

ACADEMIC BOARD TE TAUMATA

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Tuesday, 14 July 2026 at 1.00pm in the Hunter Council Chamber

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

PART A

26.39 Welcome to the Vice-Chancellor

Professor Rawinia Higgins DVC (Māori & Kaitiakitanga) spoke to this item. Professor Bryony James was warmly welcomed to Academic Board ("where the papers are long and the questions are probing") in her new role as Vice-Chancellor and Chair.

26.40 Apologies, acknowledgements and welcomes

Apologies were taken as read (see Appendix 1).

Welcome to:

- New Vice-Chancellor Bryony James (per minute number 26.39)
- Dr Catherine Abou-Nemeh, elected representative for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Associate Professor Stephen Epstein, acting Head of School for the School of Languages and Cultures
- Associate Professor Anna Siyanova, acting Head of School for the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies
- Dr Yau-Hee Kho, elected representative for the Faculty of Science and Engineering

26.41 Part B of the agenda – items brought forward

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

26.42 Vice-Chancellor oral report

The Vice-Chancellor's oral report was received.

Introductory remarks:

- The role of Vice-Chancellor requires a different point of view than that of Provost. While the Provost is primarily concerned with the internal running of the University, the Vice-Chancellor is more externally focused, and their function is to be one of the many bridges between the University and the city, region and country.
- While the V-C's function as institutional cheerleader will be relished, the duty of expressing personal neutrality to preserve institutional neutrality will be more of a challenge. However, this duty is vitally important, as only strict institutional neutrality allows staff the freedom to express their opinions without fear of being swayed by an institutional position – and thus to perform the University's statutory function as critic and conscience of society.
 - The Vice-Chancellor will strongly defend staff in the public expression of their expertise
 - Please never mistake silence on any particular topic for a lack of care
- The VC reflected that Academic Board is at its best when members are passionately engaged in a debate
 - Academic Board has a regulatory function, which includes approving academic programme changes
 - Proposals have already been through a vigorous committee process by the time they reach the Board
 - Suggestions for how best to use Academic Board time are welcome

Upcoming Events:

- 4 August – the new Staff Survey opens with a new provider, CultureAmp
- 5 August – Staff Quiz – this has already been fully booked, but there is a waitlist
- 13 August – Election Panel discussion on the Education portfolio with party representatives.
- The first Staff forum will be held in mid-August. This forum is intended to be a conversation about the shape the University should take in the future.

The floor was opened, with no comment.

26.43 Written Report of DVCs

AB26-45

The July 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.

The Curriculum Enhancement Programme

- Workstream 1: Assessment is now underway. Please sign up for one of the focus groups [here](#):

- <https://intranet.wgtn.ac.nz/staff/learning-teaching/curriculum-enhancement-programme> (the link is in Oko's edition of 7 July).
- Dr Matthew Galloway has recently been appointed as a Learning Designer for the Ethical use of AI – Matthew will also be running workshops for staff looking for professional development in their approaches to AI use.

Course Administration and Timetabling

- The timetabling system replacement project has gone into user acceptance testing. Thank you to the Course Administration team, Digital Solutions and all the others who are progressing this project while maintaining business as usual.
- The number of in-person exams are being tracked and are rising as a way of assessing students' ability to undertake learning unassisted by AI. More resources will be budgeted in 2027 but the logistical challenges of timetabling more exams remain.

Curriculum Quality

- Work is progressing on new academic approvals processes, now that Matatāhuna—Universities Quality Assurance Agency (UQAA) has been established.
 - The new processes will come into effect in January 2028
 - There will be only one CUAP round in 2027, opening on 5 April
 - Te Herenga Waka already has robust internal approval processes and is in a good position for self-accreditation
 - Student voice and input will be recognised as an essential criterion in self-accreditation.

The floor was opened for comment:

The Library:

- In response to a question, University Librarian Trish Wilson spoke to processes for tracking missing items; a report of missing items is run twice a year. Please let staff know if a missing item is required, and it will be replaced
- An indication of the number of visitors is obtained via a simple headcount at the entrances.

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL):

- One of the objectives of the one-year appointment of a new WIL External Engagement Manager is to test the best uses of such a role in supporting customer relationships and management systems both with external partners and with faculties and other University central service units that are managing existing external relationships.

Aegrotats:

- The University is exploring software to help streamline and manage the aegrotat process. In the meantime, aegrotats should not be considered a standard alternative to an exam – they are intended for exceptional circumstances.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Māori and Kaitiakitanga Report

Professor Rawinia Higgins spoke to the DVC (Māori and Kaitiakitanga) report, which was taken as read.

