





Artwork in the University of Otago Clocktower foyer, title 'Matiti ki te ao, Uruao ki ruka' by Ephraim Russell, a sculptural work depicting the Southern Cross.

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Introductory message

Vision 2040 sets our aspiration for who we want to be: Our people and knowledge transforming lives, connecting communities, and nurturing the environment in Otago, Te Waipounamu, Aotearoa, the Pacific, and the world.

This Strategic Plan defines what we will do from now until 2030 as we work to become a globally leading university that delivers outstanding teaching, transformative student experiences, excellence in research, and has a positive impact on our communities and the world.

Our journey towards Vision 2040, is guided by this whakataukī¹ that has its roots in Polynesian voyaging.

***Ko te pae tawhiti, whāia kia tata
Ko te pae tata, whakamaua kia tina.***

***Seek distant horizons and draw them near,
Pursue and grasp the near horizon.***

This whakataukī speaks to the boldness of spirit that characterises the University. Our voyage is beyond the visible horizon. It demands vision, planning, courage and conviction.

Vision 2040 sets out our pae tawhiti (distant horizon), and this Strategic Plan defines our pae tata (near horizon). We have to hold this ambitious near horizon in our minds and the University must become a stronger version of itself to navigate the stormy seas ahead and reach our pae tawhiti of Vision 2040.

Members of our community will be aware of the challenges we face. While we continue to deliver quality teaching, our research performance is slipping, we tend to be inwardly-focused in a globalising sector, and we are under significant financial pressure.

We must alter course to embrace change and the opportunities it brings. Change is necessary so we can remain relevant and impactful in a rapidly changing world. It will involve making difficult decisions about where we focus our limited resources, and some things we do now we will need to discontinue.

Throughout, the University must face change with courage, compassion, and careful consideration. Our motto – Sapere Aude (Dare to be Wise) – captures the spirit with which we need to approach our future.

1 A whakataukī is a proverb.

The case for change

The University has been a renowned place of learning and discovery for more than 150 years. We must strive to become an even more successful, globally influential university, and embrace our role as Te Tiriti partners. We must navigate external pressures and respond to expectations from our students, our staff, our community, mana whenua, University partners and our government. We can learn from how other universities across the world have responded to similar challenges.



We must change the way we teach to ensure we meet expectations and become sustainable

Successful universities balance offering enough papers to provide choice, with maintaining clear pathways so students are not overwhelmed. This balance enhances the student experience, can help grow enrolments, and delivers improved efficiency that enables reinvestment in teaching and research.

We have an outstanding reputation for teaching excellence and achieve nation-leading results in teaching, learning and student satisfaction. However, our course offerings are falling out of step with students' emerging needs and our need for financial sustainability. Our broad offering and complex programme structures can cause a paradox of choice for students, who may find it harder to identify and sequence study options; it also adds complexity to our course administration. Many of our papers cost more to deliver than they earn: at present, one quarter of our papers have fewer than fifteen enrolments, and these papers tend to run at a loss.

We need to efficiently operate our large papers to offset strategically selected smaller papers. Our overall course offerings must be more focused and aligned with strategic priorities and what students want, to deliver transformative, excellent teaching and learning experiences, while also remaining financially stable.

Successful universities are using digital learning effectively and innovatively to meet the needs of different student cohorts as demand for flexible learning grows.

We responded rapidly and successfully to COVID-19 by moving temporarily to online delivery, but best practice in digital learning goes far beyond delivering face-to-face teaching online. We have areas of excellent distance delivery, but the quality of many of our students' digital learning experiences lags behind their on-campus experiences and does not meet current or emerging student expectations.

Campus-based and residential undergraduate student experiences will remain fundamental to our identity. However, we must develop our use of blended learning, and targeted fully online offerings to meet students' expectations locally and across the world. Blended learning means that our in-classroom activities are focused on interactive learning, delivered flexibly for students who are increasingly living and working in a digital world. Fully online delivery, when targeted appropriately, can meet the lifelong learning needs of our alumni and working professionals, and complement our on-campus experience for other cohorts.

We can focus our research effort to increase impact and enhance research performance

Successful universities focus their research efforts, to achieve greater depth in a smaller number of areas. This enables them to achieve critical mass and greater impact.

We have a proud history of research and scholarship, and a strong reputation for our research in Aotearoa New Zealand. However, in recent years our relative research performance has weakened, and our share of research funds is decreasing. Our global reputation for research, as measured by global rankings, has slipped. These rankings are crucial to securing high-value research partnerships, and attracting international students and researchers, who in turn help provide the resources needed to have a greater impact on Aotearoa New Zealand and local communities.

Historically, our research activity has largely been guided by individual, school, and divisional priorities rather than by an overarching university focus. We need to become more focused, disciplined and collaborative.

A more globalised university will enhance student experiences, increase research collaboration and allow the University to take its place in the Pacific and the world

Successful universities increase student and staff mobility, enriching their institutions' cultural life, increasing connectedness, and building their global reputation while creating revenue opportunities.

Partnerships are critical to strengthening our global presence and influence. A strategic and focussed approach to partnerships will create new opportunities for research collaborations, and enhance our research impact nationally, regionally and globally.

International students made up just 13.5 per cent of our student cohort in 2019 and our growth in international students pre-COVID was much slower than at most other universities. International students are vital to our cultural and intellectual success, encouraging increased knowledge exchange, greater cultural literacy, and stronger global linkages. In the current funding environment, increasing international student enrolments is critical to our ability to invest in our education and research. We must work together to support international students' growth and success as part of the University community

Our financial situation must change to enable us to reinvest in teaching, research, and impact

Successful universities are financially disciplined, managing costs and growing alternative forms of revenue. This provides the flexibility to respond to challenging circumstances, pursue strategic priorities, and deliver on their core mission of research, teaching, and service.

Over the past decade, costs have increased much faster than government funding and income from other sources. For a range of reasons, we need to spend more on maintaining our buildings and providing new facilities. We have more staff relative to students than most New Zealand universities. Given that significant government funding increases are highly unlikely, we need to make a sustained effort to control our costs and to grow revenue from non-government sources. A financially sustainable operating model is essential for reinvestment into our ambitious change agenda needed to create the highest quality student experiences and produce impactful research.

We must improve our processes, structures, and systems to deliver efficient, effective, and responsive services for our students and staff

Successful universities are learning from other sectors that efficiently deliver organisation-wide services. Seamless student and staff experiences are created through service hubs focussed on advisory work, with transactional effort reduced through process-step automation and effective digital systems.

Despite the ongoing hard work of our professional staff, the current structural complexity of our organisation and the way we deliver services significantly affects our ability to work effectively. Too many of our processes are inefficient, vary across the University or rely on unevenly distributed institutional knowledge. This means our staff – both academic and professional – spend too much time completing transactional tasks, with poor user experiences and inadequate staff role satisfaction.

Significant work is needed to simplify our processes and reduce the number of people involved in each process. This must be matched by investment to replace outdated digital systems, so that our systems better support efficient operations. Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the services we deliver will improve student and staff satisfaction and support us to better focus on our education and research.

Pae Tata - Strategic Plan 2030

We have a vision for the future ...

Vision 2040:

Our people and knowledge transforming lives, connecting communities, and nurturing the environment in Otago, Te Waipounamu, Aotearoa, the Pacific, and the world.

... as a strong Te Tiriti partner ...

Together with mana whenua, we explore what being a Te Tiriti led university means in each of our campus contexts and jointly develop our capability to operate effectively as Te Tiriti partners. As a University, we will work to strengthen our capability, capacity and culture to honour and give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi across all areas of the University.

... underpinned by our commitment to transforming lives and nurturing the environment in Aotearoa and the Pacific ...

Our teaching, research, partnerships, engagement, and behaviour, alongside the Ti Kōuka Sustainability Strategic Framework 2030 and Pacific Strategic Framework 2030, demonstrate our commitment.

... supported by a contemporary, effective, efficient and responsive university...

- Deliver value to the university and community through the unique character and purpose of our physical places.
- Ensure our processes and structures enable us to work effectively and efficiently.
- Transform our digital spaces to create value for students and staff.

... achieved through outcomes in five domains ...

Streamline our educational offerings.

Grow our student cohort and increase its diversity.

Redefine our graduate attributes.

Meet student needs with best practice pedagogy.

Achieve equity in student participation and achievement.

Better focus our research efforts into areas of strength.

Communicate our research impact with local, regional and global communities.

Align our research partnerships so that each one delivers strategic value.

Ensure our processes, resource allocation and staff expectations efficiently support our areas of research focus



Support our Te Tiriti journey and mana whenua partnership.

Support all our staff to engage with and embed te ao Māori.

Provide an environment in which tauria Māori can succeed as Māori.

Develop innovative ways for students to engage and learn with and in te ao Māori.

Grow our research that engages with te ao Māori.

Protect taonga Māori.

Substantially grow our international student cohort.

Maximise the impact of strategically aligned global partnerships.

Create transformative international experiences for our students.

Deepen our relationship with alumni and partners.

Enhance a culture of working together and supporting diversity.

Ensure students thrive through the unique Otago experience.

Support our staff to succeed and grow.

Build the capability of our leaders at all levels.



We have a vision for the future

Vision 2040 is our pae tawhiti (distant horizon) and will guide us into the future

Vision 2040 is a collective expression of who we want to be as an institution, developed through extensive engagement. We aspire to be a globally influential, strongly connected and socially accountable institution that produces research and teaching of the highest quality, and consistently engages with the issues that face our society and humanity. We will continue to be a kāinga waewae¹ for generations of students, staff, and alumni as we have been for generations past. We will weave a new network of partnerships working under the korowai² of Te Tiriti o Waitangi together with our Scottish heritage to enrich our intellectual traditions and meet the future needs of Aotearoa.

