-AI-tools-FINAL.pdf?mc_cid=1e28924088&mc_eid=72944e1dd1 (Accessed 8 October 2023.)

Suspected breaches of academic integrity are detected by academic staff and examination invigilators. Allegations of academic misconduct are considered under the Student Discipline Regulations,[224] administered by the Student Discipline Committee. Students may be referred to the Student Discipline Committee for misconduct or a breach of the Student Code of Conduct.[225] Expectations of acting "honestly, conscientiously, reasonably and in good faith" in matters of academic integrity are part of the Student Code of Conduct.[226]

An academic integrity team manages misconduct complaints through the Student Discipline Committee. This provides support for academic staff and is another feature of a comprehensive approach to academic integrity.

The Student Discipline Committee provides an annual report to the Education Committee. This provides both an analysis of complaints received and misconduct found, and commentary on emerging trends. This allows the University to prepare for emerging challenges to academic integrity, including through its academic integrity risk register (see GS 5). The Panel is pleased to see the University is both seeking to manage risks to academic integrity from the growth in generative AI and is open to the opportunities these tools may afford. The Panel encourages the University to continue this thinking.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the University's approach to academic integrity—which includes education, assessment design, support and reporting—and encourages the University to continue to develop its thinking on the use of generative AI and other emerging technologies that may have implications for academic integrity.*

GS 21   Assessment in te reo Māori
Assessment in te reo Māori, where appropriate, is facilitated by the university.

The University has had a policy on the 'Use of Māori for Assessment' since the early 1990s.[227] The Policy endorses the right of students to use the Māori language for written assessments and states that the University seeks to have sufficient staff competent in both the Māori language and the subject being assessed.

Students are asked to give fourteen days' notice of their intent to present material for assessment in Māori. This is to allow the University time to plan for marking. If advance notice is not given, material submitted in Māori will still be marked, but there may be a delay. Work will be assessed in Māori if the examiner is able to do this. Otherwise, a co-examiner who is competent in Māori will assess the work in consultation with the original examiner. The University intends to resort to

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[224] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/general-regulations-and-procedures/student-discipline-regulations (Accessed 8 October 2023.)

[225] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/academic-integrity/student-information/why-referred (Accessed 8 October 2023.)

[226] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/docs/code-of-student-conduct (Accessed 8 October 2023.)

[227] SRR, p. 56; https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/research-assessment-graduation/use-of-maori (Accessed 9 October 2023.)

translation "only when reasonable efforts to find an examiner capable of assessing the work in its original language have been exhausted".[228]

The Cycle 5 academic audit had commended the University, *inter alia,* for "its efforts to build capability in both students and staff".[229] In this Cycle 6 academic audit, the main challenge in enacting the policy is having staff/examiners with disciplinary expertise who are also proficient in te reo Māori.

The University does have initiatives in place to increase the number of staff functionally fluent in te reo Māori. However, it recognises that, while demand for assessment in te reo Māori (outside of programmes taught in Māori) has been steady, there is the potential for this to increase. Both internal and external factors will contribute to the increase. Internally, the University's objective to embed Mātauranga Māori into teaching and learning[230] will increase demand as will the growth in numbers of kura kaupapa students attending University.

The University has identified an enhancement initiative associated with an action to achieve Objective 1 of Te Rautaki Māori/Māori Advancement Plan. The University plans to develop a te reo Māori strategy and the policy on Use of Māori for Assessment will be reviewed as part of this initiative. The Panel heard this review will include examining expectations of Māori language competency at different levels of study.

The Panel endorses this initiative. It further suggests, however, that the University needs to be more deliberate in its efforts to build capacity of fluent te reo Māori speakers with disciplinary expertise and willingness to assess in te reo Māori. This could consist of, for example, including competency in te reo Māori as an advantage in criteria for appointment. This is foreshadowed in recognition of the need for a workforce development strategy.[231] This recommendation is also relevant to GS 27.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the University's review of its policy on Use of Māori for Assessment.*

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** the University progress its workforce development strategy and other deliberate initiatives as a means of building capacity of staff fluent and able to assess and supervise in te reo Māori.*

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[228] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/research-assessment-graduation/use-of-maori (Accessed 9 October 2023.)
[229] https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Waikato%20Cycle%205%20academic%20audit%20report.pdf, p. 30. (Accessed 9 October 2023.)
[230] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/academic (Accessed 16 September 2023.)
[231] SRR, p. 57.

Section D: Teaching quality

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

The number of both academic and other staff at the University have declined since 2020. The number of professorial staff grew from 2016 to 2022 but dropped to their lowest level since 2016 in 2022. However, the percentage of professors who are female has grown to 31% in 2022[232] but still remains below both the percentage of staff overall who are female (58% in 2021)[233] and percentage of students who are female (61% in 2021).[234] The proportion of staff who are Māori varies across the University, with 32% in Te Pua Wānanga ki te Ao – Faculty of Māori and Indigenous Studies, 22% in Te Wānanga o Ngā Kete – Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences and 23% Te Kura Toi Tangata – Division of Education.[235] These proportions are considerably higher than the percentages of staff who are Māori across the university sector.[236] Numbers of Pacific academic staff have fluctuated slightly, but have remained below 2% of total academic FTE.[237]

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.

Objectives and actions in university strategies and plans have implications for recruitment. These include the objective to embed Mātauranga Māori in teaching and learning, and intent to build the capability of disciplinary experts fluent in te reo Māori.

