



## **ACADEMIC BOARD TE TAUMATA**

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### **Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Tuesday, 24 February 2026 at 1.00pm in the Hunter Council Chamber**

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The meeting was held face-to-face in the Kelburn Council Chamber and was convened by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nic Smith. The meeting was opened with a karakia and everyone was welcomed to the meeting.

#### **PART A**

##### **26.01 Apologies, acknowledgements and welcomes**

Apologies were taken as read (see Appendix 1).

The convenor welcomed:

- Professor Sally McArthur as the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).
- The following staff on their promotion to Professor:
  - Professor Jonathan Barrett, School of Accounting and Commercial Law
  - Professor Sue Cherrington, School of Education
  - Professor Peter Gu, School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies
  - Professor Jamie Howarth, School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences
  - Professor Anna Jackson, School of Arts and Media
  - Professor Giacomo Lichtner, School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations
  - Professor Yi Mei, School of Engineering and Computer Science
  - Professor Franck Natali, School of Physical and Chemical Sciences
  - Professor Peter Ritchie, School of Biological Sciences
  - Professor Bridget Stocker, School of Chemical and Physical Sciences
  - Professor Kathryn Sutherland, Centre for Academic Development
- Associate Professor Fiona Barker as the new Head of School, School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations
- The following student member representatives for 2026:
  - Aidan Donoghue, VUWSA President
  - Ethan Rogacion, VUWSA Academic Vice-President
  - George Baker, VUWSA Acting Postgraduate Officer

- Shay McEwan, Ngāi Tauira Academic Officer (Āpiha Mātauranga)
- Andrew Tipton, PGSA President
- Carley Dove-McFalls, PGSA Vice-President
- Taylor Tran, V-ISA President (in absentia)
- Dr Liz McKibben, VUWSA Postgraduate Voice (attending only)

## **26.02 Part B of the agenda – items brought forward**

No items were brought forward from Part B to Part A.

## **26.03 Vice-Chancellor Oral Report**

The Vice-Chancellor's oral report was received.

There are a range of economic and social issues that are being carried forward from 2025, not only in Te Herenga Waka but in the external environment, which will only intensify as the general election approaches. The University intends to have election debates on campus.

### Finances

In 2025, Te Herenga Waka achieved a surplus – a good result for the University. That surplus was largely due to the performance of the Victoria Foundation and investments.

2026 will be a tight year financially – we are budgeting for a very small surplus only.

The downstream effects of the 2023 enrolment issues will continue to be felt until the pipeline refills in 2027. The Tertiary Education Commission is yet to confirm their capacity to fund all student growth in New Zealand, so care needs to be taken around projecting and planning around the steady student growth of the last few years.

International enrolments are up between 15%-20%. This is important given the current government's position on using international enrolments to keep universities sustainable.

### Recent successes:

- 18-month celebration of Te Awa, our entrepreneurial innovation hub at Rutherford House. Te Awa has contributed to the Wellington economy in terms of jobs and revenue which showcases the University's leverage in this area.
- Our Law School is the highest ranked in New Zealand.
- The University also performs very well in AI rankings, which speaks to our innovation as an institution.

Even with our successes in specific ranking areas, it is important to emphasise that we are first and foremost a comprehensive University; one which values humanities, social sciences and STEM disciplines in an integrated way. This is an important narrative to hold on to, particularly in the face of a current political discourse which posits technology as the way forward.

### Further notes on progress:

- Success was achieved in the CAUL negotiation between the Australasian University Libraries with four major academic publishers. This represents a significant savings for the university sector and demonstrates the power of collective action.
- The convenor thanked Professor Karen Smith and Professor Robyn Longhurst for their ongoing work and progress on leading He Kokonga Whare a Kitea. There has been a significant data gathering stage and these data are now being worked into themes that will inform a series of engagements to personalise our student success journey.
- Exchange Aotearoa has been launched as part of a collaboration between VUW, Otago and AUT in which students may be able to exchange 1 or 2 semesters between these three institutions.

#### National directions of note:

- National science funding allocation within the new National Science Framework will be an important discussion in the first half of 2026.
- CUAP is being actively discussed within Universities New Zealand – how universities might adopt self-accreditation and maintain standards.
- MFAT are revisiting export controls in terms of information and collaboration. Discussions are at an early stage.