Vision / Ko te Aronga

Our people and knowledge transforming lives, connecting communities, and nurturing the environment in Otago, Te Waipounamu, Aotearoa, the Pacific, and the world.

Mission / Ko te Uaratanga

The University of Otago exists to create, advance, share, promote, preserve, and apply knowledge. Committed to partnership with mana whenua and upholding Whakamana i Te Tiriti o Waitangi, we undertake outstanding research and research-informed teaching, enable transformative learning and student experiences, and engage in meaningful service to society with a dedication to excellence, innovation, and positive impact.

The Strategic Plan 2030 is our pae tata (near horizon) and lays out the steps we will take to navigate towards our Vision 2040 by becoming a stronger version of ourselves

We seek a globally leading role as a university in and of Otago, Te Waipounamu, Aotearoa and the Pacific that delivers the best for our student and creates impact for our communities. Our people are of utmost importance in reaching this pae tata. We aim to be a place that welcomes and values all students and staff, supporting them to achieve and work at their best.

The University needs to evolve to meet expectations from our students, staff, mana whenua, our alumni, and other key stakeholders that we be a contemporary and financially sustainable institution. We need to evolve both to meet these expectations and to secure our future as a university delivering high-quality teaching and research, and creating positive impact for society.

The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to define the focus of our activity out to 2030 and identify the associated measures of success. By achieving success against this Strategic Plan, we will be moving intentionally towards the aspirations expressed in Vision 2040.

¹ A stamping ground or somewhere where one spends much of their time.

² A cloak ornamented with black twisted tags or thrums worn as a mantle of honour, symbolic of leadership and caring for one's people.



As a strong Te Tiriti partner

We recognise that becoming a “Te Tiriti-led” university as outlined in Vision 2040 is a bold ambition requiring significant effort, resourcing, and change.

The key step in this journey is committing to build stronger and deeper partnerships with mana whenua. Together with mana whenua, we will define what being a Te Tiriti-led university means in each of our campus contexts and jointly develop our capability to operate effectively as Te Tiriti partners. As a university, we will work to strengthen our capability, capacity and culture to honour and give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi across all areas of the University.

Central to this is supporting our partnership with Ngāi Tahu as the University’s principal Tiriti partner as mana whenua within their takiwā¹ of Te Waipounamu. Alongside this partnership, we will foster partnerships with mana whenua in other locations where the University has a physical presence, and other iwi and iwi groups as appropriate.

Our commitment includes working with mana whenua to understand how the leadership and governance of the University will evolve to support partnership and achieve our ambition of becoming a Te Tiriti-led university. The way we achieve this goal will be the subject of ongoing discussion and exploration between Ngāi Tahu and the Council and Senior Leadership of the University, before being applied at the Divisional levels.

Our journey to Te Tiriti partnership will require shifts in the ways we teach, learn, research, engage and work as we bring together te ao Māori² and the traditional university world in a way that both honours the ideals of our Scottish heritage and upholds tino rangatiratanga³.

Within this plan, the domain Whakamana i Te Tiriti o Waitangi - Strengthen our capability, capacity, and culture to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi outlines the strategic commitments and actions that we will take to support our journey to 2030. This domain draws on and is aligned with the University’s Māori Strategic Framework⁴, which will be integrated within the University’s strategic planning environment, forming part of a unified work plan.

Our commitment to becoming a “Te Tiriti-led University” reflects both our status as a landowner with a longstanding relationship with mana whenua in their takiwā, and our role as part of an education system that “honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and supports Māori-Crown relationships” as defined in the Education and Training Act 2020. While this Strategic Plan outlines the approach the University will take to fulfil our responsibilities, we recognise the diversity of viewpoints on this matter and (consistent with our role as a university) the importance of critical debate on how the Te Tiriti o Waitangi is effectively applied in the context of the University.

1 Takiwā equates to region – in this case the geographical home region of Ngāi Tahu.

2 Te ao Māori denotes the Māori world. While simple in definition, it is rich in meaning and vast in breadth and depth, incorporating te reo Māori (Māori language), tikanga (customs), mātauranga Māori (knowledge), and more broadly, Māori ways of being and worldviews.

3 Māori sovereignty, autonomy, self-determination.

4 Noting that the current Māori Strategic Framework is now due for replacement and the next iteration is currently in development.

Underpinned by our commitment to transforming lives and nurturing the environment in Aotearoa and the Pacific

Vision 2040 articulates the positive impact that we wish to make in our society, grounded in and growing from our legislatively protected role as critic and conscience of society. Vision 2040 underpins our way forward as a strongly connected and socially accountable institution, demonstrated by:

- Contributing significantly to local, regional, national, and global advancement through our research and outstanding graduates.
- Engaging and partnering with communities in Te Waipounamu and Aotearoa New Zealand, the Pacific and beyond to undertake research, teaching and service that supports their needs.
- Supporting and promoting equity, inclusivity, diversity, and reciprocity.
- Behaving ethically and with compassion.

The way in which we demonstrate these elements is articulated throughout this plan. Alongside our Māori Strategic Framework, our commitments to sustainability and to our Place in the Pacific are central themes that permeate the University's Strategic Plan.



Ti Kōuka: The Sustainability Strategic Framework

Vision 2040 embraces sustainability in its broadest sense as demonstrated by our commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, aiming to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Ti Kōuka: The Sustainability Strategic Framework provides direction for our sustainability transition through to 2030¹, including our commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030. Ti Kōuka and its action plan will be integrated with the University's strategic planning environment, forming part of a unified work plan aligned with the Strategic Plan. Importantly, Ti Kōuka will support us to compete in the global market in both international education and research, provide international experiences for our students, and support staff travel while minimising the negative impacts of air travel.

The Pacific Strategic Framework 2022-2030

We are confident of our place within and of the Pacific and aspire to play a leading role in the Pacific in teaching, research, and community engagements, and to be a premier university of the region.

The Pacific Strategic Framework is focused on achieving academic excellence, equitable access and retention of Pacific students. It recognises that strengthening and celebrating the knowledge, skills and capabilities of Pacific students will prepare Aotearoa New Zealand's and the wider global workforce to be influential, responsible, and entrepreneurial citizens. The Pacific Strategic Framework's five goals map firmly into the structure of the Strategic Plan and will be integrated to ensure alignment of the Pacific Strategic Framework and the University Strategic Plan.

Action: *Create a unified strategic work plan that integrates and ensures alignment in purpose and actions with the Māori, Pacific and Sustainability Strategic Frameworks.*

¹ The framework articulates our approach to sustainability across teaching, research, operations, culture, engagement, regional and global impact, and innovation through the cultural metaphor of the ti kōuka (cabbage tree) which was critical to sustaining many iwi on Te Waipounamu. We will report on our progress against Ti Kōuka including our carbon emissions in annual reports.

Achieved through
outcomes in five domains



Where we are heading: The University is a community where staff and students flourish and contribute meaningfully to our mission and University life. Our University community values and respects diversity, and our culture is supportive of students and staff. We provide an environment where all learners can achieve their full potential and grow holistically to become engaged, connected and highly valued members of society. Our high-performing staff have fulfilling and rewarding careers, working together towards shared goals. Our leaders at all levels inspire confidence, and our organisational and leadership structures are agile and aligned with our strategic aspirations.

Provide compelling and viable educational offerings that deliver excellent student outcomes and experiences

Where we are heading: Our students value our transformative University experience. We produce graduates distinguished not only by their academic achievements, but also by their open-mindedness, maturity, adaptability, and enduring comradeship. The academic, co-curricular, cultural and social aspects of the student experience challenge, inspire and support our diverse student cohort to achieve the educational and social outcomes of our Vision 2040. Students appreciate our excellent teachers, clear programme structures and our contemporary ways of teaching with a digital experience that matches the on-campus experience. Our educational offerings are delivered in an efficient and financially sustainable manner.

Organise and focus research and innovation efforts to deliver high-quality, impactful research

Where we are heading: We are known across Aotearoa New Zealand and globally for the quality and impact of our researchers, research, and innovation, with the reputation and rankings performance to match. This platform strengthens our research by and for Māori and Pacific peoples. We have built critical mass in key areas of strength, attracting some of the world's best researchers and have strong partnerships in these areas. Our research endeavours have a significant impact on social wellbeing, environmental and sustainability challenges, both locally and in the Pacific region. Our high expectations, and effective and responsive research supports, deliver quality research efficiently.

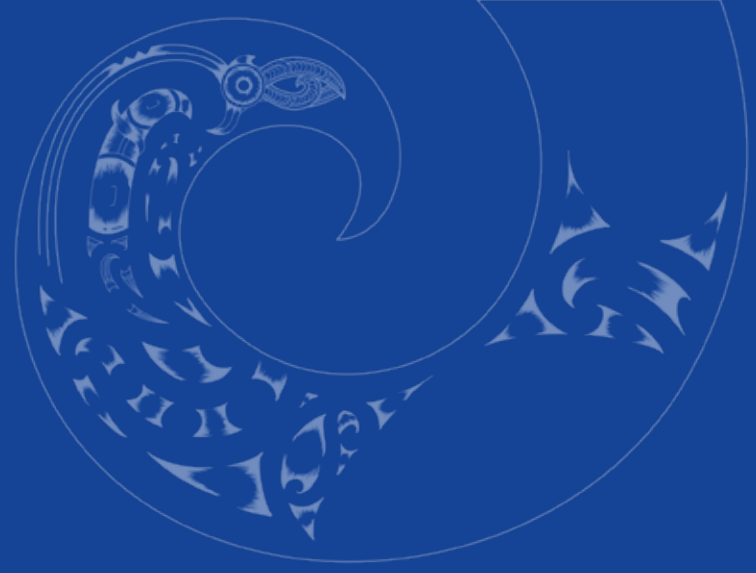
Support our people to achieve their best

Whakamana i Te Tiriti o Waitangi - strengthen our capability, capacity and culture to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Where we are heading: We are committed to incorporating te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori, throughout the experience of our students and staff. Our University is a place where tauira and kaimahi Māori flourish as Māori. Our partnership with mana whenua is strong, and together we strengthen the embedding of te ao Māori throughout the University. Staff and students engage confidently with te ao Māori across disciplines. We have academically-focused and engaged senior Māori leaders. Our increasing tauira and kaimahi Māori have opportunities to learn and grow within their culture. We do more research with and by Māori.