Staff recruitment is overseen by Te Wāhanga Whakahaere Pūmanawa Tangata Human Resource Management. The first objective in the HR plan is "Support creating an anti-racist University". This objective further references the Academic Plan's objective to embed Mātauranga Māori in teaching and learning, identifies a need to establish a framework to "increase efforts in relation to Māori academic staff recruitment and retention", and develop a reporting approach that "tracks the recruitment, appointment, retention and progression of Māori and Pacific staff".[238]

Steps to increase the number of Māori and Pacific staff recruited by the University include paying attention to the wording of position descriptions to encourage applications, the development of a Pacific Candidate pack[239] and being willing to change the staffing profile of parts of the University by making multiple appointments together (for example, the cluster appointment approach undertaken by Te Whare Pukapuka – The Library referred to in GS 12). The position descriptions the Panel saw

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[232] SRR, pp. 87-88.
[233] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/861214/5474-UOW-Annual-Report_WR.pdf, p. 47. (Accessed 9 October 2023.)
[234] SRR, p. 85.
[235] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/861214/5474-UOW-Annual-Report_WR.pdf, p. 47. (Accessed 9 October 2023.)
[236] https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/research.unz/viz/Universitysectorhumanresources/Gender (Accessed 9 October 2023.)
[237] AD 2, p. 7.
[238] SD D1, p. 3.
[239] SD D4.

included values expressed in te reo Māori and a commitment to the University's partnership with Māori as a personal quality. They did not make any reference to capability in te reo Māori or capability (or willingness) to embed Mātauranga Māori in teaching and learning.[240]

Appointment committees for Māori or Pacific roles include a Māori or Pacific member. This can place demands on Māori staff, especially if there are relatively low numbers of Māori staff in a part of the University that is recruiting. The Panel heard mixed reports of the extent to which Tikanga Māori had supported recruitment processes.

Given the overall levels of Māori and Pacific staff across the university sector, there is competition to recruit Māori and Pacific staff. Other efforts to build capacity include supporting pathways to academic careers for future Māori and Pacific academics through a dedicated scholarship.[241] The University is also engaged with whole-of-sector initiatives including the UNZ Piki Ake programme.[242]

> **Affirmation** *The Panel **affirms** the University's range of initiatives to increase the numbers of Māori and Pacific staff employed at the University.*

GS 23   Induction and ongoing expectations

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

The SRR states that core values of manaakitanga and whanaungatanga are essential in welcoming new staff to the University.[243] New staff on more than two-year contracts are expected to have a personalised induction. While academic staff might be anticipated to be on longer-term contracts, the Panel did hear of staff on multiple fixed-term contracts (GS 22). It also considers that two years is a substantial amount of time, particularly for staff in student-facing roles, not to be inducted into the University's objectives for student success.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** the University review its criteria for staff to participate in a structured induction to the University.*

The Organisational Development and Wellness Team, based in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, oversee and provide resources to support good practice induction.[244] These resources include advice that most induction processes take place at the local level and guidance on the sorts of activities that could be expected at different times in the process and where responsibilities for these processes

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[240] AD 13.

[241] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/scholarships/s/the-university-of-waikato-pathways-doctoral-scholarship (Accessed 1 December 2023.)

[242] https://www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/piki-ake-transition-programme (Accessed 9 October 2023.)

[243] SRR, p. 60.

[244] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/odw/ (Accessed 10 October 2023.)

lie. Responsibilities are assigned to the line manager, central programmes, a buddy and the employee themselves.[245]

Centrally run programmes and resources include:

- an information guide for new staff which provides information about the University, its strategy and the context in which it operates[246]
- information for managers to guide their activities in welcoming and inducting new staff
- a one day workshop 'Kanohi ki te Kanohi: Making Knowledge Connections', that aims to "introduce the campus cultural narrative, provide a common basic understanding of the Treaty and the University's Treaty Statement, Kīngitanga and associated concepts".[247] This is part of the professional development programme to support Te Aurei.
- an introduction for new academic staff that includes information on culturally responsive teaching and research, and information on teaching development.[248]

New staff are expected to have a first conversation about goal setting and objectives for the upcoming year within three months of starting in their role. This is part of the Objectives, Development and Review (ODR) process (see GS 24 and 25).[249]

The University seeks feedback on staff experiences of on-boarding and collects rich data on the experiences. While the Panel understands the University's caution about the small sample size, it still considers the feedback would provide a basis for a more structured response.[250] A staff engagement survey also provides feedback on staff experiences. However, the summary the Panel saw did not allow the experiences of new staff to be differentiated from those of longer tenure.

The Panel explored the induction processes for offshore staff and Heads of Department/School. It is impressed by the attention paid to providing offshore staff with an induction that both reflects the University and the specific context of their campus or programme. This includes bringing overseas-based staff to the Hamilton and Tauranga campuses. In contrast the induction experience for new Heads of Departments, particularly less recently appointed Heads, seems to be mixed and more reliant on existing familiarity with the University.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for ensuring that staff based offshore receive an induction process that reflects both the University and the specific context of their campus and programme.*

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** the University ensure that new Heads of Department receive an induction specific to the expectations of their role.*

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[245] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/640421/OnBoardingOnePager.pdf (Accessed 10 October 2023.)
[246] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/odw/onboarding-and-induction/information-guide (Accessed 10 October 2023.)
[247] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/odw/onboarding-and-induction/kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (Accessed 10 October 2023.)
[248] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/odw/onboarding-and-induction/central-programmes/new-academic-staff-introduction (Accessed 10 October 2023.)
[249] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/odw/odr (Accessed 10 October 2023.)
[250] SD D8.

The Panel also heard that welcome and induction processes for Māori staff were culturally affirming, although, as was recognised with respect to GS 23, this does place a load on existing Māori staff. It recommends the University ensure that these contributions are appropriately recognised.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** the work that Māori and Pacific staff undertake in supporting recruitment and induction processes is recognised appropriately.*

The extent to which Pacific staff felt that induction processes provided cultural affirmation and support was mixed. This may reflect the lower numbers of Pacific staff at the University and its ability to provide culturally supportive recruitment and induction processes.

