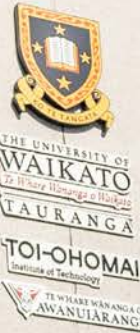




THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

STRATEGY 2022-2024



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UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO STRATEGY 2022-2024

The Council of the University of Waikato has decided to adopt a Strategy for the period 2022-2024. While this period is shorter than many strategic planning cycles, it reflects our need to focus this Strategy on recovery from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and on investment in work programmes that will ensure a sustainable future for the institution.

While key elements of government policy over the medium term remain uncertain, including in relation to the movements across the border, it is important that our focus is on responding to, and taking maximum advantage of, the environment in which we are currently operating.

This Strategy is focussed on those programmes of work where significant shifts are required from the University in the short term. In many cases these shifts have already begun, and the role of this Strategy is to make explicit the key programmes of work required for sustainability and to elucidate the inter-relationships between them. This includes enabling students to be leaders in creating sustainable futures in relation to climate change but also as benchmarked against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) more broadly. Our intent is to advance the interests of the University of Waikato despite the challenges of the current environment.

A second focus for the University over the period covered by this Strategy is on addressing recommendations of the Taskforce on Systemic and Casual Racism. Specific elements of this strategy are designed to address issues raised by the Taskforce, but a comprehensive response is being developed under a separate and parallel process.

The University is committed to making progress towards the goals outlined in this Strategy over the next three years but recognises that it is designed to establish a trajectory of action rather than to achieve a particular outcome over that period.

This Strategy is designed to guide change and establish priorities over "business as usual". The absence of explicit reference to an activity in this Strategy should not be taken to indicate that the activity will not continue, or that the University does not consider it important, but it does mean that it will not be a key focus for change or new investment in this period.

The Strategic goals for the period 2022-2024 are:

1. A whole of University focus on student recruitment
2. Improving student retention through higher levels of learner success and innovation in teaching content and practice
3. Progressing the objectives of the Taskforce
4. Creating, and being known for, research outcomes that embody excellence, impact, relevance and resilience
5. Investing in facilities that support academic developments, student recruitment and campus life
6. Promoting sustainable futures by advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in every aspect of University operations.

Following the discussion of each proposed goal, a section outlining the interdependencies between the different elements of the Strategy has been included.

GOAL 1. A WHOLE OF UNIVERSITY FOCUS ON STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Context

Maximising student enrolments is a key to the University's sustainability and its ability to invest in its future. The vast majority of University income is associated with student enrolments. With a long-term trend for government to increase funding rates at much less than the rate at which University costs are increasing, increased enrolments provide the University with flexibility and with strategic options that are otherwise absent.

With border restrictions resulting in a sharp reduction in the number of international students enrolled at the University, the University must be prepared to implement a vigorous programme of international student recruitment as soon as the borders are open to our students again.

Strategic priorities

1. Build the University's domestic student recruitment capability into the best of its kind in New Zealand, by
2. Developing innovative, distinctive and compelling marketing and recruitment programmes consistent with the fact that Waikato is a national and international, not a regional, university. The stronger the brand of the University is perceived to be nationally and internationally, the more value it will deliver in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions.
3. Ensuring the University has staff who have the experience, marketing skills and personal characteristics to build sustainable relationships with school leaders, agents and potential students, eloquently and persuasively marketing the University of Waikato as a preferred place of study.
4. Developing and refining our description of the distinctive student experience at Waikato to provide a basis for competing directly with the other New Zealand universities in recruiting students from the Auckland and Wellington regions, the South Island and internationally, as well as consolidating recruitment in our home regions.
5. Create innovative new programmes and degree structures that reflect the issues and the perspectives, and address the employment opportunities of the next two decades, and support schools and teachers and to promote pathways to study at Waikato.
6. Support international student enrolment in online programmes, build additional institutional relationships and nurture existing international recruitment channels to ensure we can resume strong international student enrolments as soon as the border is open.