Achieve our ambition to become a more global and connected university

Where we are heading: We are recognised as a leading global institution in and of Aotearoa and the Pacific, delivering research and teaching that is globally significant and nationally transformative. We attract world-class researchers, high-quality students, and esteemed partners. Our focused portfolio of partnerships builds our global reputation and impact, and creates value across multiple dimensions (teaching, research, and engagement). Our relationship with alumni locally and globally connects them to us in ways that support them in their lives and careers and supports the University to grow and prosper.



Provide
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Where we are heading: Our students value our transformative University experience. We produce graduates distinguished not only by their academic achievements, but also by their open-mindedness, maturity, adaptability, and enduring comradeship. The academic, co-curricular, cultural and social aspects of the student experience challenge, inspire and support our diverse student cohort to achieve the educational and social outcomes of our Vision 2040. Students appreciate our excellent teachers, clear programme structures and our contemporary ways of teaching with a digital experience that matches the on-campus experience. Our education offerings are delivered in an efficient and financially sustainable manner.

Where we are now: Our identity as a comprehensive undergraduate residential university delivering outstanding teaching and learning is a strong foundation for growth.

The diversity and complexity of our paper offerings and programme structures can be both confusing and inefficient, and we need to evolve to meet students' emerging digital learning needs and expectations.

While we have taken steps to successfully grow Māori and Pacific student enrolments and have leading support programmes for these students, we are yet to achieve equity of participation and achievement for all our students.

Global best practice

Sustainable delivery of excellent student outcomes and experiences includes:

- focussed curriculum design with the optimal amount of choice to ensure administrative and teaching efficiency, while improving the student experience through clear pathways
- effective use of technology to enhance teaching and learning and meet the needs of all students
- a strong focus on student engagement and support that incorporates student feedback and other key perspectives in our teaching and learning.

Our priorities

- 1) Grow our student cohort and increase its diversity.
- 2) Redefine our graduate attributes to guide excellence in teaching and deliver a transformative student experience.
- 3) Streamline our educational offerings to deliver an exceptional experience that is financially viable and aligned with demand and our strengths.
- 4) Meet student needs with best practice pedagogy.
- 5) Achieve equity in student participation and achievement.

Domain-wide success measures

- Student satisfaction with the “Otago experience” is maintained at or above 90%.
- Student EFTS grows to 24,000 by 2030. This includes 15-20% international and 15-20% postgraduate taught students.
- The University’s domestic student cohort becomes more reflective of the national demographic profile in similar age brackets, taking into account the relative proportion of under-served groups who achieve university entrance.
- We maintain our position as the number one university in New Zealand for educational performance for first year retention, paper pass rates, and qualification completion rates.
- Achieve equity in educational achievement by 2030 for priority cohorts¹.

¹ Priority equity cohorts as defined by the TEC, and including Māori, Pacific and students with disabilities.

Priority 1

Grow our student cohort and increase its diversity

Growing our student cohort and increasing its diversity is essential for the University to remain competitive, cultivate academic excellence, and advance our equity goals. We are ambitious in growth, aiming to significantly increase enrolments to 24,000 EFTS by 2030. An upswing in domestic school leaver numbers from 2025 provides a platform for future domestic growth, and the University also has significant opportunities to increase postgraduate taught and international enrolments. Growing our postgraduate taught student cohort is vital to support the needs of those entering and in the workforce. As we detail further in the Domain Achieve our ambition to become a more global and connected university, growing our international student cohort will enrich the cultural and educational experience of all our students, creating a global community, while also supporting our global reputation and financial sustainability.

Increasing enrolments will be challenging, in an increasingly competitive environment, with uncertain economic conditions, and rising costs of living. Growth will require all parts of the University to contribute to attracting and retaining students, through focused and attractive programme and paper offerings, more flexible delivery including blended and online learning, quicker admissions decisions, increased support for all students in our community, and the provision of more student accommodation.

Action: *Grow overall enrolment, particularly in our international (onshore and offshore) and postgraduate taught cohorts.*

Priority 2

Redefine our graduate attributes to guide excellence in teaching and deliver a transformative student experience

We need to clearly define graduate attributes that support the University in shaping a student's overall development and communicate externally our value to students. Our graduate attributes will embody our own unique value proposition and connect to what we teach and how we teach. Graduate attributes will prepare our students to realise their educational goals, reach their potential and become highly sought after in the professional world.

Action: *Revise our graduate attributes to better align with our unique identity and student experience and to guide the University's teaching and learning activity.*

Priority 3

Streamline our educational offerings to deliver an exceptional experience that is financially viable and aligned with demand and our strengths

Our goal in paper and programme consolidation is to respond to student need and demand, align our offering with our strategic direction, minimise duplication of teaching across existing papers, and create clarity for students of programme requirements. This will free up resources for reinvestment.

Our current offerings can be difficult to navigate for students, and inefficient in operation, which adds complexity and unnecessary effort for our staff. Nearly a quarter of our papers have less than fifteen enrolments, and these papers typically cost more to deliver and support than they earn,¹ which is financially unsustainable. We will always need to deliver some papers and programmes with low enrolments for strategic reasons; however, decision-making for small papers and programmes must account for relative strategic benefits aligned to the University's overall mission.

Action: Consolidate the University's paper and programme offerings, guided by a set of principles. The consolidation will be centrally guided, and will require Divisions, Schools, and Departments to apply these principles firmly and rigorously when new offerings are being considered or existing offerings are not performing. These principles are:

Principle	Description
Strategic alignment	Aligns with university and divisional priorities to focus on what we do best and what will best develop graduates to achieve our vision of transforming lives, connecting communities, and nurturing the environment.
Student experience	Provides a high-quality educational experience that engages and challenges students and prepares them to succeed beyond their studies.
Research alignment	Aligns with University research focus areas to give students access to world-class research and researchers.
Honours Te Tiriti	Supports the University to honour Te Tiriti.
Market responsive	Appropriate to our relative market position, led by data on student demand and the needs of students, communities, and the workforce.
Viable	Financially viable to allow us to invest in improving the student experience across the University, and to support research.

¹ This is consistent with similar benchmarks from universities in Australia, Canada and the UK.

Priority 4

Meet student needs with best practice pedagogy

The way we teach must evolve to meet the changing needs and expectations of students if we are to continue to remain known for the excellence of our teaching, and more broadly for providing high-quality learning experiences that inspire our students and prepare them for their lives and careers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated acceptance of increased flexibility and blended learning, leading many universities around the world to update their offerings and pedagogy. Non-traditional education providers¹ are offering increasingly sophisticated flexible and targeted learning more cheaply than universities, and providers of all kinds must adapt their delivery in response to rapid developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI).

We will incorporate blended learning into existing undergraduate pedagogy to complement our focus on face-to-face delivery, as the on-campus experience provides improved educational outcomes and is a key differentiator for the University. Our undergraduates want to be on campus, but with the flexibility to fit study around work and other opportunities such as internships and Work Integrated Learning (WIL).

A select and carefully designed offering of purpose-designed fully online, flexible, and blended programmes that align with student demand can help us better meet the needs of postgraduate taught students, both within New Zealand, and overseas. Opportunities include non-award programmes for people seeking targeted skills development.

WIL is strongly embedded in many of our professional programmes. We need to build on our experience in these areas to use WIL more broadly to improve employability and deepen students' understanding of industry and real-world applications of their learning.

Action: *Ensure our pedagogy meets student expectations by:*

- *incorporating blended learning to complement the undergraduate residential experience*
- *developing a select and targeted offering of fully online and blended learning postgraduate, taught and non-award professional development programmes*
- *enhancing work integrated learning opportunities.*

¹

For example, edX, Coursera, LinkedIn Learning.

Priority 5

Achieve equity in student participation and achievement

We respond to Vision 2040's commitment to social accountability by supporting our students to achieve equity in access, participation, and achievement.

Our sustained investment in this area has already contributed strongly to rising enrolments from under-served groups. Our Māori and Pacific enrolments have risen steadily in recent years and over 30 per cent of our students are first generation university attendees. However, increasing socioeconomic diversity remains more of a challenge.

We currently have one of New Zealand's best paper pass rates and qualification completion rates for Māori and Pacific students and world-leading support programmes delivering excellent results in some areas, but key educational performance metrics for these groups as a whole, remain significantly below those achieved by our broader student population. We need to prepare now to ensure that by 2040, our student body is reflective of the reality that 25.0% of New Zealand's population aged 15-39 will be Māori, and 13.8% will be of Pacific ethnicity.¹

There is still work to be done to support success for all students, such as rolling out our proven targeted programmes more broadly. Supporting success requires specific approaches for different groups, as well as responsiveness at the individual level.

Action: *Take a whole-of-university approach to supporting under-served groups across the University, incorporating resourcing and accessibility of supports, pathways to degree-level study, and financial assistance to ensure we are delivering the range of support students need to succeed. Implementation of our Pacific Strategic Framework, Māori Strategic Framework, and Learner Success Plan will underpin this endeavour.*

¹ Stats NZ projections (50th percentile [median]), 2023.



Organise and
focus research
and innovation
efforts to deliver
high-quality,
impactful
research

Where we are heading: We are known across Aotearoa New Zealand and globally for the quality and impact of our researchers, research, and innovation, with the reputation and rankings performance to match. This platform strengthens our research by and for Māori and Pacific peoples. We have built critical mass in key areas of strength, attracting some of the world's best researchers and have strong partnerships in these areas. Our research endeavours significant impact on social wellbeing, environmental and sustainability challenges, both locally and in the Pacific region. Our high expectations, and effective and responsive research supports, deliver quality research efficiently.