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 Performance and Professional Development Framework 2020 – 2023 sets out objectives and principles for professional development and the range of opportunities available.[251] Further guidance is set out in the Academic Workloads Guidelines.[252] These include professional development as part of the nominal 20% of workload that could be expected to be spent on administrative and service activities. Given the often disproportionate amount of time that Māori and Pacific staff spend on service activities, the Panel is concerned that this could limit available time for teaching development for these staff.

More specifically, a statement on Tertiary Teaching Development Expectations establishes that teaching staff should undertake "at least two tertiary teaching activities per year".[253] This is an expectation reflecting a recommendation made in the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University. It is, however, not explicitly connected to either the Performance and Professional Development Framework or the Academic Workloads Guidelines. The University has identified an enhancement initiative to renew the Tertiary Teaching Development Expectations Framework. The Panel supports this initiative and at the same time considers that expectations of engagement in teaching development should be better integrated into the broader Performance and Professional Development Framework or Academic Workloads Guidelines.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that, in renewing its teaching development framework, the University consider how expectations might be better connected to the Performance and Professional Development Framework or the Academic Workloads Guidelines.*

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[251] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/docs/staff-performance-and-development-policy (Accessed 1 December 2023.)
[252] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/docs/academicworkloadsguidelines (Accessed 10 October 2023.)
[253] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/363587/Tertiary-Teaching-Development-Expectations-FINAL2016.pdf (Accessed 10 October 2023.)

Te Puna Ako – Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning (Te Puna Ako) is the University's central teaching and learning unit.[254] Alongside teaching development, Te Puna Ako provides support for evaluations of teaching, includes the Student Learning team and is responsible for the Postgraduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning – PGCert (TertiaryT&L). Other teaching development support includes:

- a workshop series
- Wednesday workshops
- individual consultations
- "Ask Me Anything" sessions twice a day
- an annual symposium—Te Puna Aurei Learnfest—in conjunction with other universities
- teaching partnerships
- orientation for casual teaching staff
- postgraduate supervisor training, in collaboration with Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research
- online resources and an online teaching development programme - Waikato Extend.[255]

The Panel is impressed with the range of support available for teaching development and with the approach taken by Te Puna Ako. The "Ask Me Anything" (AMA) sessions were developed as part of the University's transition to online teaching in its COVID-19 response and have been retained as part of the support available. Te Puna Ako has recognised that questions raised in AMA sessions may reflect other areas for development and are an important contributor to relationship building between academic staff and Te Puna Ako. In turn, these relationships facilitate innovation in teaching as staff have confidence that support is available. Staff engagement with Te Puna Ako has grown significantly since 2017 and was close to 6000 interactions in 2022 with AMA accounting for almost two-thirds of those interactions.[256]

The University uses Te Puna Ako strategically to support the objectives in its Academic Plan and other priorities. For example, the workshop series includes sessions on Mātauranga Māori[257] and resources to support the integration of kaupapa Māori into teaching and learning have been developed.[258] The PGCert (TertiaryT&L) includes papers on Integrating Kaupapa Māori Across Programmes and Pacific Pedagogies for Tertiary Teachers and Learners.[259] This alignment between strategic direction for teaching and learning, and support for staff to enact that direction, was the subject of a recommendation in the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University.[260] The Panel considers the University has addressed this issue well.

[254] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/ (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[255] SRR, pp. 62-63.
[256] SD D11.
[257] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/teaching-development/opportunities/wednesday-workshops (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[258] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/teaching-development/teaching-resources/integrating-kaupapa-maori (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[259] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/teaching-development/opportunities/pg-cert
[260] https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Waikato%20Cycle%205%20academic%20audit%20report.pdf, p. 50. (Accessed 11 October 2023.)

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University and Te Puna Ako for the range of teaching development opportunities available and the ways in which these support the University's strategic priorities.*

All staff, including those based offshore and on part-time or fixed-term contracts, have access to teaching development. A Te Puna Ako teaching/learning advisor is based on the Tauranga campus.

However, the Panel also heard of instances of staff on multiple fixed-term contracts and wonders if further opportunity to consolidate capacity might exist here. The Panel considers that the disconnect between access to teaching development and access to the ODR process may mean the University is missing opportunities to build both capacity and capability.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** the University review the alignment between its expectations for engagement with the Objectives, Development and Review (ODR) process and engagement in teaching development to ensure that both processes are supporting capacity and capability building.*

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.

Teaching quality is monitored through student evaluations of papers and teaching and academic staff portfolios.[261] The University differentiates between 'paper' evaluations that examine "learning objectives, assessment, resources, timing, organisation and the overall learning experiences" and 'teaching' evaluations that focus on "perceptions of teaching effectiveness in relation to the ability to generate interest and engagement, approachability, clarity, providing opportunities for active learning, and enthusiasm".[262] The Evaluation of Teaching and Papers Policy sets out responsibilities for undertaking, engaging with and reporting on evaluations of teaching.[263]

Paper and teaching evaluations should be undertaken at least every second occurrence of the paper (see GS2). Evaluations are undertaken on a centrally administered system (Blue) which is integrated into the LMS, allowing evaluations to be generated automatically. Additional questions, including qualitative questions, can be added to standard sets of questions for evaluations and students can select to see questions in either te reo Māori or English.[264] Individual staff can only opt out of an evaluation of their teaching every second occurrence. Head of School (Department) authorisation is required to opt out of a paper evaluation.[265]

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[261] SRR. p. 65.
[262] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/420490/Guidelines-for-the-Evaluation-of-Teaching-and-Papers.pdf (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[263] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/docs/evaluation-of-teaching-and-papers-policy (Accessed December 2023.)
[264] SRR, p. 65.
[265] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/420490/Guidelines-for-the-Evaluation-of-Teaching-and-Papers.pdf (Accessed 11 October 2023.)