How will we know we are making progress?

- New programmes that attract different cohorts of students to Waikato are developed, and strong relationships are established with schools across New Zealand.
- New enrolments increase in each of school leaver, new to tertiary and tertiary transfer categories.
- International student numbers grow quickly following the opening of the border.

GOAL 2. IMPROVING STUDENT RETENTION THROUGH HIGHER LEVELS OF LEARNER SUCCESS AND INNOVATION IN TEACHING CONTENT AND PRACTICE

Context

The University of Waikato has for some time been focused on learner success and improving outcomes for learners. We have embarked on an ambitious learner success project. We have recently demonstrated greater focus on developing new degree programmes aimed at attracting new cohorts of students to the University, but need to build on and institutionalise this success.

Strategic priorities

1. Embed mātauranga Māori into teaching, learning and the curriculum.
2. Ensure continued improvement in outcomes for all students, with a particular focus on Māori and Pacific learners by reinforcing the role of excellent teaching and inclusive learning environments in supporting student success.
3. Evaluate the University's efforts to offer students increased flexibility in where and how teaching and learning take place, as well as in approaches to and timing of assessment, and use these evaluations to inform the expansion of flexible teaching and learning practices across the institution.
4. Expeditiously develop quality, future-focused new academic programmes that meet student and employer demand. Restructure academic development and approval processes to support timely implementation of programme innovations.
5. Continue to grow work integrated learning opportunities that prepare students for successful lives and careers and engage them with the community.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Improved paper completion rates, particularly for Māori and Pacific students.
- Improved retention rates, particularly for Māori and Pacific students.
- Improved quality of FLEXI papers at all levels as well as more flexible teaching and learning practices.
- Approve and operationalise the Principles of Assessment.

GOAL 3. PROGRESSING THE TASKFORCE OBJECTIVES

Context

The Taskforce on Systemic and Casual Racism recommended that we work towards ensuring that the University of Waikato is experienced as a welcoming, inclusive and affirming environment by staff and students of all cultures, as well as tangata whenua, and where systemic racism has been dismantled and casual racism is rejected. The diverse and multicultural makeup of the student and staff groups at the University of Waikato make the absence of systemic and casual racism a necessary condition for the successful implementation of other elements of this Strategy.

The University of Waikato has a higher proportion of Māori students than other New Zealand universities including in those disciplines in which there are currently few Māori academic staff members. The University has had a strategy of increasing the proportion of our staff (particularly academic staff) who are Māori for many years. To make progress we need a strategy that states how we will both increase Māori academic staff numbers and retain our existing Māori academic staff. This strategy needs to be tied to the reality of our hiring practices and the necessary link between student demand and funding for academic positions. It will also require that our appointment, advancement and promotion processes recognise the wider contributions of Māori academic staff members within their academic disciplines and the institution as a whole.

Below is proposed a limited form of centrally-directed workforce planning through which we would encourage and support increased numbers of Māori students to follow the pathway to an academic career at this institution.

The University also needs to increase its capability to teach, support and undertake research relevant to Pacific students and connect with Pacific communities. Again, this will not be achieved without a larger number of staff drawn from our Pacific communities.

