TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

School of Government

MAPP 526
POLICY METHODS AND PRACTICE
(15 Points)

Trimester 2 / 2012

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

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School Office Hours:	8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday

Trimester Dates

From Thursday 12 July to Monday 29 October 2012

Withdrawal from Course

Formal notice of withdrawal must be in writing on a Course Add/Drop form (available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks) or emailed to the course Administrator. Not paying your fees, ceasing to attend lectures or verbally advising a member of staff will NOT be accepted as a formal notice of withdrawal.

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before **Friday 27 July 2012**.

2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is **Friday 5 October 2012**. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an '*Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late*' including supporting documentation. The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks.

Class Times and Room Numbers

Module One:	Thursday 12 July 2012	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Two:	Thursday 30 August 2012	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Three:	Thursday 25 October 2012	8.30am – 6.00pm

Attendance is <u>required</u> at all three modular teaching days

Locations: Classes will be held on the Pipitea Campus of Victoria University in Wellington and you will be advised of your classroom one week prior to each module by email. The timetable is also available to view on the Victoria University website (www.victoria.ac.nz/timetables/).

Course Overview

> *Policy analysis is designed to force one to think ahead in order to identify and organise the information which both defines a given problem and appears to be necessary to fully explore solutions. . . . Policy analysis is not a discipline. Rather, it chooses the analytic methods, theories, and substantive knowledge generated by other fields that are useful to integrate into its own framework for application to particular problems at hand.* (Joel Fleishman in *Divided Knowledge: Across Disciplines, Across Cultures*, Easton, D. & Schelling, C. S. Eds., 1991, p 235–6).

This course examines methods for getting policy-relevant information and effectively using it in evidence-based policy contexts.

Policy analysis is not a technocratic practice—our understanding of policy has moved on from one in which 'problems' had 'solutions' (if this ever was the perception). For example, we have witnessed a diversification of the roles of the policy analyst, and are now accustomed to thinking of policies in systemic terms, thinking of many policy problems as 'wicked' (or at least very uncertain and complicated) and policy behaviours as complex and unpredictable. Knowledge is always incomplete, multiple and provisional. Accordingly, policy inquiry is specific to a policy-decision environment. A primary emphasis throughout the course is on understanding how best to deploy 'methods' to address the various challenges that confront a policy analyst/advisor. That, in turn, requires reflective practice and an effort to continually develop sensitivity to unique configurations of policy tasks and their place in improving policies.

MAPP 526 is a 'companion course' to MAPP 525, Policy Analysis and Advising. Participants who have not already done so are strongly encouraged to read the MAPP 525 text, C. Scott and K. Baehler, *Adding Value to Policy Analysis and Advice* (UNSW Press, 2010). That course 'critically examines how policy specialists apply different methods, theories and substantive knowledge to

problems or goals that emerge in given social, political, cultural and environmental contexts, to provide information and evidence for policy understanding and decision.'

MAPP 526 considers the contexts of policy analysis practice and a variety of methods policy analysts use. The aim is to improve skills for working with information and 'evidence' and to gain critical understanding of how policy contexts bear on the deployment of those skills. There are far more topics of interest to policy practitioners than time to consider them. Likewise, there is not time for in-depth treatment of any one method. In your own work, you may use some and not others, and depth and understanding develops with time and practice, like any higher-order skill.

There are many skills and abilities we admire in policy professionals. Some of these are person characteristics, like attentive listening and the ability to stay focused. Others are responsive to the institutional settings of policy work, such as the abilities to draw on institutional knowledge and to work well with operational people as well as political players. These important aspects of policy practice are outside our scope. Instead, the focus is on ways that you can think more clearly and nimbly as you engage in the various information and evidence tasks of policy work.

Course Learning Objectives

This course has three main objectives. As indicated, the various assignments contribute to your achievement of these objectives. All assignments seek to contribute to Victoria graduate attributes of communication, critical and creative thinking and leadership.

At the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Ascertain a 'policy need' for specific sorts of 'evidence' in view of the specific context of the policy at issue (Assignments 1 and 3)
2. Identify and justify appropriate methods to gather, assess and present evidence according to the policy need and the strengths and limitations of methods (Assignments 2 and 3)
3. Effectively apply methods to practice (Assignments 1, 2 and 3).

Course Content and Readings

Although one of the first things we will emphasise is the inseparability of words and numbers, the first two modules consider methods for working with numbers and words respectively. The third module is dedicated to increasing the sophistication of working with words and numbers in the complexities and multiple demands of the 'real world'.

Module 1: Thursday 12 July 2012

Because this course follows quickly from the first trimester courses, the readings have been kept to a minimum, and some will be examined in class time, so that you are not overwhelmed with preparatory work. Please ensure that you have read each before class, but do not spend hours trying to work out things you do not fully understand. See additional notes below.