The floor was opened for comment:

- IT systems being overloaded as teaching begins, causing numerous hiccups. These problems are a result of legacy systems rather than anything new being rolled out. Leadership is aware of these issues, and the Digital Roadmap for 2026 includes numerous projects involved in keeping the current system functional.

#### **26.04 Written Report of DVCs**

AB26/01

The February 2026 DVC report was received from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Māori and Kaitiakitanga), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students).

#### **Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Report**

Professor Robyn Longhurst spoke to the DVC (A) report which was taken as read.

*He Kokonga Whare a Kitea:* Robyn acknowledged the significant work and effort through December in this space – in particular, the work of Professor Karen Smith.

*CAD courses for academic staff:* These courses started in February, with a course on using AI in assessment having good uptake.

*The Curriculum Enhancement Programme (CEP):* Communications and a summary of feedback on the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) will be sent out shortly. Despite extending the deadline, only eight submissions were received. The low number of submissions was taken as an indication that staff are broadly comfortable with the proposed direction, and major changes to the draft are not anticipated.

- There are three main workstreams proposed in the draft ToR (identified from staff feedback): points value of undergraduate courses; developing guidelines for assessment; and clarifying modes of delivery.

*Work Integrated Learning:* There is now a draft model that may be rolled out throughout the University. We are considering which responsibilities should sit with the Central Hub and which should devolve to faculties and schools.

The floor was opened for comment:

- The importance of updating the curriculum to include what students need to learn in this current environment, including AI, was noted, as curriculum and assessment are interdependent. Robyn acknowledged the importance of curriculum work. AI in Assessment is particularly urgent and will be prioritised – it should not be delayed by the scale of a curriculum review and update.
- A question was raised as to how realistic it is to take on all three CEP workflow threads due their size. Robyn acknowledged the scale of work but is confident of finding a medium between ambition and what can be achieved.
- VUWSA asked where the responsibility for the implementation and operationalisation of the project will lie, and what the projected timeline will be. The ToR has a Governance Group and a Steering Group (Robyn would like to add a Student Advisory Group) who will direct implementation and operationalisation. The timeframes are yet to be determined – the ToR need to be finalised first.
- A question was raised as to how these workstreams will be resourced on top of existing workload, and why AI in assessment has been prioritised. Nic responded that focusing on assessment provides a tangible space from which to address the other issues. Defending our academic integrity is the priority.
  - Re workload: The workload model is a way to surface work equitably and a tool to aid in time allocation between delivery, evolution, assessment etc. There are indications that we over-assess, creating workload for both staff and students – it's necessary to think about how to add value and reduce workload without compromising academic integrity and quality. It's clear that we can't both resource the changes and maintain processes exactly as they are.

### **Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Report**

Professor Sally McArthur spoke to the DVC (R) report, which was taken as read.

Sally thanked everyone for making her so welcome in her first weeks at Te Herenga Waka.

113 Marsden applications were submitted on the week of 16 February, which is a huge achievement. As Marsden funding is no longer available to a number of disciplines, a large focus of the Research Office is (a) how to diversify the types of funding that we seek; (b) how to support researchers to access that funding.

Making the case for why universities matter, and why research matters is perhaps the most important work for the Research Office and its associated entities. Sally invited ideas from all comers about how to seed new initiatives.

The floor was opened for comment.

- A correction in the report – the panels for Humanities and Social Sciences were not included in Marsden last year.
- Sally acknowledged the importance of exploring tools for publicising research stories both with and beyond the Engagement team.
- MFAT export control changes are going to affect research outputs. The current legislation needs to be scaled back to be an effective risk-assessment tool for research collaboration. There are many discussion papers in circulation with opportunities for feedback.
- The importance of retaining and budgeting for postgraduate students and Research Assistants in funded research rather than replacing them with AI was noted. Sally agreed, reiterating the importance of human innovation in research: AI can only tell us what we've done before, not innovate.
- It was asked if there is any update about the reform of HRC funding and potential changes to the national ethics standard. Sally noted that the HRC is aware of a gap and is working on a solution. Updates will be shared as soon as possible.

### **Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students Report**

Dr Logan Bannister was an apology. The report is taken as read.