Access to reports from evaluations is set out in Guidelines for the Evaluation of Teaching and Papers.[266] Access to teaching evaluation data had been the subject of a recommendation in the Cycle 5 academic audit of the University.[267] The Guidelines now provide a full schedule of who receives evaluation reports.[268]

Heads of School are expected to consider evaluations data in discussions about professional goal setting.[269] The Panel has commented (GS 2) on concerns about low response rates to paper and teaching evaluations. Low response rates did seem to lessen emphasis that was placed on responding to evaluations. Otherwise, the Panel heard that constructive and contextual approaches were taken to understanding factors that may be contributing to poor evaluations. However, given that evaluations are automatically included in Academic Staff Portfolios as part of promotions processes, the Panel recommends the University pay further attention to increasing response rates to a level that staff and their managers have confidence in them.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** the University take steps to increase response rates for student evaluations of papers and teaching.*

Assessment of teaching quality does not solely rely on paper and teaching evaluations. Other opportunities for gaining feedback on teaching quality are provided through a mid-trimester evaluation option, teaching partnerships and teaching observations. These are all available through Te Puna Ako. Overall, the Panel considers the University is committed to and has processes in place to assess and report on the quality of teaching.

GS 26   Teaching recognition
High-quality teaching is recognised and rewarded.

High-quality teaching is recognised in promotions and staff excellence processes. Both processes have been recently reviewed.[270] Teaching excellence awards recipients are encouraged to share their good practice, including at Te Puna Aurei LearnFest.[271] The Panel heard that good practice was also shared within the Faculty and Divisions.

The promotions process uses a centralised online academic staff portfolio. Teaching and paper evaluations data are used to create a teaching score that is automatically included in the portfolio. The review of the academic promotions processes resulted in, *inter alia*, greater opportunity to reflect the narrative and context of teaching. New Teaching Profile fields were created to include excellence, teaching process, outcomes, evaluation and feedback, leadership and impact, and Mātauranga Māori. The Panel is pleased to see Mātauranga Māori being explicitly included in the

[266] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/420490/Guidelines-for-the-Evaluation-of-Teaching-and-Papers.pdf (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[267] https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/Waikato%20Cycle%205%20academic%20audit%20report.pdf. P. 49. (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[268] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/420490/Guidelines-for-the-Evaluation-of-Teaching-and-Papers.pdf (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[269] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/docs/evaluation-of-teaching-and-papers-policy (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[270] SRR, p. 67.
[271] SRR, p. 68.

expectations for promotion. This is further strengthened by the requirement that the membership of academic promotions committees must include the Associate Dean Māori for the Division and/or a Māori Professor.[272]

While the Panel considers these changes will support the Academic Plan objective to "embed Mātauranga Māori in teaching and learning", it also considers it too early to see the impact either on teaching or on how they may change promotion rates for Māori staff.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** changes the University has made to the academic promotions system, particularly the explicit inclusion of Mātauranga Māori in the expected teaching narrative.*

Awards for excellence operate at Divisional and University levels. Te Puna Ako coordinates Faculty and Divisional Teaching Excellence Awards and provides advice and other resources on how to develop a teaching portfolio. Nominations for University excellence awards are made through the Faculty and Divisional awards process and FMIS and the Divisions each have a Teaching Excellence Awards Coordinator.[273] Faculty and divisional teaching excellence awardees are recognised on the University website. Awards have also been made to staff from NZUWI and Te Puna Ako.[274] The University also values recognition of teaching excellence available from Advance HE and the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA).[275]

University teaching excellence awards have four categories: (1) Excellence in Mātauranga Māori; (2) Overall teaching excellence; (3) Early career teaching excellence; and (4) Nola Campbell award for excellence in e-learning.[276] These awards are administered by a Staff Awards Committee and a list of recipients is again published.[277] The Panel notes that it found the Faculty and Divisional awardees easier to find than the University awardees.

Recipients of University teaching excellence awards are encouraged to submit a portfolio to the national teaching excellence awards—Te Whatu Kairangi and Te Puna Ako can support this process by matching the applicant with a critical friend and advising on portfolio development. The University has been well represented in the national awards with five winners since 2017, including two Prime Minister's Supreme Award for Excellence in Tertiary Teaching (2017 and 2023).[278]

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[272] SRR, p. 67.
[273] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/teaching-development/opportunities/teaching-excellence-awards/faculty-teaching-excellence-awards (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[274] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/teaching-development/opportunities/teaching-excellence-awards/faculty-teaching-excellence-awards (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[275] SRR, p. 68.
[276] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/737663/University-Teaching-Awards-Criteria-with-RL-edits.docx.pdf (Accessed 11 October 2023.)
[277] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/odw/organisational-development/staff-awards
[278] SRR, p. 68.

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.

Enrolments in postgraduate research degrees increased from 2016 to 2021 but dropped in 2022. Māori research-based postgraduate EFTS have also increased since 2016, although there was a slight drop in 2022 and the percentage of research-based postgraduate EFTS who are Māori remains lower (14%) than the overall percentage of students who are Māori. In contrast, Pacific research-based postgraduate EFTS increased in 2022, although numbers overall remain low.[279]

Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research (SGR) is responsible for higher research degrees (doctorates and the Master of Philosophy) and scholarships.[280] It also delivers workshops, monitors progress, and provides support for supervisors and postgraduate research students.[281] Other Master's degrees are managed in the Faculty and Divisions, although the SGR is responsible for the consistency of policy and regulations for student research, and dissertations and theses which are relevant to research Master's degrees.[282]

The SGR Strategic Plan 2022-2027 aligns with other University plans and has five goals, each with a series of actions:
1. Increase the quality and quantity of graduate and postgraduate students enrolling at the University of Waikato.
2. Enhance the quality of graduate and postgraduate students through creation of a vibrant research environment, aligned training opportunities and excellent supervision.
3. Enabling the Treaty of Waitangi and the 2021 Taskforce work plan at the University of Waikato.
4. Providing equitable access to research training through responsive and appropriate support networks.
5. Improved completion rates and wellbeing through quality student and supervisor experience.[283]

