

STUDENT VOICE—GETTING STARTED

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

- TOPLINE REPORT APRIL 2020 -



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VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

METHODOLOGY

1,926 NEW STUDENTS PROVIDED FEEDBACK IN THE STUDENT VOICE – GETTING STARTED SURVEY

The survey was implemented via Qualtrics, a web-based on-line survey tool. All students new to Victoria University of Wellington in the first trimester of 2020 were sent an e-mail invitation with a link to complete the Student Voice—Getting Started Survey. A total of 1,988 (2019: 2,715) (2018: 2,649) (2017: 2,460) surveys were started in Qualtrics. Of those, 1,926 (2019: 2,632) (2018: 2,535) (2017: 2,368) were recorded representing a 37% response rate (2019: 50%) (2018: 46%) (2017: 44%).

CHOOSING VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

TWO OUT OF THREE NEW STUDENTS APPLIED ONLY TO VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION

67% of new students stated that they did not apply anywhere else when asked if they applied to any other universities for the 2020 academic year. 20% applied to only one other New Zealand university. 3% of students applied to at least one international university.

INFORMATION SOURCES TO ASSIST STUDENTS DECIDE WHAT TO STUDY

University website (91%), Open day (87%), Family and friends (80%), and Printed publications (78%) are rated as the most useful sources of information to assist students decide what to study.

USEFUL SOURCES OF ADVICE WHEN PREPARING FOR STUDIES

International students found the University website (92%), Staff at your Faculty/School office (91%), and Wellington University International (90%) to be great sources of advice when preparing for studies. Overall, new students found the University website (91%), fellow students (86%), and the orientation event (84%) to be the best sources of advice when preparing for their studies.

GETTING SORTED

PRE-ENROLMENT EXPERIENCE

The majority of new students rate the pre-enrolment experience positively. 80% of new students report communication about entry requirements was clear (2019: 81%) (2018: 78%). 71% of new students had confidence in the academic advice they received about their study options (2019: 73%) (2018: 69%). 64% of new students reported information about fees was comprehensive (2019: 69%) (2018: 61%).

EMAIL IS THE MOST HELPFUL CHANNEL FOR INFORMATION BEFORE ARRIVING

87% of new students reported that Email was a helpful channel for information before they arrived on campus. 36% and 31% reported that they thought the Website and Publication (Getting Started, Student Guide, New Students' Orientation booklets), respectively, were the most helpful channels for information.

THE ENROLMENT EXPERIENCE RATINGS BY NEW STUDENTS ARE SIMILAR TO 2018

While close to four in five new students report the overall enrolment experience went well for them (75%) (2019: 77%) (2018: 77%), less students found the enrolment process to be well coordinated across the whole university (62%) (2019: 69%) (2018: 65%). 81% of students report that they understood what was required of them to complete enrolment (2019: 81%). 70% of students thought the process was completed in a timely manner (2019: 75%) and 72% found the enrolment services staff to be helpful and knowledgeable (2019: 78%).

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 (91%) (2019: 93%) (2018: 87%), followed by the University website (89%) (2019: 89%) (2018: 86%), New Students' Orientation booklet (88%) (2019: 91%) (2018: 90%), Social media (78%) (2019: 82%) (2018: 77%) and UNI 101 students / Campus Coaches (72%) (2019: 80%) (2018: 78%).

THE NSO EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS ARE CONSIDERED VALUABLE

Overall, new students found the NSO events and workshops valuable. The Pasifika (98%) (2019: 95%) (2018: 94%), Postgraduate (94%) (2019: 92%) (2018: 97%), Mature (89%) (2019: 91%) (2018: 97%), and Māori (88%) (2019: 98%) (2018: 91%), Students' Orientation sessions were rated by the students they were targeted at, as valuable sessions. The degree orientation sessions were also considered useful by participants.

79% of new students enjoyed the Welcome Festival (2019: 82%) (2018: 78%). 51% of those attending the Welcome Festival agreed that they made connections with other students at the Welcome Festival.

Of those students who joined a UNI 101 programme / Campus Coaches Group, 73% reported being part of the Campus Coaches Group helped them understand the services the University provides to students (2019: 76%) (2018: 69%) and helped them make connections with other students in their Faculty (57%) (2019: 54%) (2018: 57%).

69% of new students report the NSO programme prepared them for study at the University (2019: 72%), prepared them for life in Wellington (63%) (2019: 67%), and allowed them to meet new people (81%) (2019: 82%) (2018: 79%). 81% of students reported the programme was fun (2019: 82%) (2018: 73%).

