

# STUDENT VOICE—GETTING STARTED

A look into the experience of new students at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington

- TOPLINE REPORT MAY 2022 -



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VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF  
**WELLINGTON**  
TE HERENGA WAKA

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## METHODOLOGY

### 2,492 NEW STUDENTS PROVIDED FEEDBACK IN THE GETTING STARTED SURVEY

The survey was implemented via Qualtrics, a web-based online survey tool. All students new to Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington in the first trimester of 2022 were sent an e-mail invitation with a link to complete the Student Voice—Getting Started Survey. A total of 2,566 (2021: 2,114) (2020: 1,988) surveys were started in Qualtrics. Of those, 2,492 (2021: 2,028) (2020: 1,926) were recorded representing a 53% response rate (2021: 38%) (2020: 37%).

## CHOOSING VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

### CHOOSING A UNIVERSITY TO ATTEND

65% of new students stated that they did not apply anywhere else when asked if they applied to any other universities for the 2022 academic year. ‘Family, friends and colleagues’ (87%) were identified as the most useful sources of information to assist students when deciding which University to attend, followed by the ‘University website’ (86%). 94% of students stated that ‘programme offered’ was an important factor in their decision, followed by ‘university reputation’ (88%), ‘career opportunities (post study)’ (81%) and ‘university facilities’ (80%).

### DECIDING WHICH PROGRAMME TO STUDY

The University website remained the most useful source of information for students when choosing which course or programme to study (88%) (2021: 90%) (2020: 91%). Social media platforms were identified as the least useful, particularly Twitter (17%).

### SOURCES OF ADVICE WHEN PREPARING FOR STUDIES

Overall, new students found the University website (89%) (2021: 91%), fellow students (81%) (2021: 84%), and family and friends (80%) (2021: 84%) to be the best sources of advice when preparing for their studies.

## NON-SCHOOL LEAVERS

Slightly over half of non-school leavers (58%) stated that they had attended another tertiary education provider in the past. While 62% of these students made their decision to apply to Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington within 6 months, 20% took over a year to make their decision. These students identified that they chose the university to pursue their interests (93%) and progress their career (80%). Many stated that the ability to study online (88%) and face-to-face teaching and learning (82%) were important to them.

## GETTING SORTED

### PRE-ENROLMENT EXPERIENCE

Many new students rate their pre-enrolment experience positively. 77% of new students report communication about entry requirements was clear (2021: 78%) (2020: 80%). 72% of new students had confidence in the academic advice they received about their study options (2021: 69%) (2020: 71%). 68% of new students reported information about fees was comprehensive (2021: 65%) (2020: 64%).

### EMAIL AND THE WEBSITE REMAIN THE MOST HELPFUL CHANNEL FOR INFORMATION BEFORE STARTING STUDIES

89% of new students reported that Email (2021: 87%) (2020: 88%) was one of the most helpful channels for information before they started their studies. The next most selected option, the website, had 39% (2021: 38%) (2020: 38%) identify it as one of the most helpful channels for new students.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

## NEW STUDENTS' ORIENTATION (NSO)

### EMAIL FROM THE UNIVERSITY IS THE MOST USEFUL SOURCE OF NSO INFORMATION

Emails from the University were rated as being the most useful source of NSO information (87%) (2021: 92%) (2020: 91%), followed by the University website (84%) (2021: 88%) (2020: 89%), and social media (67%) (2021: 78%) (2020: 78%).

### THE NSO EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS ARE CONSIDERED USEFUL

Overall, new students found the NSO events and workshops useful. The Pasifika (93%) (2021: 96%) (2020: 98%) and Māori (85%) (2021: 88%) (2020: 88%) Students' Orientation sessions were rated, by the students they were targeted at, as useful sessions. The Kelburn Campus Tours were also rated highly useful by new students (88%) (2021: 90%) (2020: 90%).

Students suggested that the Degree Orientation Sessions were informative, but could provide more detailed information.

In 2022, the New Students' Orientation was impacted by the increased spread of COVID-19 which meant in-person events were reduced or removed as required. While there was an increase in agreement regarding the NSO programme preparing students for study at the University (71%) (2021: 64%) (2020: 69%), there was a drop in agreement that it prepared them for life in Wellington (51%) (2021: 56%) (2020: 63%), was fun (62%) (2021: 72%) (2020: 81%), and allowed them to meet new people (50%) (2021: 65%) (2020: 81%).

The top comments regarding the New Students' Orientation programme discussed the programme being fun, good and useful. One in five commented on their desire to have more in-person events and activities, but many understood the challenge with COVID-19.

Due to changes in alert settings and the increased spread of COVID-19, VUWSA's OWeek did not run in 2022.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' ORIENTATION (ISO)

### PRE-STUDY INFORMATION IS USEFUL

Over three quarters of new international students report that the pre-study content they received prior to starting their study at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington was clear (85%) (2021: 84%) (2020: 86%), informative (84%) (2021: 84%) (2020: 85%), timely (77%) (2021: 72%) (2020: 78%) and helpful (76%) (2021: 84%) (2020: 78%).

### COMMUNICATION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CONVERSION TEAM

89% of new international students were satisfied with the communication they received from the International Conversion Team (2021: 93%) (2020: 81%).

### THE INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION PROGRAMME IS USEFUL

The 2022 International Students' Orientation programme was held primarily online through Blackboard.

Sessions through Blackboard were introduced in 2020 and have continued due to high ratings by students. The sessions consist of seven parts, and all increased in positive feedback in 2022 except for 'Part 6 – Your Rights as a Worker and Renter,' which, even with the lowest rating, was still identified as moderately to extremely useful by 85% of new international students (2021: 91%).

A few students provided comments that the quality of the online sessions were good, but recommended integrating more opportunities for students to socialise online, such as online games or activities.

The orientation programme helped students know what resources are available to them (88%) (2021: 84%) (2020: 88%), learn about the academic system (84%) (2021: 79%) (2020: 79%), and obtain information about who to contact in an emergency (82%) (2021: 91%) (2020: 94%).

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

## GETTING UNDERWAY

### THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS ARE OFF TO A POSITIVE START

10% report they are off to a great start, 20% are off to a very good start, 42% a good start, 25% an okay start with 4% of students reporting they are not off to a good start.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### RECRUITMENT BENEFITS FROM THE UNIVERSITY'S DIGITAL PRESENCE

Students identify that a key source of information and advice is the University website so it should continue to be a leading resource in student engagement and recruitment.

While webinars/digital events are relatively new recruitment events, they have had high engagement, are identified as useful by future students, and, for some, are a preferred option for connecting with the university.





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