Where we are now: We are nationally known for our research strengths, our researchers, and their high-class research across our comprehensive offer. Our research is innovative and regionally responsive. While we have critical mass in some areas, much of our research effort creates breadth rather than depth. It is likely that a lack of research focus and the need to communicate research impact more strongly is contributing to our declining performance in international rankings. While the amount of funding we win is growing slowly, we have lost market share across our three major research funding sources. Our key funders' research priorities are shifting, and others may be adapting to these faster than we are.

Global best practice

Universities around the world are typically focusing their research efforts on a smaller number of areas to achieve greater depth and performance in these areas, while increasing research efficiency. Greater depth builds critical mass in areas of strength, fostering stronger global reputation in those fields, in turn increasing international rankings and helping to attract the best researchers and relevant partnerships..

Our priorities

- 1) Better focus our research into areas of strength.
- 2) Communicate our research impact with local, regional, and global communities.
- 3) Align our research partnerships so that each one delivers strategic value.
- 4) Ensure our processes, resource allocation and staff expectations efficiently support our areas of research focus.

Domain-wide success measures:

- The University grows its market share of major New Zealand competitive grant funding (MBIE, HRC and Marsden).
- Research funding from a diverse range of other sources increases year on year.
- The University improves its standing in the QS and THE Rankings year on year¹.

¹ Including both its overall rankings, and its specific rankings in a wide variety of disciplines.

Priority 1

Better focus our research into areas of strength

We have a strong domestic reputation for delivering high-quality research across our comprehensive research portfolio and some notable concentrations of research strength. However, in many parts of the University research effort is spread thinly across many discipline areas.

Worldwide, many universities are focusing their research on “grand challenges”, such as climate change, geopolitical security, and AI. Domestically, the Government has signalled a shift toward a research system that focuses on nationally significant priorities. We need our research to align with these priorities and work to address the biggest issues facing our local, regional, and global communities.

Embedded within this is the need to ensure that we have research that is serving and co-created with our Māori and Pacific communities.

We will increase the depth of our research, achieve critical mass, and strengthen our impact, by determining focus areas at the University, Division, School, and Department levels.

Action: *Redefine our current University-wide Research Strengths against the below principles.*

Action: *Define a small number of focus areas at the Division and School/Faculty levels, guided by our University-wide Research Strengths and strategic direction. Use these focus areas to consolidate our research activity, including through the recruitment of new researchers and the allocation of internal research funding. Areas to grow or strengthen interdisciplinary research, particularly focused on “grand challenges”, will be identified through this process.*

We will assess Research Strengths and define focus funding and capacity-building effort using the following principles:

Principle	Description
Internal strategic alignment	Aligns with the strategic priorities of the University.
External strategic alignment	Aligns with the strategic and funding priorities of funding bodies, government, partners, mana whenua and Pacific communities.
Rewarding success	Builds on existing strengths where quality and quantity of research output have been achieved.
Researcher development	Provides development opportunities for current researchers and strengthens our ability to attract the best researchers.
Honouring Te Tiriti	Strengthens the University's ability to support Te Tiriti through growing Māori-focused research, Māori-led research, and co-creation of research with Māori.
Partnership potential	Creates or strengthens opportunities for partnerships with government, industry, international universities, and other partners.

Priority 2

Communicate our research impact with local, regional, and global communities

Global rankings are an important tool for attracting academic staff, students, and high-value partnerships, and for increasing research and international student income. As such, they help provide the platform for us to undertake high-impact research across the University, including in areas of importance to our Māori and Pacific communities. While rankings are a far from perfect measures of quality, they are increasingly important in a competitive global environment, especially given that New Zealand Government investment is significantly constrained and prioritised elsewhere.

Our rankings have declined significantly in recent years. The measures underpinning the rankings indicate that we need to dramatically improve the communication of our research impact and quality to the world. Increasing our efforts to demonstrate impact to the New Zealand community will help to maintain the University's social licence and accountability, and aid in increasing government funding for research.

Action: *Ensure that effective support mechanisms (such as strategic communications and marketing, media training, conference attendance, and publication support) are in place to strengthen the ability of our researchers to showcase their research.*

Priority 3

Align our research partnerships so that each one delivers strategic value

Partnerships are critical to delivering much of our research, such as our relationship with the health sector that facilitates much of our clinical research. However, formal partnerships require investment to develop and resourcing to maintain, therefore careful decision-making is required on which partnerships the University pursues, to ensure they deliver value to both sides of the partnership.

Our current approach to research partnerships has resulted in many partnerships without sufficient scale or alignment to deliver optimal value. We must adopt a more strategic approach to partnership development to increase the impact of our partnerships.

Action: *Focus our efforts in current and new research partnership development, using criteria including strategic alignment, alignment with research focus areas, opportunity for growth into other areas of the University, and financial sustainability.*

Priority 4

Ensure our processes, resources allocation and staff expectations efficiently support our areas of research focus

A more focused approach to research will require our past practices to change. We must support researchers to understand their responsibilities under this new way of working and ensure guidelines and processes related to funding allocation, and staff recruitment are clear, transparent and aligned with the University's strategic priorities. At the centre of this approach is the need to work more efficiently, allowing us to spend our discretionary research funds less broadly, with more consolidated effort on research activities aligned to the University's focus.

Action: *Update research KPI frameworks, guidelines, funding models, and processes for recruiting new staff, to ensure that they reflect the principles used to define research focus areas and align with the University's strategic priorities.*



Support our
people to
achieve their
best

Where we are heading: The University is a community where staff and students flourish and contribute meaningfully to our mission and University life. Our University community values and respects diversity, and our culture is supportive of students and staff. We provide an environment where all learners can achieve their full potential and grow holistically to become engaged, connected and highly valued members of society. Our high-performing staff have fulfilling and rewarding careers, working together towards shared goals. Our leaders at all levels inspire confidence, and our organisational and leadership structures are agile and aligned with our strategic aspirations.

Where we are now: Our culture has many positive aspects, fostering high levels of staff dedication and student engagement and outcomes. However, we are constrained by a range of external and internal challenges, and our resilience is being tested by the pressures of change. We need to grow and support capable leaders to help us navigate the changes ahead. We need to engage and support our staff whose hard work is highly valued and essential to our ongoing success as we implement Pae Tata. We provide excellent student support, but a more coordinated and consistent approach to delivering this support will further strengthen the Otago student experience.

Global best practice

Successful universities approach wellbeing with a whole-of-university approach wherein all aspects of the university promote and support wellbeing, with the support of leaders, a focus on culture, and designing services collaboratively with students and staff. Universities with a highly devolved operating model that have successfully undergone transformation have focused on developing a cohesive university culture. This unites universities with shared goals and ensures that leaders at all levels are making decision that contribute to shared success.

Our priorities

- 1) Strengthen a culture of working together and supporting diversity.
- 2) Ensure students thrive through the unique Otago experience.
- 3) Support our staff to succeed and grow.
- 4) Build the capability of our leaders at all levels.

Domain-wide success measures:

- Students and staff report a sense of belonging to the University community.
- Students and staff are satisfied with the University's support for their development and wellbeing.
- Staff turnover is reduced.

Priority 1

Enhance a culture of working together and supporting diversity

We are proud of our staff and their continued commitment to delivering excellence throughout the University. We are equally proud of the strong relationship between our staff and students, and our students' high level of engagement in university affairs is one of our great strengths. While this creates a strong positive basis for our culture, several factors have eroded elements of our culture, including COVID-19 disruption, a legacy of tolerance for the poor behaviour of a small number of staff, a divide between some academic and professional staff, and the University's financial situation. Change in large, complex institutions such as universities is difficult, and we need to learn to change more effectively and more successfully.

We have undertaken foundational work that allows us to move forward on elements of our workplace culture, but we need to do more. We aim to ensure that the University, its leaders, and all staff within it are equipped for, and proactively engaged in embedding our values as articulated in Vision 2040. We will build on the Equity and Diversity, Māori, and Pacific Strategic Frameworks, to ensure that our community respects and celebrates diversity. Becoming a stronger version of ourselves will require us to live these values day to day, embrace new ways of working and keep the University's vision, mission, and strategic priorities at the forefront of our decision-making through a period of significant change.

Our culture is reinforced by the decisions and actions of leaders, our people practices, processes, systems, and underlying structures as well as behaviours and performance that are rewarded.

Action: *Improve the elements of our leadership, capability, processes, and systems required to embed a positive, collaborative, and unified university culture that is based on the University's values and supports diversity and increased comfort with change.*

Priority 2

Ensure students thrive through the unique Otago experience

We are known for the strength of our student experience, underpinned by our distinctive character as a residential university, and by the commitment of our staff to providing an environment where learners from all backgrounds and experiences are supported to achieve their full potential. Our students are engaged in the community through volunteering and other types of service, and are sought after for their capability, resilience, and well-roundedness.

Aware that we live in a challenging world where politics and policy have become fraught and polarised, we will also support students to disagree openly and respectfully, think critically, and debate important and contentious issues constructively.

The University acted swiftly to support student wellbeing through COVID-19 disruptions, working with student leaders to enact a comprehensive response. As mentioned elsewhere in this plan, we have world-leading support programmes for Māori and Pacific students and work hard to support all our students. However, there is more we can do to apply excellent initiatives that have worked in particular parts of the University more broadly. We need to ensure we coordinate academic, wellbeing and other types of support around the concept of supporting the whole student, and use data more to inform, tailor and monitor our support interventions. In doing so, we also need to ensure we meet the requirements of relevant government regulations and expectations as they relate to pastoral care and student success¹.