Suggestions made by students reaffirmed that the programme was fun, good, and useful for students, but could be improved with more access to events such as adjusting timing to reduce clashes.

HALF OF NEW STUDENTS ATTENDED VUWSA'S O WEEK

Overall, 57% of new students attended at least one OWeek event (2019: 50%) (2018: 47%). Students were asked how they heard about OWeek events and 48% stated through Facebook, 41% through a friend, 41% through Email from the University, 35% through Instagram, and 24% through University publications (Getting Started; New Students' Orientation booklets). 14% of students stated that they did not hear about OWeek events.

A number of students reported that the events were fun and provided opportunities to bond with peers. They also recommended offering a greater variety of events and times, as well as improving ticket availability.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' ORIENTATION (ISO)

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION IS USEFUL

Four in five new international students report the pre-departure information they received prior to coming to New Zealand was clear (86%) (2019: 84%) (2018: 85%) and informative (85%) (2019: 88%) (2018: 85%) while three in four new international students report that it was received in a timely manner (78%) (2019: 78%) (2018: 73%) and helpful (78%) (2019: 82%) (2018: 78%). Student suggestions to improve the pre-departure information include: providing clear information, offering more information about accommodation, and sending information earlier.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FOUND THE UNI CREW HELPFUL

91% of new international students found the Uni Crew to be helpful during their orientation (2019: 96%).

WHILE THE ENROLMENT PROCESS WAS EASY TO FOLLOW, STUDENTS FELT IT COULD HAVE BEEN MORE EFFICIENT

The majority of new international students report the enrolment briefing speaker was easy to understand (87%) (2019: 85%) (2018: 82%) and that the session clearly explained all the steps needed to complete enrolment (78%) (2019: 83%) (2018: 83%). Those who met with the Course Advice Team after the enrolment briefing found the meeting useful to help them plan their study (78%) (2019: 89%) (2018: 90%).

Overall, international students report that they understood what was required of them to complete their enrolment (78%) (2019: 83%) and staff and volunteers were helpful and knowledgeable (78%) (2019: 84%). 51% of students report that the process was well coordinated (2019: 70%) and 55% stated that enrolment was completed in a timely manner (2019: 70%). Students commented on the need for more and better information and also discussed the long wait or lack of efficiency in the system.

THE INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION PROGRAMME IS USEFUL

The Your Student Visa and Health Insurance (95%) (2019: 96%) (2018: 96%), Life in NZ (93%) (2019: 95%) (2018: 96%), New Zealand Police Safety Briefing (90%) (2019: 95%) (2018: 91%), and Healthy Body, Healthy Mind (90%) (2019: 94%) (2018: 88%) sessions were ranked as the most useful International Orientation sessions.

94% of new international students report after attending the orientation programme they knew who to contact in an emergency (2019: 87%) (2018: 81%), what resources were available to them (88%) (2019: 84%) (2018: 80%), that the programme helped them learn about Victoria University of Wellington's academic system (79%) (2019: 82%) (2018: 77%) and find their way around the university (71%) (2019: 72%) (2018: 70%). For 85% of students the orientation programme provided an opportunity for them to meet new people (2019: 86%) (2018: 83%). 66% of students thought the programme was fun (2019: 68%) (2018: 58%).

Suggestions made by students to improve the programme include having a diversity of events at various times to form friend groups and better organising the enrolment and orientation for students to feel informed and connected.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

GETTING UNDERWAY

THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS ARE OFF TO A POSITIVE START

A majority of new students are off to a positive start. 11% report they are off to a great start, 22% are off to a very good start, 42% a good start, 22% an okay start with 2% of students reporting they are not off to a good start.

THE TOP PIECES OF ADVICE NEW STUDENTS WOULD GIVE TO STUDENTS STARTING AT TE HERENGA WAKA - VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON ARE "PREPARE AND ORGANISE," "MEET PEOPLE," AND "FIND BALANCE"

Key sentiments expressed by students regarding advice for other new students include "Prepare yourself well. Plan well with time management because the workload does come fast. Be focused on the end goal and you'll be fine. Nothing is impossible," "Try your best to get out of your comfort zone, join a club, talk to people in your lectures (they tend to be some pretty cool people, trust me!)," and "Stay dedicated and focused at the same time as having a good time."





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