Strategic priorities

1. Implement a new scholarship programme for Māori and Pacific students that has the following key elements:
 - A doctoral scholarship for outstanding students committed to an academic career with a commitment to employment in a relevant discipline at the University of Waikato upon completion of the doctorate.
 - A requirement that at least one year of the doctorate be spent in residence at a University other than the University of Waikato, with a preference for completion of the doctorate at a university outside New Zealand.
 - A preference for supporting students in disciplines where Māori and Pacific staff are under-represented.
 - The recipients of the scholarships to be bonded to accept employment at the University of Waikato for a three year period following completion of the doctorate.
2. Ensure that academic appointment, advancement and promotion processes require staff to reflect on their engagement with mātauranga Māori, as well as recognising the wider knowledge and contribution that Māori and Pacific staff provide to scholarship at the University.
3. Support academic and general staff upskilling in terms of tikanga and te reo Māori through a range of culturally appropriate internal and external programmes, and to make available anti-racism training for staff.
4. Increase the number of University staff who are functionally fluent in te reo Māori through the funding of eight-month study leave scholarships for members of the University staff (academic and general) who wish to enrol full-time in Te Tohu Paetahi language immersion programme. The scholarship will cover the tuition fee and provide funding for limited term replacement in the substantive role of the scholarship recipient.
5. Provide support and opportunities for staff to engage with mātauranga Māori within their areas of academic expertise, and to ensure that mātauranga Māori is embedded as part of the curriculum.
6. Increase visibility and representation by involving Māori and Pacific leaders with relevant real world experience to contribute to our teaching.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Creation of the PhD scholarship scheme and the award of scholarships to Māori and Pacific students commencing PhD studies during 2022.
- Staff enrolments in Te Tohu Paetahi funded from 2022.
- Introductory Māori language and racism awareness training programmes made available to University staff.

GOAL 4. CREATING, AND BEING KNOWN FOR, RESEARCH OUTCOMES THAT EMBODY EXCELLENCE, IMPACT, RELEVANCE AND RESILIENCE

Context

Much of the University's academic reputation is dependent on the quality of its research outputs. The University has an expectation that all its academic staff are research active and contributing to the University's overall research performance (including by supporting research publications by its research postgraduate students).

The University Research and Enterprise Office, provides advice on internal, public and private sources of funding, assists with the development of research proposals, and assists with the referral of research ethics applications to appropriate committees. In the future the Office will also be more outward looking in matching University research teams with organisations who seek assistance in solving problems and developing commercially valuable intellectual property.

The School of Graduate Research supports students conducting excellent and impactful scholarly research. In the future the School will be focussed on delivering increased skill development to contribute to a leading postgraduate experience.

Strategic priorities

1. Increase recognition, internally and externally, of our world-class scholarship that reflects our place in the world, and in te ao Māori, and grow the next generation of researchers recognised for their scholarly impact and ability to create sustainable futures through local and global leadership.
2. Determine and recognise the measures that reflect positive environmental, social and economic impact, and invest in our researchers to deliver transformative research outcomes, and tell our story.
3. Grow our interdisciplinary research collaborations, both within the University and with external parties, including universities, wānanga and crown research institutes (CRIs).
4. Deepen stakeholder engagement in the co-creation of research programmes, including with iwi, Māori trusts, Pacific community organisations, industry and government.
5. Use research linkages to strengthen our existing portfolio of strategic international partnerships and develop additional international partnerships based on research synergies
6. Increase resourcing for research and development, from external sources, that enables the University to continuously improve research, teaching and service and allows all staff to balance their contributions to the University's strategy.
7. Increase the scale and scope of research.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Increased levels of engagement with external organisations interested in collaborative research programmes with the University.
- Increased revenue generated through research contracts
- A growing number of high impact quality assured research publications
- Improvements in academic reputation in rankings exercises
- All academic staff are contributing to improved institutional research performance

GOAL 5. INVESTING IN FACILITIES THAT SUPPORT ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS, STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND CAMPUS LIFE

Context

Much of the University's campus infrastructure needs to be upgraded to meet changing delivery modes and student expectations, improve access and inclusion and create a stronger sense of community.

The University is committed to progressing a programme of upgrades and enhancements to its Hillcrest campus and to its systems, prioritising investments that will activate the campus, support student recruitment and provide appropriate facilities for world class new programmes. Given the ability of the University to obtain debt at very attractive rates of interest in the current environment, we can utilise debt to fund investment as necessary.