### **Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Māori and Kaitiakitanga Report**

Professor Rawinia Higgins was an apology. The Report was taken as read.

The floor was opened to comment on both reports above.

- An update on UNI 101 was requested. Nic noted that UNI 101 was highly successful in 2025 and continues in 2026 with 330 students enrolled. Logan will provide an update at the next Academic Board.

### **26.05 CUAP Round 1 Proposals 2026**

The following two new programme proposals were **endorsed** by the Academic Board for submission to CUAP Round 1:

#### **AB26-02 Introduction of a Master of Arts (Coursework)**

<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Proposal Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
FHSS	New 180-point Master of Arts (Coursework) (including amendments to existing programmes); new Environmental Humanities (EHUM) subject.	AB26-02 (APC26-01)

Professor Averil Coxhead introduced the new 180-point Master of Arts (Coursework). This initiative responds to a gap in the curriculum – providing another pathway from undergraduate to postgraduate study and incorporating Work-Integrated Learning.

AD(A) Xavier Marquez was thanked for leading a complex process, and the Academic Office was also thanked for their help.

### **AB26-03 Introduction of a New Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Trauma-Transformative Support**

<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Proposal Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
FEHP	New Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Trauma-Transformative Support (PGDipTTS, PGCertTTS)	AB26-03 (APC26-02)

Professor David Harper introduced the new Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Trauma-Transformative Support noting that these qualifications are timely and distinctive, and consistent with the Faculty's emphasis on flexible postgraduate pathways, filling a gap in the curriculum and carefully designed to meet workforce needs.

### **26.06 Programme Amendments**

The following programme amendment was approved by the Academic Board:

<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Proposal Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
FHSS	Amend the General Requirements for the Bachelor of Global Studies	AB26-04 (APC26-03)

### **26.07 Policy and Regulations Updates**

(a) The update to *Meeting the Needs of Disabled Students Regulation* was AB26-05 **approved** subject to the minor amendments below.

Professor Robyn Longhurst introduced an update to the *Meeting the Needs of Disabled Students Regulation* (Professor Probyn Longhurst and Dr Logan Bannister sponsoring). The changes being made are relatively minor.

Rachel Anderson-Smith was thanked for her contributions. She noted the strong track record Te Herenga Waka has regarding the treatment of disabled students, and this updated regulation reflects ongoing commitment on the part of the University.

Okan Tan noted several minor corrections:

- Clause 5.4 is missing a definition of "precincts" – use definition from Campus Life Policy
- There is an incorrect policy name in Section 8.1 – should be "Staff Conduct Policy" rather than "Staff Conduct Regulation"
- The phrase "as appropriate" should be removed
- Tidying sections 10 and 11 for consistency purposes.

(b) The memo *Establishing a Student Success Committee as a Committee of Academic Board* was **approved** subject to the amendments below.

AB26-06

The memo was approved subject to minor changes, with a record in the delegation schedule.

Professor Robyn Longhurst introduced the memo establishing a Student Success Committee. The former Student Experience Committee was an arena for strong student voice and a forum for discussion, while the Student Success Committee, as a formal committee of Academic Board, is intended more as a mechanism for action. This has come to pass in part because of the He Kokonga Whare a Kitea programme of work, where there was a strong suggestion that such a committee be established. Robyn suggested two amendments:

1. "VUWSA" President be replaced by "VUWSA President or delegate"
2. To add one representative from the Postgraduate Students Association to the committee.

The floor was opened for questions.

- It was noted that the Director for the Centre for Student Success is no longer a member.
- It was noted that the committee is prioritising work – will this work be done by Central Service Units or academics? How does that affect resource allocation?
- It was suggested programme directors and heads of school should have a mechanism to work in partnership with this committee. Associate Professor Meegan Hall noted that ADAs are an important link between the committee and Faculty Boards.

Meegan also noted that DVC(S) Dr Logan Bannister was keen to reduce the size of the committee to make it easier to engage with. There will need to be conversations around how this committee works in relation to existing committees – the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Academic Programmes Committee in particular. Some of the people not represented on this Committee sit on those other committees and will be working in conjunction with it.

Rather than items being fully delegated to the Student Success Committee, it should function like Learning and Teaching or Academic Programmes, allowing items to be considered in a much more focused space before they come to Academic Board.