Action: *Enhance our culture of holistic student success by:*

- *ensuring our staff continue to place students at the centre of what we do and how we do it.*
- *improving the consistency, coordination, visibility, and utilisation of our student support services*
- *continue to embed extra- and co-curricular activities within the Otago student experience to develop graduates that are engaged and responsible contributors to society.*

1

This includes legislation relation to pastoral care and expectations related to the Learner Success Plan.

Priority 3

Support our staff to succeed and grow

The University has historically enjoyed a strong reputation as a place to build a career, and many of our staff are long-serving. The culture-related challenges mentioned above have had a negative impact on staff wellbeing and satisfaction, and the disruption of internal change and sector-wide evolution ahead will continue to challenge us. Meanwhile, job market and economic conditions are having a negative impact on our ability to attract and retain staff. Some of our staff have job descriptions that do not accurately describe their work, spend too much time on transactional tasks, and in some parts of professional services, have limited opportunities for career development. Staff at all levels and in all roles need to be supported with clear and relevant job descriptions with performance expectations that align with these job descriptions.

Our success is determined by our ability to attract and retain highly talented and committed people. The factors above make it critical for us to strengthen our reputation as a place where staff are supported to do their best work. This will require us to consider all aspects of the experience of working at the University.

Action: *Take a holistic approach to building careers and supporting staff including:*

- *Refine career development frameworks for all staff, including consistent access to targeted and relevant professional development and resources for all staff.*
- *Undertake job redesign where needed to ensure that all staff have fulfilling and rewarding work, including updating job descriptions to match work being completed and relevant performance expectations.*
- *Strengthen staff wellbeing and support mechanisms.*

Priority 4

Build the capability of our leaders

University leaders made rapid decisions to respond to the COVID-19 crisis, however, in our normal mode of operation, decision-making is often slow. We have not always empowered our leaders at all levels with clarity of direction or expectation or provided the support or development they need to be fully effective. Complex leadership structures and a hierarchical culture of internal compliance and control contributes to this lack of empowerment, to slow decision making, and to an uneven track record of effectively implementing key strategic decisions.

Universities elsewhere are responding to the kinds of challenge we face by bringing together academic and professional leadership, and ensuring they have roles that allow them to focus on leadership and alignment in implementing strategy. We need to build our leaders' capability across a range of areas to help them better support students and staff to flourish, pursue iterative improvement, and manage the business of their areas.

Action: *Build the capability of leaders and improve our leadership structures to ensure that our leadership is agile and aligned to our strategic aspirations.*

Action: *Develop performance expectations for leaders at all levels that clearly articulate their role in implementing Pae Tata.*



Whakamana
i Te Tiriti o
Waitangi -
strengthen
our capability,
capacity, and
culture to
honour Te Tiriti
o Waitangi

Where we are heading: We are committed to incorporating te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori, throughout the experience of our students and staff. Our University is a place where tauira and kaimahi¹ Māori flourish as Māori. Our partnership with mana whenua is strong, and together we strengthen the embedding of te ao Māori throughout the University. Staff and students engage confidently with te ao Māori across disciplines. We have academically-focused and engaged senior Māori leaders. Our tauira and kaimahi Māori have opportunities to learn and grow within their culture. We do more research with and by Māori.

¹ Tauira means student or learner, kaimahi means staff.

Where we are now: We have made strong progress growing our numbers of tauira Māori and (to a lesser extent) kaimahi Māori, but we have a long way to go for our numbers to reflect society. Our kaimahi Māori are frequently called on outside of their regular duties to support building cultural capability across the University. There are pockets of strength where te ao Māori is embedded in teaching and research, but many of our students have limited opportunity to engage with te ao Māori in their studies. We have lagged behind other universities in establishing a senior Māori academic leadership role.

New Zealand best practice

Best practice is emerging across the education sector and the public sector in New Zealand as institutions grow their understanding of and approach to honouring Te Tiriti.

A common thread is ensuring that there are leaders, structures and teams with specific responsibilities and resourcing to undertake critical work. For example, curriculum transformation working groups, Te Tiriti offices, and engagement mechanisms for Māori within industry and community.

Our priorities

Our approach is to grow our culture, cultural capability, and capacity to honour Te Tiriti and embed te ao Māori together, as one cannot grow far without the other.

- 1) Ensure we have the leaders, structures, and resourcing to support our Te Tiriti journey and mana whenua partnership.
- 2) Support all our staff to engage with and embed te ao Māori.
- 3) Provide an environment in which tauira Māori can succeed as Māori.
- 4) Develop innovative ways for all students to engage and learn with and in te ao Māori.
- 5) Grow research engaged with te ao Māori.
- 6) Protect taonga¹ Māori.

¹ Taonga Māori are cultural treasures, including te reo Māori (language) and mātauranga Māori (knowledge).

Domain-wide success measures:

- Tauira Māori and kaimahi Māori report that they feel their Māori identity and culture are valued at the University.
- Students report that they have had the opportunities they want to engage with te ao Māori.
- The number of research outputs¹ across categories of Māori-focused research, Māori-led research, and research undertaken engaging with Māori continues to grow.

¹ The term is used in the broadest sense to reflect the variety of outputs that our Māori academics produce and is not limited to publications.

Priority 1

Ensure we have the leaders, structures, and resourcing to support our Te Tiriti journey and mana whenua partnership

The scale of the journey towards Vision 2040 and bringing together te ao Māori and the Western university world will require significant Māori leadership, and place great demands on our partnership with Ngāi Tahu and mana whenua at our other campuses as we will need their guidance and collaboration at many stages of the journey. We must approach this partnership in recognition that mana whenua are called upon as partners to many organisations, and the partnership is foremost between mana whenua, University Council and Senior Executives at the mana-to-mana level. We need to foster manaakitanga¹ and reciprocity in support of our partnership.

Action: Establish a Māori academic role at the senior leadership level and revise the structure and reporting lines of Māori leadership across the University in light of the establishment of this senior role.

Action: Commit to additional resourcing to ensure our Te Tiriti partnership with mana whenua is fully supported.

¹ Manaakitanga derives from two words - 'mana' and 'aki'. Mana is a condition that holds everything in the highest regard. Aki means to uphold or support. Extending Manaakitanga requires respect, humility, kindness, and honesty.

Priority 2

Support all our staff to engage with and embed te ao Māori

Embedding te ao Māori across the University will require all our staff to strengthen their capability to understand and work in te ao Māori, supported by a significant increase in our number of kaimahi Māori (both academic and professional), and underpinned by a workplace culture that values te ao Māori and empowers kaimahi Māori. Ensuring we have the staffing capability and capacity to embed te ao Māori is critical to contribute to the advancement of mātauranga Māori through our teaching and research and for supporting our taura Māori.

Increasing our number of kaimahi Māori

Among the many reasons we need to increase our number of kaimahi Māori are:

- 1) To ensure that the percentage of kaimahi Māori is more reflective of our society and student population.
- 2) To grow our capability and capacity to embed te ao Māori across the University. Greater numbers of kaimahi Māori in dedicated roles both engaging directly in teaching and research and supporting the University to build its capability to engage with te ao Māori, will be pivotal to ensure the additional workload does not fall on Māori staff who are not in roles dedicated to this purpose.

We aim to increase our kaimahi Māori numbers in an environment where there is both a shortage of Māori to take on these roles, and significant competition to recruit and retain them. We need to adopt innovative ways to engage mātanga Māori (Māori experts) in our operations, offerings, and delivery. There are many opportunities to meet the staffing and knowledge needs of embedding te ao Māori across the University, that will also enrich learning, research, and ways of working.

Action: Significantly increase initiatives to retain, grow and support Māori staff including: targeted recruitment, establishing kaupapa Māori focused roles, career development programmes and pathways, and Māori staff support networks.

Action: Support more flexible and mutually beneficial opportunities for Māori professionals, businesses and institutions across industry, government, and academia to engage in teaching and capability uplift at the University.

Strengthening our capability to engage with te ao Māori and our workplace culture..

All our staff must strengthen their understanding of and engagement with te ao Māori and grow our University culture to be a place where taurira and kaimahi Māori flourish as Māori. We acknowledge the challenge of delivering capability development across the University, and that our staff will have different learning needs to achieve growth. We will need to balance the need to build foundational capability in ways that are authentic at scale across the University, with the need for more focused capability development to meet the demands of specific roles. We will work to ensure the workload of growing cultural empathy and capability does not fall on Māori staff who are not in relevant dedicated roles, and that all staff are supported in this journey.

Action: *Design and provide capability development programmes for all our staff adopting a stepped approach to capability development and move towards making these required for all.¹*

Action: *Aligned with the Domain Support our people to achieve their best, grow our workplace culture to ensure that the University is a safe and supportive space for Māori staff.*

¹ As a first step towards this, the University will deploy the Te Rito bicultural competency programme.

Priority 3

Provide an environment in which taurira Māori can succeed as Māori

As stated in the *Domain Provide a compelling and viable educational offer that delivers excellent student outcomes and experiences*, we currently have one of New Zealand's best paper pass rates and qualification completion rates for Māori and Pacific students and world-leading support programmes delivering excellent results in some areas. However, these key educational performance indicators are significantly below the rates achieved by our broader student population. Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the University context strengthens our existing commitment to supporting taurira Māori. We need to empower taurira Māori to succeed as Māori through valuing their culture, their voice and responding to their needs. We need to invest in their success, for our success.

Action: *In conjunction with the action related to student support outlined elsewhere in Pae Tata, engage with taurira Māori to understand their needs and responsively shape the support they want, including revising mechanisms for senior leadership to engage with taurira Māori.*

Priority 4

Develop innovative ways for students to engage and learn with and in te ao Māori

Honouring Te Tiriti means ensuring that all students should have opportunities to learn from and within a te ao Māori framework, and this is increasingly an expectation from many of our students. This means providing opportunities to engage with te ao Māori for students at all levels, whatever their programme, pathway or prior experience. We will need to provide foundational learning at scale University-wide as well as discipline-specific learning.