A review of Master's and honours in 2021 made recommendations for:
* providing programme information to students and their advisors, recruitment and admissions
* programme structure, nomenclature, regulations and processes
* research and supervision
* student experience and support
* partnerships with students.[284]

An implementation framework assigns responsibilities for recommendations and recognises where they intersect with other plans and projects. It also establishes overall responsibility for monitoring

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[279] SRR, p. 87.
[280] SRR, p. 70.
[281] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/research-supervision/ (internal site). (Accessed 12 October 2023.)
[282] SD E1.
[283] SD E1.
[284] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/academic-office/quality/benchmarking-and-reviews/review-of-masters (internal site). (Accessed 12 October 2023.)

progress on implementation and reporting to academic committees.[285] The University has identified priorities in the implementation framework as:

- "developing, designing, and delivering comprehensive on-boarding and orientation programmes and materials (including online) for new Master's and Honours students
- ensuring equity and adequacy of support and resources for Master's and Honours students
- developing processes through which Master's and Honours students are engaged in partnership on matters concerning their specific needs as learners and researchers …."[286]

Affirmation: *The Panel **affirms** the University's implementation framework and the priorities it has established for responding to recommendations made in the 2021 Master's and Honours Review.*

GS 27   Supervision quality
The quality of postgraduate research supervision is ensured.

Commitments to the quality of supervision are made in actions to deliver on three of the five goals of the SGR Strategic Plan 2022-2027. Supervision quality is expressed in terms of:

- a clearer understanding of the role of quality supervision, timely feedback and review in fostering excellence in performance
- supervision appropriate for mātauranga and kaupapa Māori research
- culturally responsive supervision and support.[287]

Supervision quality is supported through supervisor appointment and training processes. Prospective supervisors need to meet criteria and be appointed to the Supervisor's Register.[288] Applications need to be approved by the Head of Schools and Associate Dean Postgraduate for the Faculty or Division and the PGRC representative.[289] Applicants may be approved as a Supervisor or Chief Supervisor. Supervisors who are external to the University may also be appointed and follow the same process.

Supervisory panels are appointed by the Dean of Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research. The panel for PhD students is a minimum of two supervisors, one of whom is a continuing staff member and the Chief Supervisor.[290] The availability of appropriate supervision is considered in making the decision to enrol a student.[291]

The FMIS is consulted on the composition of any panel that will be supervising a thesis related to Mātauranga Māori.[292] The Panel heard that the University did experience challenges in being able to

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[285] SD E9.

[286] SRR, p. 77.

[287] SD E1.

[288] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/research-supervision/supervision#How_to_become_a_supervisor_for_Doctoral_Research-panel (internal site). (Accessed 12 October 2023.)

[289] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff/research-supervision/supervision (internal site) (Accessed 12 October 2023.)

[290] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/regulations/higher/phd (Accessed 1 December 2023.

[291] SRR, p. 71.

[292] SRR, p. 71.

appoint Māori supervisors. It recognises that the work the University is undertaking through Te Aurei, including providing pathways to support existing PhD candidates into academic roles, will contribute to building capacity. However, this is a medium- to long-term strategy and the Panel's recommendation that the University progress its workforce development strategy (GS 21) is also relevant to building capacity for postgraduate supervision.

The Pacific Strategic Plan also seeks to "consistently provide high-quality supervision for Pacific higher learners".[293] The Panel heard of initiatives including writing retreats for Pacific research students.

Graduate Strategic Research Plan sets out actions to deliver on its Equity and Diversity Goal, including providing:
- targeted scholarships to under-served groups, with a focus on Māori and Pacific students
- culturally responsive supervision and support to research students
- training for supervisors, staff and selection panels on recognising and reducing bias in decision-making.[294]

The University advises that work is in progress on these actions and the Panel encourages the University to continue to progress this.

> **Affirmation:** *The Panel **affirms** the University's initiatives to support equity for under-served groups, particularly Māori and Pacific students, in postgraduate research studies.*

Training is part of the supervision appointment process and requirements for continuing registration. Supervisors must attend a workshop at least once every three years to ensure currency with requirements and good practice is maintained. Specific workshops are also provided for chief supervisors, convenors of doctoral examinations, supervisors of a PhD through publication, and supervisors of a PhD with a creative practice component.[295] The SGR delivers workshops and training for supervisors and also collaborates with Te Puna Ako to deliver 'Doctoral Supervisor Conversations'.[296] Te Puna Ako also offers a paper on 'Supervising Postgraduate Students', either as part of the PGCert (TertiaryT&L) or as a standalone paper.[297]

Student feedback on the quality of supervision is sought through the Student Barometer Survey, an exit survey and a recently introduced mid-candidature survey.[298] The Student Barometer Survey does not explicitly ask about the quality of supervision, but the mid-candidature survey does elicit detailed comment on the quality of supervision students received.[299] Students may also comment on supervision quality in six-monthly progress reports.[300] The Panel heard that the University was alert to other indications of problems with supervision emerging, even if these were not signalled in

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[293] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/governance/strategic-planning/pacific, p. 6. (Accessed 1December 2023.)

[294] SRR, p. 74.

[295] SRR, p. 72.

[296] SRR, p. 72.

[297] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/teaching-development/opportunities/pg-cert (Accessed 12 October 2023.)

[298] SRR, pp. 72-73.

[299] SD E5.

[300] SRR, pp. 72-73.

formal processes. The Panel recognises that not all concerns or issues with supervision are to do with supervision quality.