Strategic priorities

1. Complete the Pā project.
2. Ensure there is a clearly articulated plan to progress all of the following projects as quickly as our capital budget and borrowing capability will allow:
 - Progress Stage 2 of the Silverdale Road accommodation project, and refurbishment of the lowest quality units in Student Village.
 - Expand the Large-Scale Engineering Lab facility, and commence work on a project for a permanent home for Engineering.
 - Upgrade and extend the Academy of Performing Arts
 - Undertake seismic strengthening and refurbishment, and investment in decreasing the University's carbon footprint.
 - Expand facilities and services in Tauranga consistent with growth in student numbers and strategic research and teaching developments.
3. Make our campuses 'places of belonging' for all members of our University community by reflecting the distinctive histories, cultures and aspirations of our people in our physical infrastructure.
4. Ensure each new building reflects the best environmentally sustainable practices.

How will we know we are making progress?

- The University has a continuous pipeline of capital expenditure projects which ensure that funds equivalent to depreciation charge and the University surplus are invested back into the infrastructure of the University each year, utilising borrowing to manage cashflow as necessary.
- Consistent improvement in the efficiency of buildings and reduction in the electricity and gas usage per sq m of space.
- A steady increase in the number of beds available in University halls, and in the average quality of the accommodation that we offer.

GOAL 6. PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES BY ADVANCING THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN EVERY ASPECT OF UNIVERSITY OPERATIONS

Context

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a transformative global strategy. The Agenda is committed to achieving sustainable development economically, socially and environmentally. Aotearoa New Zealand signed up to the UN SDGs in 2015 and Waikato is committed to achieving sustainability for our communities and ourselves.

Strategic priorities

1. Commit to reducing our energy use and greenhouse gas emissions and aim to be carbon neutral by 2030.
2. Develop more efficient use of resources and enhance our environmental performance across infrastructure, innovation and industry.
3. Embrace Māori and Pacific understandings of sustainability as part of the University's response to issues of sustainability for our University and communities.
4. Create distributed leadership in sustainability and advance SDGs across all areas of our teaching, research, facilities, and service activities.
5. Ensure all our students have opportunities to engage with the SDGs, and to develop sustainability related knowledge and understandings of effective and innovative applications of solutions.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- Projections show we are on target to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- Improved performance in the Times Higher Education Impact Ranking which focuses on assessment against the UN SDGs.
- Academic staff are contributing to advancing SDGs.
- Students are undertaking opportunities to develop solutions for sustainable futures.

INTERDEPENDENCIES

The different elements of this Strategy are interdependent. These interdependencies flow from the high level of government regulation applying to most aspects of the University's operations and pricing, with the closure of the border to international students limiting our ability to increase one of our few lightly regulated streams of income. The interdependencies also flow from the highly competitive environment for the recruitment of domestic students, and the need to provide a learning experience and facilities that are at least the equal of other universities and the top academic high schools in New Zealand.

- The high likelihood that government funding per student will continue to increase at below the rate of inflation means that growth in student numbers is required even to retain existing staffing levels and fund the replacement and renovation of our aging infrastructure.
- The ability to recruit additional domestic students, and to increase our share of the national market for tertiary study, requires a much greater focus on student recruitment and on external communication about the quality of the research, teaching and student experience at the University of Waikato.
- Growth in domestic student numbers that is materially above our current investment plan targets will only be allowed by the Tertiary Education Commission if our record on student retention and success, and in particular our record on retention and success of Māori and Pacific students demonstrates a focus on continuous improvement.
- The ability to attract students requires that we provide quality teaching and learning opportunities, facilities that support a positive student experience, and an environment that is welcoming, friendly and supportive of students from diverse backgrounds, cultures and communities. To attract additional Māori and Pacific students we will need to demonstrate that we are listening and have plans to support the aspirations of iwi and Pacific communities to see more of their people in tertiary teaching and research roles.
- The success of initiatives to recruit new and retain existing Māori and Pacific academic staff will determine our ability to provide appropriate leadership for the integration of Mātauranga Māori and traditional Pacific knowledge into the curriculum and our research programmes.



The Pā



THE UNIVERSITY OF
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