Given that different areas of the University have different levels of experience delivering learning with and in te ao Māori, approaches will initially be tailored to match existing levels of capability and capacity. We will also work towards bringing together Māori epistemologies and pedagogy methods with mainstream Western models for learning delivery.

Action: *Ensure adequate resourcing (potentially through a dedicated unit or centre) to increase the incorporation of te ao Māori perspectives and pedagogies in papers and programmes via a stepped approach (below).*

Action: *Investigate the feasibility of making 100-level courses in te reo Māori and te ao Māori mandatory across the University for students who have not completed relevant prior study or do not meet a minimum level of competence.¹*



¹ Kaupapa Māori here refers to a Māori approach to learning and education incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values of Māori society.

Priority 5

Grow our research that engages with te ao Māori

The University has gradually increased the number of research projects that progress through the Research Consultation with Māori Policy, but we do not effectively capture data on research outputs that engage with te ao Māori. We want to grow our research with and by Māori and improve our ability to measure and monitor performance in these areas. Priority 2 Actions to retain, grow and support Māori staff, and increase the cultural capability of all our staff will assist us to grow our research that engages with te ao Māori, but there is more we can do.

Action: *Ensure that the University has the internal supports, postgraduate scholarships and data capture required to increase and measure research activity that effectively engages with te ao Māori.*

Priority 6

Protect taonga Māori

Embedding te ao Māori across the University's educational offering will require much greater access to, development of, and use of taonga Māori (Māori cultural treasures), including te reo Māori (language), mātauranga Māori (knowledge) and tikanga Māori (customs). Taonga remain the cultural and intellectual property of their Māori kaitiaki (custodians). We need to develop ways to ensure taonga that form part of our education are accessed, developed, and used in a culturally appropriate manner that upholds mana whenua's tino rangatiratanga.

Action: *Ensure that the University has the staffing, processes, and governance in place to support the culturally appropriate use of taonga Māori in partnership with kaitiaki, mana whenua, and government.*



Achieve our
ambition to
become a
more global
and connected
university

Where we are heading: We are recognised as a leading global institution in and of Aotearoa and the Pacific, delivering research and teaching that is globally significant and regionally and nationally transformative. We attract world-class researchers, high-quality students, and esteemed partners. Our focused portfolio of partnerships builds our global reputation and impact, and creates value across multiple dimensions (teaching, research, and engagement). Our relationship with alumni locally and globally connects them to us in ways that support them in their lives and careers and supports the University to grow and prosper.

Where we are now: We are no longer ranked in the QS top 200 or the THE top 300 which has implications for international recruitment, research, and partnerships. Our international students come from many source countries and bring a rich diversity to the University; however, there are too few of them. Our rebuild of that international student cohort aims to quickly exceed our pre-pandemic levels. We have a significant number of international partnerships and agreements and must ensure these deliver maximum value. Our alumni feel strong loyalty to our institution, but this relationship could deliver much more to both parties.

Global best practice

Universities are operating in an increasingly global environment to deliver the best research, to achieve the best outcomes for students, and to have impact at a local and global level. Universities in many parts of the world have achieved major increases in international student recruitment to contribute to growth through matching global market demand with programme offering. To succeed in this competitive environment, they are taking a coordinated approach to high-value international partnerships that are relevant to many parts of the institution.

Our priorities

- 1) Substantially grow our international student cohort at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- 2) Maximise the impact of strategically aligned global partnerships, particularly in the Pacific.
- 3) Increase student mobility and create transformative international experiences for all our students.
- 4) Deepen our relationship with alumni, industry and community stakeholders, and other strategic partners.

Domain-wide success measures:

- *Grow our undergraduate and postgraduate international fee-paying enrolments so that our international student cohort reaches 4,000 EFTS by 2030.*
- *At least 500 students per year studying abroad, undertaking outbound exchange experiences, or participating in collaborative online international learning programmes, and the diversity of students undertaking these programmes increases to be more reflective of the student population.*
- *Continually increase the proportion of alumni engaged with the University in each of the four CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) categories of connecting, giving, going, and helping.*

Priority 1

Substantially grow our international student cohort at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels

International students are vital to the cultural and intellectual life of the University, enriching the wider student experience through cross-cultural learning. They strengthen our global alumni network and partnerships and are critical to achieving the financial sustainability needed to deliver excellent teaching and research.

Due to our previous cap on international student numbers, our international student cohort and growth has been less than that of other New Zealand universities. We seek to recover our pre-COVID undergraduate and postgraduate taught international cohorts, then grow well beyond those levels to 2030. This will require a more ambitious approach to international marketing and recruitment.

As we grow our international student cohort, it is critical that we maintain our high-quality international student experience. This will require adjusting our resourcing for international student support, as well as ensuring there is suitable available accommodation, targeted financial aid, and improved responsiveness to student applications and enquiries.¹

Action: *Attract greater numbers of international students through a coordinated approach that articulates a distinctive and clear value proposition in regions we are competitive in and leverages our networks and partnerships, while improving conversion rates for students that enquire and apply to study with us.*

¹ Students may also require academic and English language support.

Priority 2

Maximise the impact of strategically aligned global partnerships, particularly in the Pacific

We have many international partnerships and agreements, which deliver joint research, facilitate student mobility and staff development, and involve collaborations that address global and local challenges. Some partnerships focus on specific activities, while others such as the Matariki Network¹ advance multiple aspects of the University's mission and help raise the University's global profile. The development of meaningful, targeted partnerships can attract more international students and staff, leading to increased diversity and intellectual exchange. It can also strengthen our international reputation, as well as increased funding opportunities and research outputs.

It is important to maintain an overview of partnerships, to ensure strategic alignment of the suite of agreements. Having too many partnerships can absorb effort for outcomes that are insufficiently leveraged and fail to deliver genuine collaboration or mutual benefit. A clear partnership selection and management framework is needed to assess the relative opportunities and risks of partnerships, and the resourcing required to give effect to them.

Action: *Focus our approach to international partnerships by considering each partnership's strategic alignment and commitment, potential to deliver value, and reputational benefits.*

Action: *Strengthen Pacific partnerships and networks to build on the goals on our Pacific Strategic Framework.*

Action: *Strengthen our collaboration with the Matariki Network to deliver greater value across the University.*

¹ matarikinetwork.org/

Priority 3

Increase student mobility and create transformative international experiences for all our students

Our students are not participating in international student experiences at the scale we would like, missing out on opportunities to broaden their perspectives and enhance career prospects. This leaves us at risk of becoming uncompetitive in the market, impacting on our reputation and partnerships, and potentially affecting future funding opportunities.

Increasing the number of outbound mobility/student exchange and collaborative online international learning (COIL) opportunities will enhance the international exposure, cultural capability, and personal and professional development of our students. Increased participation also strengthens international partnerships. We can do more to support and encourage students to participate in outbound international opportunities and increase the diversity of those taking part.

Action: *Extend opportunities and increase options for outbound mobility, student exchange and collaborative online international learning experiences.*

Action: *Partner with institutions that prioritise diversity and inclusivity, including growing the Tūrangawaewae, Pōkai Whenua Award.¹*

Priority 4

Deepen our relationship with alumni, industry and community stakeholders, and other strategic partners

The loyalty and strength of our community of over 160,000 alumni is a great source of pride. Many of our alumni, both locally and globally, look back at their time at the University with great fondness and support us in myriad ways. However, we have an opportunity to build deeper connections with more of our alumni, that benefit both them and us. The University can do more to support life-long engagement with alumni². Stronger alumni relationships can support the University in many ways, such as via national and global partnerships, assistance with recruitment and advocacy, and increased philanthropy.

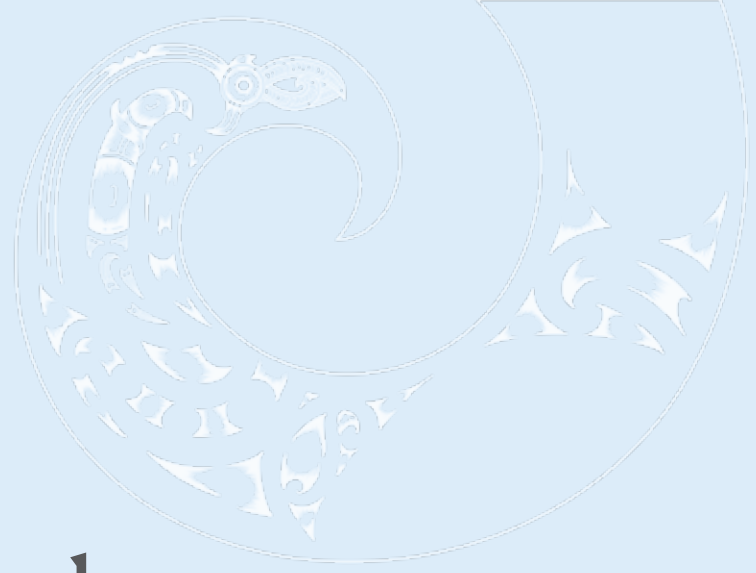
Similarly, our industry, community and other strategic partners are vital to delivering high-quality teaching and research, supporting the operations of the University in other ways, and creating opportunities for our students, staff, and alumni. There are many opportunities for us to grow these connections and the mutual benefit they deliver.