In addition to formal processes, students may also raise concerns about supervision (or other matters) with the Associate Deans Postgraduate in the Faculty and Divisions. The Dean of the SGR has a regular informal catch-up with the Postgraduate Students Association.

If issues about the quality of supervision (or other matters) cannot be resolved informally, the Higher Degree Appeals and Complaints Regulations set out a process for making and resolving a complaint.[301] If the matter is not resolved through these processes, students also have access to the complaints and appeals processes outlined in GS 11.

GS 28   Resourcing of postgraduate research students
Postgraduate research students are appropriately resourced and supported to undertake their research.

Minimum resource expectations for postgraduate research students are set out in a 'Statement of Research and Resource Support Requirements for Higher Degree Research Candidates'.[302] This details expectations about an induction programme, office space and furniture, computer and IT facilities, and financial support for doctoral and MPhil students. The Review of Master's and Honours recognised that a comparable statement did not exist for these students and there was variation across the University. The University has identified addressing this inconsistency as a priority in its implementation framework for responding to the review and the Panel has affirmed this approach (GS 26).

The financial support set out in the Statement of Research and Resource Support Requirements refers to consumable funds for research. The University also provides scholarship support and priorities for scholarships (and other support) are set out in both Te Rautaki Māori/Māori Advancement Plan and the Pacific Strategic Plan.

The Panel did hear of some concerns regarding a change in practice in the allowed use of research consumable funding. The Panel understands that this is in response to financial challenges facing the University but encourages the University to ensure equity considerations are considered when implementing this change.

Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research also provides support for postgraduate research students though workshops and a 'Postgraduate Researcher Development Programme'.[303] This aligns support available in the early, mid and late stages of the degree. Te Puna Ako and the Library also provide dedicated support for postgraduate research students.

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[301] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/regulations/higher/appeals-and-complaints (Accessed 12 October 2023.)
[302] SD E10.
[303] https://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/research-degrees/postgraduate-researcher-development-programme

Support for postgraduate research students begins before enrolment. The Panel heard unprompted instances of how the responsiveness of individual academic staff to initial enquiries by prospective students had contributed to their decision to enrol at the University.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University's timely responsiveness to initial enquiries from prospective PhD students and the follow-through with these students to enrolment and orientation.*

The adequacy of support is again monitored through the student barometer, mid-candidature survey and six-monthly progress reports.[304] The Panel notes that the six-monthly reporting form makes relatively little reference to asking about resource adequacy or future needs. Including resources in progress reporting could assist students in building research planning experience.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** the University include questions about the adequacy of resourcing and future needs in six-monthly progress reports.*

Overall, the Panel considers resourcing and support for postgraduate research students to be consistent with expected practices.

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.

Doctoral research student progress is monitored through six-monthly reports, which are generated automatically and sent to students for completion. A student completes their section which is then forwarded to the members of their supervisory panel. While students are encouraged to discuss the reports with their supervisor(s) before submission, the process does not necessarily facilitate a discussion and negotiation of issues between students and supervisors. Students do have the opportunity to see their supervisors' comments before the report is sent to the Associate Dean Postgraduate and Head of School and subsequently the SGR.[305]

Although the SRR states that progress reporting is intended to be a reflexive and formative process, unsatisfactory progress is reported. If a return to satisfactory progress is not seen, this will be reported to the Dean of SGR. Continued unsatisfactory performance will be referred to the PGRC, who have the authority to terminate the candidature of a student.[306]

The progress of Master's students in monitored in the Faculty and Divisions. The implementation framework for the Review of Master's and Honours includes a recommendation to examine how processes for tracking progress for doctoral and MPhil students can be used for Master's thesis students.[307] The Panel encourages this assessment as part of the University's overall response to recommendations made in the Review of Master's and Honours.

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[304] SRR, p. 75.
[305] SRR, p. 78.
[306] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/regulations/higher/phd (Accessed 12 October 2023.)
[307] SD E9 (Recommendation 22).

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GS 30   Thesis examination

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

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Thesis submission and examination requirements are set out in the Dissertations and Theses Regulations[308] and the relevant higher degree regulations.[309] A thesis can be submitted in te reo Māori or English only. Options exist to submit a PhD with publication and a PhD with a creative practice component. The SGR provides advice and guidance to students, supervisors, examiners and examination convenors. [310]

Two external examiners, one of whom must be from outside New Zealand, are appointed for a PhD thesis. Following the receipt of examiners' reports, the Dean of Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research will decide if the thesis should proceed to oral examination. Processes are in place for resolving any differences between the two examiners. Following the reports from the examiners after the oral examination, the Dean of Te Mata Kairangi School of Graduate Research will determine whether the degree should be awarded, whether revisions are required, whether the thesis should be resubmitted, or whether another or no degree may be awarded.[311]

A thesis that is submitted in te reo Māori is examined by examiners fluent in te reo Māori.[312] The oral examination follows 'Protocols for the oral examination of a doctoral thesis examined within a Māori context'.[313] Guidance for whānau who may attend the oral examination is also provided.[314] Since 2019, one student has completed their thesis and examination in te reo Māori and another four students have indicated their intent to submit in te reo Māori.[315]

The SRR indicates that the University amended its processes during COVID-19 to allow oral examinations to be conducted via videoconference.[316] Post-COVID-19 the advice is that a student should be physically present for the oral examination, but the PGRC may approve an exception.[317]

The Implementation Framework for the Review of Master's and Honours indicates the University intends to develop guidance for students, supervisors and examiners for Master's theses.[318] The Panel again encourages this development.

The Panel considers examination processes for postgraduate research students are consistent with expected practices.

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[308] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/research-assessment-graduation/dissertations-theses (Accessed 12 October 2023.)
[309] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/regulations/higher/ (Accessed 12 October 2023.)
[310] SRR, p. 80.
[311] https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/regulations/higher/phd (Accessed 12 October 2023.)
[312] SRR, p. 80.
[313] SD E23.
[314] SD E24.
[315] Further evidence, p. 22.
[316] SRR, p. 81.
[317] SD E16.
[318] SD E9, Recommendation 21.