Events:

- The University's annual tree-planting event, to take place on 24-25 July is fully subscribed, demonstrating our commitment to sustainability.
- Matariki Hautapu is to take place at 6am on Friday 17 July, followed by breakfast.
- Congratulations to Giacomo Lichtner on his inaugural professorial lecture.
- Upcoming inaugural lectures will be given by Professor Kathryn Sutherland (Higher Education) on [23 July 2026](#) and Anna Jackson (English Literature) on [6 August 2026](#).

The floor was opened for comment.

- Ryan Kerr will report to a future Board about whether Māori EFTS mirror domestic EFTS enrolment patterns between Wellington and other regions.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Report

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

External Research Funding Changes

- In June, Sally met with Heads of School and Directors to collaborate on the University's approach to the new national external funding system. This includes:
 - training and support in developing applications for the new schemes and criteria,
 - an Expression of Interest process to manage the University application cap system.

International PhD funding

- International PhD students will no longer be eligible for domestic fees from the beginning of 2028, but this change will not affect current students, or students who enrol at any point in 2027. These students will continue to pay domestic fees throughout their study. The University is continuing to participate in robust conversation with the Ministry of Education regarding this change, as international PhD students are a key part of our community of researchers.

Tertiary Research Excellence Fund (TREF) Update

- TREF funding components have been announced (details can be found in the DVC (Research) report).

- The one-year process of implementation is underway, with Te Herenga Waka participating in Tertiary Education Commission workshops with the other NZ universities.
- The PBRF will continue to be implemented in its current form until the formal TREF changeover, two years from now.

The floor was opened for comment:

- According to the new external research framework, 100% of the funding allocated to talent development sits in the technology pillar, but that pillar is open to multiple disciplines, as long as the focus is on the application of technology. There is scope for those who would like to make use of advanced technologies in their research in interesting ways.
- The Post is running a series in which four junior academics are profiled each week, and Te Herenga Waka has already had one researcher included. If you have any recommendations for profiles, please let the Research Office know.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students Report

The DVC(S) report was taken as read with Dr Logan Bannister's apologies. Acting DVC(S) Monique Warder spoke to this item in her place.

- New student's orientation ran from 30 June to 2 July, with great success – thank you to all involved.
- Open Day will be taking place on Friday 21 August. An Expression of Interest form has been circulated for staff who would like to be involved.
- The Summer Research Scholarship programme opened for academics to create their projects on 1 July.
- Our international numbers are 10-15% above our highest recorded – this represents complete recovery from Covid. Thank you to everyone for their efforts, particularly those in the Future Students and International Students teams.

The floor was opened with no comment.

26.44 Programme amendment requiring CUAP approval

AB26-46

The quality and structure of the redesigned major and minor below, along with the DIGI code, were **endorsed** by the Academic Board for submission to CUAP.

The Heads of School of the School of Information Management and the School of Architecture will seek to reach agreement on the proposed name of the major by 31 July, in time for submission to CUAP. Once agreed, the resolution will be advised to the relevant Faculty Boards and submitted to the Vice-Chancellor for approval before the proposal is submitted to CUAP. The proposal will not return to Academic Board.

Faculty	Proposal Title
WSBG	Rename the Information Systems (INFO) major and minor to Digital Architecture (DIGI)

Professor Jane Bryson, Dean of the Wellington School of Business and Government (WSBG), introduced this proposal and its wider context:

- The Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) underwent a major refresh of core courses in 2024, which was rolled out in 2025 and 2026.
- This proposal is the first update in the second phase of the refresh, which is to update BCom majors to align with the new core.

Dr Maja Krtalić, Head of the School of Information Management (SIM), spoke to the details of the proposal

- This proposal is a repackaging of existing material with an eye to ongoing industry relevance and future focus. This includes reintroducing a more practical system design of applications and practical components.
- The term 'Digital Architecture' has been in longstanding use in the field of information technology. SIM believe it is shared terminology, familiar to both students and employers in the field.
 - SIM acknowledged two potential barriers:
 - The protected use of the term 'architect' according to the New Zealand Registered Architects Board. SIM believe that the regulatory environment allows use of the term.
 - Potential confusion for students. SIM believe that this can be addressed with careful marketing, and any name would require socialisation. Further, SIM and ARCH tend to attract very different cohorts
 - Other names were considered, but SIM found that no other name captured the breadth of what SIM intends for the programme, or the pathways the school envisage for future students.
 - SIM considers that there is no risk to ARCH in terms of enrolments, or in professional identity: SIM graduates will not be looking for roles in the space reserved for registered Architects or vice-versa.