Action: *Increase alumni engagement through an approach that creates mutual benefit.*

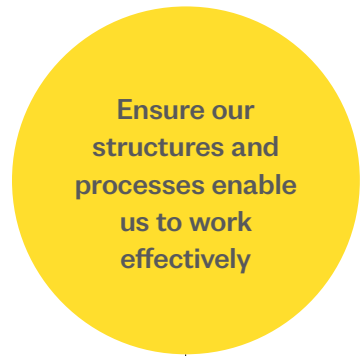
Action: *Grow relationships with industry and community stakeholders and other strategic partners, focusing on a small number of partnerships that will create value across the University.*

¹ The Tūrangawaewae, Pōkai Whenua Award is an example of how we ensure our Māori students can undertake international experiences, and through this, grow through global relationships with indigenous communities.

² By, for example further learning opportunities and the use of campus facilities.



Supported
by a
contemporary,
effective,
efficient and
responsive
university



Where we are heading:

We have excellent, distinctive campuses that:

- are vibrant places of research and learning
- support an outstanding student experience and integrate learning into the community
- align with our strategic direction
- enable opportunities for greater engagement and partnership
- are maintained and developed efficiently; and are well-utilised
- offer teaching, research and outreach targeted to the needs of partners and communities we serve.

Where we are heading:

Our digital spaces operate seamlessly in tandem with our physical spaces to enhance our staff, students and communities' experience of the University.

Our students access high-quality content and flexible learning that meets their learning needs. Our effective and contemporary student-facing systems assist students to access the services they need.

Our systems are fit for purpose, and our staff can focus their time on productive tasks.

Our data is managed effectively so that decision making is well-informed and we can easily track performance.

Where we are heading:

Our academic divisions, schools and departments and professional service divisions operate effectively and collaboratively in support of University strategy. We have the right structures, meaning that our academic departments, schools and divisions are the optimal size, and both our academic and professional services structures are organised to support the effective and efficient delivery of teaching, research, engagement and services. We have high-quality, comprehensive and easily accessible support for students and staff, supported by effective service models that are centrally guided and locally executed, and processes that empower our staff and students.

Deliver value to the University and community through the unique character and purpose of our places



Where we are heading: We have excellent, distinctive campuses that:

- are vibrant places of research and learning
- support an outstanding student experience and integrate learning into the community
- align with our strategic direction
- enable opportunities for greater engagement and partnership
- are maintained and developed efficiently; and are well-utilised
- provide teaching, research and outreach targeted to the needs of partners and the communities

Where we are now: One of our strengths as a University is our national presence. We have an iconic Dunedin campus, and a physical footprint across Aotearoa, including major health sciences presences in Christchurch and Wellington. However, our approach to campus development has at times lacked strategic direction. Due to our ageing building portfolio and the types of academic activity we undertake, we have high maintenance costs. Some of our facilities are nearing end of life, require extensive seismic work, or are heritage buildings. Additionally, we are not making the most of our spaces for our students and staff, or maximising how they contribute to our communities.

Global best practice

Successful multi-campus universities around the world are focusing their campus strategy to meet the needs of students, workforces, partners, and communities. Their campus strategies are defined by a clear value proposition for each campus. Value propositions are informed by data on student demand, community government and industry need, and opportunities for local partnerships. The campus strategy guides the educational offering, research activities, facilities, and underpinning investment, all of which should aim to enhance the campus's value proposition.

Our priorities

- 1) Take a strategic and responsive approach to campus planning.
- 2) Deliver what our communities need from our campuses.
- 3) Achieve greater efficiency in space utilisation.
- 4) Maintain and develop fit-for-purpose facilities.

Domain-wide success measures:

- *Space utilisation improves year on year to at least match national and international benchmarks from comparator universities.*
- *Staff and students are satisfied with the campus environment.*

Priority 1

Take a strategic and responsive approach to campus planning

Our national footprint is a unique strengths, and our campuses and sites across New Zealand are critical to delivering teaching, learning and research as well as vital community and health services. However, our approach to developing this footprint must be more strongly guided by our strategy to ensure the choices we make deliver the most value. This 'value' includes maximising student experience and learning, building strong local strategic partnerships, and contributing to the local community.

The current scope of activity at each of our established campuses and their locational contexts provide a starting point for considering what the future scope of activity at those sites should be. Along with considering these current sites – in Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Invercargill, and Auckland – we also need to consider future priorities for physically dispersed activity¹, and developing our presence in Central Otago/Queenstown Lakes.

Action: *Confirm and follow an overall campus strategy for the University's physical footprint and use this platform to develop specific campus strategies for each location from this. Each of these strategies should be data-driven and clearly map the character and purpose of the place. The strategies must deliver clearly on our five domains and must show how each place will contribute to our shared goals, outlining priorities over the short, medium, and long-term.*

Action: *Ensure alignment of divisional plans with the campus strategy, and from this base develop updated asset management and long-term capital plans.*

Priority 2

Deliver what our communities need from our campuses

Our flagship Dunedin campus is the economic lifeblood of the city. However, it is not part of many locals' everyday lives, and besides accessing health or sporting facilities, attending cultural and academic events, or our pro bono legal advice, they have few reasons to venture on-campus.

Additional community amenities, services and events on campus could bring in locals and generate additional revenue. Providing opportunities for the community to engage with the campus and in social, educational, and cultural activities can also ensure we contribute to the community and maintain our credibility and trust.

While our other campuses are proportionally less vital to the cities in which they are based than our Dunedin campus, the important community contributions they make can be activated more purposefully.

Action: *Develop and implement campus activation strategies, initially focused on a strategy for the Dunedin campus.*

¹ Currently, delivery dispersed beyond our campus sites exists mainly to fulfil the placement needs of professional degree programmes.

Priority 3

Achieve greater efficiency in space utilisation

Our large footprint is one of our strengths, however our space utilisation is not supporting us to get the most out of these spaces, with poor space utilisation in some areas. It is critical that we maximise space efficiency to help manage the high cost of our building portfolio, costs related to deferred maintenance and seismic proofing, and a high proportion of academic and research activity in capital intensive areas that require specialised equipment and facilities.

We must plan our space needs and make the most of our existing spaces, and apply the opportunities provided by increased flexible learning and working to the way we use our spaces. This may allow us to reduce our building footprint by exiting some existing buildings at the end of their life rather than replacing them.

Action: *Improve the utilisation of all the University's spaces, including updating the policies, processes and systems used to control, allocate and monitor spaces.*

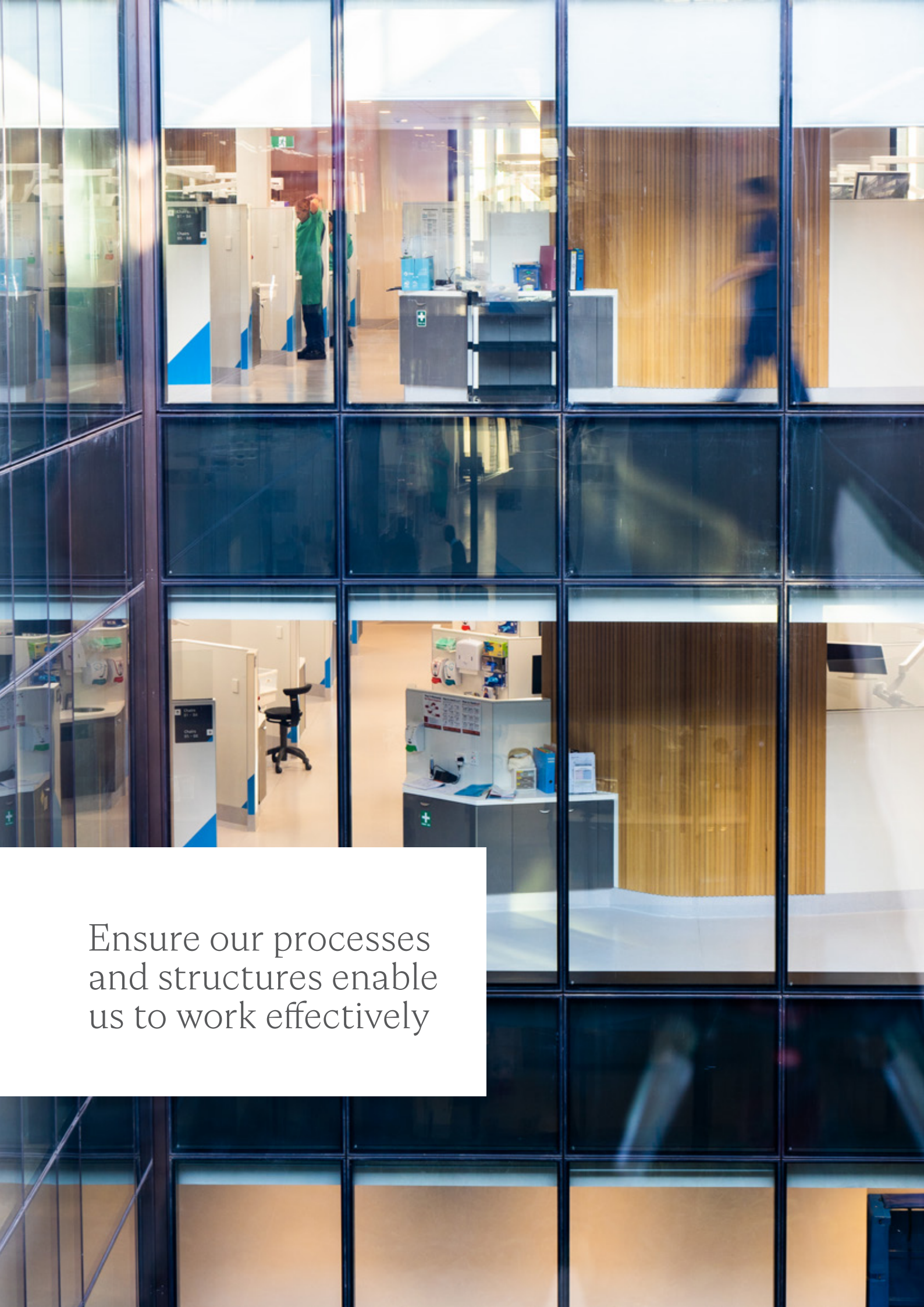
Priority 4

Maintain and develop fit-for-purpose facilities

It is important that we take an informed approach to the maintenance and development of our facilities, to ensure that they remain useable and in good condition into the future. Decision-making must be guided by strategy.