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 guidelines 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.[319]

With respect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Panel heard how the University's Treaty Statement is being enacted across the University. The Panel is also pleased to see the Te Aurei programme to support the University's response to the Taskforce report, an embedding of Mātauranga Māori in teaching and learning, and an operationalisation of the Treaty of Waitangi Statement.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the University for the ways in which it is enacting its Treaty of Waitangi Statement across the University and the establishment of Te Aurei.*

The Panel gained a sense that the research-teaching nexus informs both teaching and other developments. Papers informing developments in teaching and learning were research-informed. The Panel also heard support for the University's role as critic and conscience of society. It agrees with the University that the Taskforce established to investigate claims of systemic and casual racism is an important demonstration of University staff being prepared to give effect to their responsibilities to support the University's role as critic and conscience of society. [320]

With respect to the scope components of the audit framework, the Panel gained a sense the University is responsive to the needs of its diverse student body. It has specific plans or initiatives and support for Māori, Pacific, international and disabled students and the Panel has commended the University's commitment to equivalence of student experience across the multiple campuses of the University. It gained a sense of positive collegiality and commitment to the University and to student success from staff and considers the University is paying attention to delivery modes.

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. The Panel has commented on and endorsed the direction of all the University's enhancement initiatives. It has made a recommendation with respect to one enhancement initiative and affirmations with respect to the others.

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[319] Guide to Cycle 6 Academic Audit, p. 11.
[320] SRR, pp. xi-xii.

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. It therefore meets the expectations of the Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework. 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 reflect 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:

Intro	C1	*The Panel **commends** the University for the ways in which it responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, learnt from its experience, and embedded new or revised practices arising from the experience.*
GS 1	C2	*The Panel **commends** the University for its coherent strategic framework, including how the University's Treaty of Waitangi Statement is informing plans.*
GS 1	C3	*The Panel **commends** the University for its commitment to data availability and usage to inform planning and reporting.*
GS 2	C4	*The Panel **commends** the University for its work with the Waikato Students' Union to establish a comprehensive and supported class representative system.*
GS 3	C5	*The Panel **commends** the University for its development of The Pā and the Tauranga campus as valuable additions to the teaching and learning environment of the University.*
GS 3	C6	*The Panel **commends** the University's development of flexible learning (FLEXI papers)—which has provided resilience for the University and supported accessibility for students—and encourages its further development.*
GS 5	C7	*The Panel **commends** University's mature approach to managing risks to the quality and continuity of teaching and learning.*
GS 6	C8	*The Panel **commends** the University for the progress it is making in improving access and achievement for Māori students through its data-informed and whole-of-system (Ōritetanga) approach to learner success.*

GS 9	C9	*The Panel **commends** the University for its attention to and support of first-year students' transitions into the University.*
GS 9	C10	*The Panel **commends** the University for its support of transitions to employment and its commitment to work-integrated learning to strengthen these transitions.*
GS 12	C11	*The Panel **commends** the University for its commitment to equivalence of student experience across the multiple campuses of the University.*
GS 12	C12	*The Panel **commends** Te Whare Pukapuka – The Library for its commitment to the strategic direction of the University, including Te Aurei, and its student-centric approach to meeting student needs.*
GS 14	C13	*The Panel **commends** the University, the Māori Academic Board of Studies, and the Pacific Strategic Committee for their robust scrutiny of academic proposals that contribute to strategic direction for the University.*
GS 16	C14	*The Panel **commends** the University for the creation of the Curriculum Design Framework and the review to ensure its ongoing fitness for purpose.*
GS 19	C15	*The Panel **commends** the University's consistent use of moderation across campuses.*
GS 23	C16	*The Panel **commends** the University for ensuring that staff based offshore receive an induction process that reflects both the University and the specific context of their campus and programme.*
GS 24	C17	*The Panel **commends** the University and Te Puna Ako for the range of teaching development opportunities available and the ways in which these support the University's strategic priorities.*
GS 28	C18	*The Panel **commends** the University's timely responsiveness to initial enquiries from prospective PhD students and the follow-through with these students to enrolment and orientation.*
Conclusion	C19	*The Panel **commends** the University for the ways in which it is enacting its Treaty of Waitangi Statement across the University and the establishment of Te Aurei.*

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   *The Panel **affirms** the development and implementation of the Student-Staff Partnership Framework between the University and the Waikato Students' Union.*

GS 5   A2   *The Panel **affirms** the University's enhancement initiative to create an Academic Risk Register.*

GS 7   A3   *The Panel **affirms** the University's commitment to creating a sense of belonging for Pacific students and its data-informed and holistic support model to improve success for Pacific students.*

GS 10   A4   *The Panel **affirms** the University's plans to develop its Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to further support consistent advising practices.*

GS 11   A5   *The Panel **affirms** the University's enhancement initiative to develop facilitated processes for complaints resolution within a Pacific cultural context.*

GS 13   A6   *The Panel **affirms** the implementation of the University's Disability Action Plan across teaching, learning, assessment and support activities.*

GS 17   A7   *The Panel **affirms** the University's Paper Information Project and the enhancement initiative to make graduate profiles more visible and auditable.*

GS 18   A8   *The Panel **affirms** the University's enhancement initiative to review assessment guides and resources to ensure they reflect the University's principles for assessment.*

GS 19   A9   *The Panel **affirms** the University's plan to review moderation practices.*

GS 20   A10   *The Panel **affirms** the University's approach to academic integrity—which includes education, assessment design, support and reporting—and encourages the University to continue to develop its thinking on the use of generative AI and other emerging technologies that may have implications for academic integrity.*