The floor was opened for comment:

Professor Sarah Leggott (Acting Head of School, Architecture (ARCH)):

- ARCH is disappointed by the late and very limited consultation of this proposal. It could not be discussed at Faculty Board for the Faculty of Architecture and Design Innovation (FADI) due to the delay in consultation.

- There are a range of views in ARCH towards SIM's use of the name 'Digital Architecture'. There are those in architecture who consider it shared terminology with the IT sector, but there are also those who have very strong objections to SIM's use of this name for their major.

Professor Robyn Phipps (Dean, FADI):

- Digital architecture has been one of the four pillars of the School of Architecture for forty years, and ARCH considers that they have a legitimate claim to the name.
- ARCH was an early adopter of digital systems and digital design, and digital architecture is one of ARCH's strengths internationally - Professor Andre Brown is the foundational editor of a longstanding journal called *Digital Architecture*
- The NZRAB has identified a "meaningful risk" of confusion and ambiguity in the use of this term in a different faculty. The NZRAB strongly encourages SIM to adopt a title that signals its disciplinary base and maintains appropriate distinction from the established architecture qualification.
- The Bachelor of Architectural Studies (BAS) is currently undergoing review. This proposal as it stands blocks ARCH from having a major named 'Digital Architecture' which also restricts the school's identification among future students, employers and key stakeholders.

Dr Bruno Marques, Associate Dean (Academic):

- Alternative names have been suggested, as the University cannot offer two majors with the same name. A compromise was offered that both of the majors in each faculty add a word: Digital Solutions Architecture/Digital Systems Architecture in SIM or Digital Building Architecture/Digital Construction Architecture in ARCH. The compromise wasn't accepted.

Jacqueline McIntosh, elected representative for FADI:

- Names matter as markers of identity, intellectual content and disciplinary boundaries, and FADI's concerns have been expressed in questions of academic clarity, disciplinary identity and the long-term implications of naming. "Architect" as a label has a distinguished and rigorous reputation, which is why it is protected by a regulatory body.

Professor Leon Gurevitch (Head of School, Design Innovation):

- We are in an era where computation (and especially AI) is increasingly blurring disciplinary and potentially professional boundaries. A structural mechanism is needed to manage these situations and to reward engagement between faculties.

Student representatives from VUWSA and Ngai Taura:

- From a student perspective, architecture and information technology are two distinct disciplines, with two very different career paths. Any confusion could be cleared up by how the major is marketed.
- Seek.co.nz currently contains hundreds of job listings for “solutions architect,” “digital architect” or similar, which suggests familiar use of the term in the field of information technology.

Chair’s summary:

- Members broadly supported the curriculum redesign.
- This proposal is the redesign of a programme which is to the benefit of students and employers in WSBG and therefore to the benefit of the University.
- Student representatives considered disciplinary confusion unlikely if the programme was marketed appropriately.
- RNZAB had expressed concerns regarding potential confusion.
- Given the CUAP deadline, further consultation was unlikely to be productive without new evidence.
- There is time pressure to meet the 1 August CUAP deadline.
- Missing that deadline would delay the proposal until the 2027 CUAP Round.
- These debates are best surfaced outside of this forum: early engagement achieves this. It is acknowledged that engagement could have started earlier in this case.
- This proposal was thoroughly debated at Academic Programmes Committee and endorsed by a large majority.

26.45 Update to the Academic Grievance regulation

AB26-47

Dr Robert Stratford spoke to this item. The proposed updates to the Academic Grievance regulation, clarifying the informal and formal investigation processes as well as the appeal process were **approved** by the Academic Board.

Further minor wording clarifications can be approved by the DVC Academic and may be added to a future motion.

26.47 Update to the degree regulations to remove the award of Honours from the MSc and MBmedSc

AB26-48

Professor Neil Dodgson spoke to this item. The proposed updates to degree regulations to remove the award of honours from the Masters of Science and the Masters of Biomedical Science, were **approved** by the Academic Board.

The award of honours will be retained in the Masters of Music Therapy (MMusTher) as it is a registered practitioner qualification for which honours is an industry standard.

26.48 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**.

26.49 Minutes of the last meeting

AB26-50

The minutes of the Academic Board meeting held on 14 April 2026 (numbers 26.14 to 26.19) were **confirmed**.