## **26.08 Academic Programme Review One-Year Update for the Cultural Anthropology Programme**

AB26-07

The One-Year Review for Cultural Anthropology was noted with no questions.

### **Part C of the agenda**

It was resolved that non-members be excluded from this meeting for consideration of agenda items 12 and 13 in accordance with s9(2)(a) LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii).

### **PART B OF THE AGENDA**

The following items, not having been brought forward, were confirmed.

**26.09 Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the Academic Board meeting held on 4 November 2025 (numbers 62.74 to 72.24) were confirmed. AB26-08

*Note: Part C of meetings are excluded for reasons of confidentiality where applicable.*

**26.10 Report of the Academic Programmes Committee**

The Academic Programmes Committee report of 10 February 2026 was noted. AB26-09

**26.11 Quality Assurance Outputs**

The Quality Assurance Outputs summary and schedule report, providing an update on the Quality Assurance Outputs (Academic Programme Reviews and Graduating Year Reviews) completed in 2025 as well as those scheduled for 2026 and 2027, was noted.

## APPENDIX 1

### Academic Board attendance 24 February 2026

Dr Barbara Allen	Dr John Haywood	Professor Robyn Phipps
Professor Richard Arnold	Professor Nikki Hessel	Professor Janet Pitman
George Baker	Professor Sally Hill	Professor Rebecca Priestly
Assoc Professor Fiona Barker	Dr Linda Hogg	Assoc Professor Revti Raman
Professor Jonathan Barrett	Professor Anna Jackson	Professor John Randal
Professor Daniel Brown	Professor Bryony James	Professor Peter Ritchie
Assoc Professor Sasha Calhoun	Professor Simon Keller	Ethan Rogacion
Professor Sue Cherrington	Professor Robert Keyzers	Dr Helen Rook
Professor Averil Coxhead	Professor Dean Knight	Tau Sa'u
Professor Kim Cunio	Assoc Professor Maja Krtalić	Professor Martha Savage
Professor Carmen Dalli	Professor Sarah Leggott	Beth Smith
Heather Day	Professor Giacomo Lichtner	Professor Karen Smith
Professor Neil Dodgson	Professor Robyn Longhurst	Professor Katherine Sutherland
Assoc Professor Noelle Donnelly	Assoc Professor Xavier Marquez	Dr Okan Tan
Aidan Donoghue	Dr Stuart Marshall	Professor Paul Teesdale-Spittle
Dr Eli Elinoff	Professor Stephen Marshall	Professor Marc Wilson
Professor Alejandro Frery	Professor Jim McAloon	Trish Wilson
Dr Ally Gibson	Professor Sally McArthur	
Assoc Professor Nicola Gilmour	Professor Conal McCarthy	
Professor Gina Grimshaw	Dr Andrew Munkacsi	
Professor Leon Gurevitch	Professor Nicola Nelson	
Professor Dave Harper	Professor Sally-Jane Norman	
	Dr Yvette Perrott	

## **Non-members in attendance**

Lynn Grindell  
Joseph Habgood  
Assoc Professor Monica Handler  
Dr Angela Joe  
Dr Yang Liu  
Reese Moors  
Shay McEwan  
Dr Liz McKibben  
Varsha Narasimhan  
Linda Roberts  
Dr Angelina Sbroma  
Dr Robert Stratford  
Andrew Tipton  
Leigh Torode  
Caroline Ward  
Claire Williams  
Rachel Bruce  
Kirsten Housiaux

## **Apologies**

Professor Peter Addis  
Greg Ambrose  
Professor Siah Hwee Ang  
Professor Susan Ballard  
Dr Logan Bannister  
Professor Pamela Bell  
Professor Alberto Costi  
Professor Kevin Dew  
Dr Michael Dudding  
Professor Vanessa Green  
Professor Rawinia Higgins  
Professor Kate Hunter  
Professor Catherine Iorns Magallanes  
Professor Bev Lawton  
Professor Hai Lin  
Assoc Professor Jian Liu  
Assoc Professor Dugal McKinnon  
Ash McPherson  
Professor Yi Mei  
Andrew Tarr  
Dr Kate Thornton

Kate Tibbits  
Tina Wakefield  
Dr Jill Wilkinson  
Assoc Professor Amanda Wolf  
Dr Jenny Wollerman