GS 21   A11   *The Panel **affirms** the University's review of its policy on Use of Māori for Assessment.*

GS 22   A12   *The Panel **affirms** the University's range of initiatives to increase the numbers of Māori and Pacific staff employed at the University.*

| GS 26 | A13 | *The Panel **affirms** changes the University has made to the academic promotions system, particularly the explicit inclusion of Mātauranga Māori in the expected teaching narrative.* |

| Section E | A14 | *The Panel **affirms** the University's implementation framework and the priorities it has established for responding to recommendations made in the 2021 Master's and Honours Review.* |

| GS 27 | A15 | *The Panel **affirms** the University's initiatives to support equity for under-served groups, particularly Māori and Pacific students, in postgraduate research studies.* |

Recommendations

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

| GS 2 | R1 | *The Panel **recommends** that training and support for student members of committees and boards be provided consistently across the University.* |

| GS 13 | R2 | *The Panel **recommends** that the University consider how Māori models of wellbeing would better support Māori students.* |

| GS 14 | R3 | *The Panel **recommends** that the University review how it communicates expectations and provides guidance for engaging with the peer review of proposals (from other universities) submitted to the Committee on University Academic Programmes.* |

| GS 21 | R4 | *The Panel **recommends** the University progress its workforce development strategy and other deliberate initiatives as a means of building capacity of staff fluent and able to assess and supervise in te reo Māori.* |

| GS 23 | R5 | *The Panel **recommends** the University review its criteria for staff to participate in a structured induction to the University.* |

| GS 23 | R6 | *The Panel **recommends** the University ensure that new Heads of Department receive an induction specific to the expectations of their role.* |

| GS 23 | R7 | *The Panel **recommends** the work that Māori and Pacific staff undertake in supporting recruitment and induction processes is recognised appropriately.* |

| GS 24 | R8 | *The Panel **recommends** that, in renewing its teaching development framework, the University consider how expectations might be better connected to the Performance and Professional Development Framework or the Academic Workloads Guidelines.* |

GS 24	R9	*The Panel **recommends** the University review the alignment between its expectations for engagement with the Objectives, Development and Review (ODR) process and engagement in teaching development to ensure that both processes are supporting capacity and capability building.*
GS 25	R10	*The Panel **recommends** the University take steps to increase response rates for student evaluations of papers and teaching.*
GS 28	R11	*The Panel **recommends** the University include questions about the adequacy of resourcing and future needs in six-monthly progress reports.*

Follow-up report

The Panel invites the University of Waikato 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 David Crabbe *Chair of the Panel*	Te Herenga Waka — Victoria University of Wellington (retired)
Dr Valance Smith (Ngāti Mahuta, Te Parawhau, Te Uriroroi, Te Mahureure ki Whatitiri)	Auckland University of Technology
Associate Professor Julie MacKey	University of Canterbury
Emeritus Professor Joyce Kirk	Higher Education Consultant
Alicia Lemmer	Academic Vice-President, AUT Students' Association

Secretariat:

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

Acknowledgements

The Panel acknowledges with gratitude the mihi whakatau that welcomed them to the University campus to undertake the site visit. The Panel wishes to acknowledge and thank the students and staff who met with the Panel and Cassandra Jutsum for supporting the Panel while on the University campus and for providing information and responses to queries. It also appreciates the willingness of Te Puna Ako to allow the Panel to operate from their space.

Thanks also to Sharon Cuzens for proofreading this report.

The translation of the Summary into Te Reo Māori was undertaken by Ōkupu.[321]

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[321] https://www.okupu.co.nz/

Appendix 1: The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities, Te Poukapū Kounga Matauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa (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.[322]

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.

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.

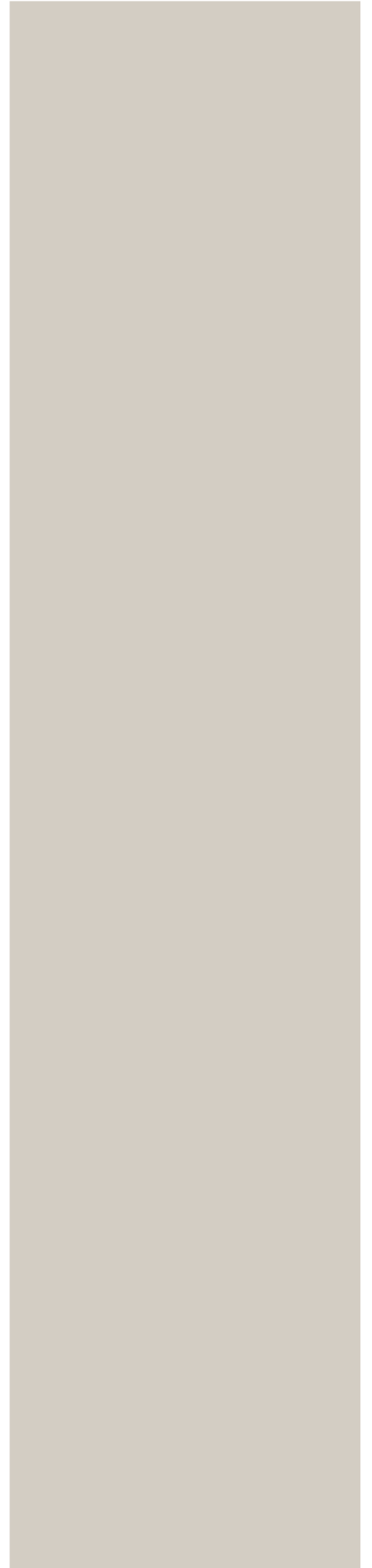Further information is available from the AQA website: www.aqa.ac.nz.

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.

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[322] AQA (2020), Constitution. Available at
https://www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/AQA%20Constitution%20Ammended%20Oct%202020.pdf. (Accessed 23 February 2022).

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