This approach will ensure that we prioritise spending carefully and are able to meet crucial maintenance requirements. We will also need to invest to ensure that our facilities are fit-for-purpose to deliver digital and blended learning.

Action: *Urgently reprioritise investment in facilities, guided by campus strategies and principles.*



Ensure our processes
and structures enable
us to work effectively

Where we are heading: Our academic divisions, schools and departments and professional service divisions operate effectively and collaboratively, in support of University strategy. We have the right structures in place, meaning that our academic departments, schools, and divisions are the optimal size, and both our academic and professional services structures are organised to support the effective and efficient delivery of teaching, research, engagement and services. We have high-quality, comprehensive, and easily accessible support for students and staff, supported by effective service models that are centrally guided and locally executed, and processes that empower our staff and students.

Global best practice

Universities are learning from other sectors in adopting consistent structures and reshaping their academic units to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency. This includes a shift away from groupings purely based on disciplines, and the consolidation of small departments in ways that achieve methodological, intellectual and pedagogical synergies.

Top universities around the world have professional services structured around clearly articulated service delivery models. Universities are continuously improving their delivery models and are continuously looking to improve the way they improve their services to increase efficiency and provide good outcomes for students and staff.

Domain-wide success measures:

- Staff are satisfied with service quality.
- Students are satisfied with administrative services and support services is maintained at or above 90%.
- Generate a financial surplus sufficient to meet our future development needs and obligations.

Where we are now: Our divisions, departments and schools deliver quality teaching and research through complex divisional and academic processes and structures. This creates additional work for academic and professional staff, makes it hard to navigate for staff and students alike, involves some areas of duplication, and contributes to siloed decision-making. Our professional services are delivering high quality work, notwithstanding challenging processes, systems, and governance. However, many staff spend too much time on transactional tasks and cumbersome processes, and their work is not sufficiently aligned to the University's strategy.

Our priorities

- 1) Develop fit-for-purpose academic structures to enable effective and efficient delivery of teaching, research, and engagement.
- 2) Redevelop academic processes and their associated decision-making structures.
- 3) Commit to continuous and strategically-aligned process improvement.
- 4) Redevelop professional service models and structures to ensure they are effective, efficient, and responsive.

Priority 1

Develop fit-for-purpose academic structures to enable effective and efficient delivery of teaching, research, and engagement

Effective universities have clear and consistent structures, with academic unit sizes that support effective teaching and learning, research, and partnerships. Within our academic divisions, we have too many departments of highly variable sizes, reducing the efficiency of teaching, research, and professional service provision. Academic structures and disciplines have evolved over time, while the structures and controls (including financial models) relating to paper and programme offerings have tended to encourage duplication of teaching rather than collaboration.

There are opportunities to bring our academic structures into closer alignment to support increased collaboration, reduce duplication of papers, and increase time available for research. Our largest academic division (Health Sciences) is currently reviewing its organisational structure, which should result in a more consolidated, simpler, structure. Similarly, there are opportunities to enhance the structure of other divisions. Having similar structures across divisions based on spans of control allows for more effective leadership, provides more opportunities for professional services to streamline processes and so reduce administrative burden on academic staff, supporting a focus on quality research and teaching. This needs to be supported by structures and processes that provide the right incentives and controls to achieve growth and manage it collaboratively, transparently, and efficiently.

Action: *Implement the findings of the review of Health Sciences divisional structure.*

Action: *Ensure the structure and alignment of disciplines across divisions supports the achievement of the University's strategy.*

Action: *Improve our budget model, and other relevant structures and controls related to how we allocate funding and academic staffing resources across teaching and research, to support focusing our educational offerings and research activities and reduce duplication.*

Priority 2

Redevelop academic processes and their associated decision-making structures

Our academic processes can create unnecessary additional work for staff and can be confusing and frustrating for staff and students. Processes such as admissions assessment, approval of research and study leave, scholarship allocation, and changes to programmes and papers can take significant time, reducing the University's agility and ability to capitalise on opportunities. There are many opportunities to streamline these processes and make them more consistent to improve efficiencies, and staff and student satisfaction.

Action: *Update academic processes and associated decision-making structures to ensure they are effective, efficient, and responsive.*

Priority 3

Commit to continuous and strategically aligned process improvement

Continuous process improvement can help increase productivity and enhance student and staff satisfaction. Currently, many of our processes require much manual transactional effort. Processes are not standardised between departments, schools and divisions, and some processes are overly convoluted, resulting in duplicated activity, and difficulty in delivering services effectively and efficiently. This situation is, in part, both a consequence of and a response to our structural complexity.

The convoluted and multi-layered nature of many approval processes is an ineffective use of professional and academic staff time. It is likely contributing to our staff feeling a lack of trust and potentially devalued and takes academic staff time away from their core work.

There are significant opportunities to streamline many of our processes and consider risk-based approaches to remove or reduce internal bureaucracy. This will improve efficiency and enhance the benefits of automation.

It is therefore a priority to lead process improvement strategically, with appropriate resourcing, in a way that supports staff and students to do their best work. We will take different approaches to improving different processes: some processes may need an iterative approach to progressively improve them, and others may require a full re-design.

Action: Streamline processes and minimise duplication through process mapping and redesigning workflows, focusing on reducing transactional tasks and eliminating unnecessary steps.

Priority 4:

Redevelop professional service models and structure to ensure they are effective, efficient, and responsive.

Our staff profile will need to evolve to meet the operational needs generated by growth in student enrolments, while also helping us to become financially sustainable. Benchmarking with comparator universities shows that we can achieve considerable growth in our student body without growing overall staff numbers through greater efficiency in service delivery; indeed, there will be some areas where improved structures and efficiency will allow us to deliver the same services with fewer staff. Putting in place a more effective service model and structures will also allow us to deliver higher quality services to our students, staff, and community.

Action: Develop and implement a service models that align to University strategic goals and delivers greater efficiency, including redesigning professional services structures and exploring outsourcing where it will deliver value.

Action: Ensure that our service models are working efficiently and effectively through regular service quality surveys and benchmarking against comparator universities.



Transform our digital environment to create value for students and staff

Where we are heading: Our digital spaces operate seamlessly in tandem with our physical places to enhance our staff, students, and communities' experience of the University.

Our students access high-quality content and flexible learning that meets their digital learning needs. Our effective and contemporary student-facing systems assist students to access the services they need.

Our systems are fit for purpose, and our staff can focus their time on productive tasks.

Our data is managed effectively so that decision making is well-informed and we can easily track performance.

Where we are now: We pivoted quickly to deliver online learning through COVID-19 and there are pockets of excellence in digital learning. However, on the whole, our students' digital experience lags behind our on-campus experience.

Fit for purpose systems are a critical enabler for the University across teaching, research, and operations, but many of our systems are outdated. This situation, as well as siloed digital systems and structural complexity, cause inefficiency and a lack of visibility of key information across the University. Many of our systems need significant improvements, replacement, or consolidation.

Global best practice

Areas where universities are leading in digital transformation include:

- increased transactional automation and self-serving, enabled by digital systems and AI, reducing the workload of staff
- increased automation of transactional processes is causing a shift towards higher expertise professional staff who are providing specialist advice and focusing efforts on more complex tasks
- innovative data analytics platforms enabling universities to better understand and track student outcomes.

Our priorities

- 1) Develop a Digital Transformation Roadmap.
- 2) Deliver a contemporary digital student experience.
- 3) Streamline and update our systems and data landscape.

Domain-wide success measures:

- *Students are satisfied with the University's digital learning environment and University systems.*
- *Staff are satisfied with University systems.*

Priority 1

Develop a Digital Transformation Roadmap

Our current approach to addressing the University's information technology needs is comprehensive and provides a clear workplan. However, the development of the scale of digital transformation required to successfully implement it necessitates a different approach. The new approach must articulate how digital systems will support the University to reach Pae Tata, aligned with the domains.

Action: *Building on our existing Information Technology Roadmaps, develop a Digital Transformation Roadmap that clearly defines how we will use technology to enable the University to deliver on our four domains over the short, medium, and long term.*

Priority 2

Deliver a contemporary digital student experience

To ensure we can deliver on Priority 4 of the Education Domain: “Meet student needs with best practice pedagogy, including more effective use of digital learning”, we must enhance digital delivery. Hybrid delivery for undergraduates can deliver greater flexibility, strengthen our students' capability in an increasingly digital world, and enhance our distinctive on-campus transformative student experience. We can also deliver more high-quality content through distance and online learning; particularly for postgraduate taught, non-award (e.g., professional development) options, and international pathway programmes.

Action: *As part of our digital strategy, prioritise investment in digital learning solutions that will enable the University to meet the emerging needs of students and remain competitive in the New Zealand and overseas student markets.*

Priority 3

Streamline and update our systems and data landscape

Our current systems and data landscape do not support staff to work effectively. Many of our systems are outdated, and our approach to data management does not support consistency, quality, or accessibility to aid in decision-making. Our systems do not support the level of automation and self-service required to reduce administrative burden on all our staff.

By updating and streamlining our systems and data landscape, we can improve efficiency, free up staff time to focus on more productive and mission-critical tasks and increase the reliability and quality of our data to support decision-making.

Action: *Continue to redesign and consolidate our systems to work efficiently at scale, prioritising systems that are critical to delivering this Strategic Plan.*

Action: *Identify opportunities for process automation in tandem with process streamlining and improvement, including increasing self-service options (without passing undue administrative burden onto staff).*

Action: *Ensure the University has the appropriate capability, capacity, and resourcing to support improved Business Intelligence systems.*