Note: Part C of meeting minutes are excluded

26.50 Programme amendments for Academic Board approval

The following programme amendments were **approved** by Academic Board:

Faculty	Proposal Title	Reference
FHSS	Amendments to the Songwriting (SONG) major in the Bachelor of Popular Music and the introduction of new courses	AB26-51
WSBG	Minor changes to the Professional Accounting programmes and courses	AB26-52
WSBG	Amend the Bachelor of Commerce TOUR major and Bachelor of Global Studies ELIC minor	AB26-53

26.51 Report of the Academic Programmes Committee

AB26-54

The Academic Programmes Committee report of 6 June 2026 was **noted**.

Appendix I

Academic Board attendance – 14 July 2026

Dr Catherine Abou-Nemeh	Dr Linda Hogg	Professor Janet Pitman
Professor Nick Ashill	Professor Bryony James	Assoc Prof Revti Raman
George Baker	Assoc Prof Robert Keyzers	Professor John Randal
Professor Daniel Brown	Dr Yau Hee Ko	Ethan Rogacion
Professor Jane Bryson	Assoc Prof Maja Krtalić	Assoc Prof Helen Rook
Professor Averil Coxhead	Professor Sarah Leggott	Professor Sarah Ross
Professor Joanne Crawford	Professor Giacomo Lichtner	Dr Tanya Ruka
Prof Kim Cunio	Professor Robyn Longhurst	Assoc Prof Anna Siyanova
Assoc Prof Toby Daglish	Assoc Prof Xavier Marquez	Professor Karen Smith
Professor Carmen Dalli	Dr Stuart Marshall	Dr Okan Tan
Heather Day	Professor Stephen Marshall	Prof Paul Teesdale-Spittle
Professor Neil Dodgson	Professor Sally McArthur	Professor John Townend
Assoc Prof Noelle Donnelly	Shay McEwen	Trish Wilson
Aidan Donoghue	Professor Ocean Mercier	Professor Michael Winikoff
Assoc Prof Stephen Epstein	Prof Joanna Merwood-Salisbury	Assoc Prof Amanda Wolf
Professor Alejandro Frery	Professor Nicole Moreham	Dr Jenny Wollerman
Professor Vanessa Green	Dr Andrew Munkacs	
Professor Leon Gurevitch	Professor Sally Jane Norman	
Dr John Haywood	Dr Yvette Perrott	
Professor Rawinia Higgins	Professor Robyn Phipps	

Non-members in attendance

Rachel Bruce	Dr Bruno Marques	Dr Robert Stratford
Leanne Gibson	Liz McKibben	Leigh Torode
Rochelle Gribble	Reece Moors	Dr Craig Watterson
Lynn Grindell	Varsha Narasimhan	
Joseph Habgood	Sue O'Donnell	
Dr Angela Joe	Linda Roberts	
Dr Yang Liu	Dr Angelina Sbroma	

Apologies

Professor Astrid an Huef	Professor Arun Elias	Professor Marco Sonzogni
Professor Sian Hwee Ang	Professor Gary Evans	Prof Kathryn Sutherland
Professor Richard Arnold	Professor Richard Furneaux	Professor Jeff Tatum
Professor Graeme Austin	Professor Anne Golding	Kate Tibbitts
Dr Logan Bannister	Professor Sally Hill	Tina Wakefield
Assoc Prof Fiona Barker	Professor Patricia Hunt	Professor Tony Ward
Professor Jonathan Barrett	Professor Kate Hunter	Professor Joe Zuccarello
Professor Pamela Bell	Professor Anna Jackson	Dr Helen Andreae
Prof Brigitte Bönish-Brednich	Professor Paul Jose	Michelle Clark
Professor Chris Bumby	Professor Karin Lasthuizen	Dr Michael Dudding
Dr Kimberley Cannady	Professor Hai Lin	Dr Andrew Lensen
Professor Sue Cherrington	Professor Karl Lofgren	Kaitlyn McLean
Professor Richard Furneaux	Professor Jim McAloon	Kirsty McClure
Professor Ally Gibson	Professor Robert McKay	Ash McPherson
Professor Nick Golledge	Professor Nicola Nelson	Dr Graeme Whimp
Professor Anne Goulding	Professor Wayne Patrick	Dr Jill Wilkinson
Professor Gina Grimshaw	Professor Rebecca Priestley	Midhuna Joy
Professor Ian Hermans	Dr Mike Ross	Professor Dean Knight
Professor Todd Bridgman	Professor Mike Wilson	Jonathan Flutey
Professor Rhian Salmon	Beth Smith	