Course overview

- Introduction to the course.
- Types of methods and their roles in policy practice.
- Overview of the challenges of 'evidence-based policy' in context
- Discussion of assignments

Introduction to statistics and methods using quantitative data

Required reading:

1. Tufte, E. R. (1974). Introduction to data analysis. In *Data analysis for politics and policy* (pp. 1–30). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

   Tufte is a brilliant and unusual statistician (and sculptor!), most well-known for his work with the visual display of information (see his website: www.edwardtufte.com/tufte/). This clearly written chapter introduces some key statistical concepts in a realistic policy example. If you are not familiar with statistics, try to let your intuitions assist you to follow the discussion.

2. Strogatz, S. (2010). Chances are. Blogpost. *New York Times*, April 25.

   Policy is future focused and hence is it full of chance. Policy analysts therefore think about probabilities, and sometimes try to work with actual estimates. It is tricky stuff, however, especially when dealing with 'conditional probability', which Strogatz addresses in this blog.

3. Arnold, R. & Forbes, S. (nd). Introductory statistics. Handout prepared for MAPP 526. Wellington: Victoria University

   This set of notes was prepared for MAPP 526. In previous years, the course has included a full day devoted to working though the material. Both Richard and Sharleen are highly experienced statistics educators, and these succinct notes are fully the equivalent of any course-length text. Again, if you've never studied statistics, you will struggle to teach yourself with this guide. But it is worth reading, as you may be surprised how much will start to fall into place. The notes will then serve you as a reference as you come across statistics in other readings and at work.

Example discussed in class:

4. Fergusson, D. M., Horwood, L. J., & Boden, J. M. (2008). Abortion and mental health disorders: Evidence form a 30-year longitudinal study. *The British Journal of Psychiatry, 193*: 444–451, and commentaries from Casey, P. (pp. 452–453) and Oates, M. (pp. 453–454).

   This example has been selected because the underlying policy question and the statistics presented are up to the challenging levels of real situations you may encounter. The purpose of considering the case is to learn how we can maximise our understanding of such articles by drawing on some fundamental thinking about both policy and statistics.

Recommended reading (on Blackboard):

5. Kelly, D., Jasperse, J., & Westbrooke, I. (2005). Designing science graphs for data analysis and presentation: The bad, the good and the better. Wellington, Department of Conservation, Technical Working Paper Series, 32.

    Richard Arnold recommended this guide for anyone who wants to present information graphically. Of course, there are now all sorts of computer-aided means to show information, but some fundamental ideas are always of use.

Cost-benefit analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis

As with statistics, cost-benefit analysis is typically taught over the course of a trimester or more. The purpose in this unit is to assist you to learn the fundamentals and to be able to read CBA reports with good understanding.

Required reading:

1. Dobes, L. (2009). A practical guide to cost-benefit analysis. In G. Argyrous (Ed.), *Evidence for policy and decision-making: A practical guide* (pp. 45–71). Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.

    This is short, clear and accurate chapter, covering all the essentials of a cost-benefit study.

2. Department of Finance & Administration (Australia). (2006). *Handbook of cost-benefit analysis* (pp. 94–96; 108–114; 118–119). Canberra.

    This extract complements Dobes by addressing some of the common criticisms of CBA and presenting a short overview of the modified form of cost-benefit analysis called 'cost-effectiveness analysis'.

Examples discussed in class:

3. Wright, J. C., Bates, M. N., Cutress, T., & Lee, M. (2001). The cost-effectiveness of fluoridating water supplies in New Zealand. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 25*(2), pp. 170–178.

4. Anderson, P., Chisholm, D., & Fuhr, D. C. (2009). Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of policies and programmes to reduce harm caused by alcohol. *The Lancet, 373*, pp. 2234–2246.

Recommended reading:

5. New Zealand Treasury. (2005). Cost benefit analysis primer. Wellington: The Treasury. www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/guidance/planning/costbenefitanalysis/primer/cba-primer-v12.pdf

Module 2: Thursday 30 August 2012

Policy analysts/advisors read a lot, and need to summarise what they read, think about how it might apply to the case at hand. Sometimes they are asked to undertake systematic reviews (or commission them) and sometimes they develop expertise in a particular policy area by building up knowledge about the working of particular policy 'mechanisms' in numerous unique practice situations. Finally, a great deal of policy-relevant material is presented with a persuasive intent, calling on the analyst/advisor to exercise skills in argument analysis and construction. The sessions in this model consider the methods for these practices.

Using published literature and research: Literature reviews and research syntheses

Required reading:

1. Gomm, R. (2008). Systematic reviews, meta-analysis and syntheses from diverse sources, in *Social research methodology: A critical introduction*. (2nd ed.) (pp. 344–364). Palgrave Macmillan.

   The chapter from a textbook is comprehensive and written in a straightforward manner. It covers the synthesis of both quantitative and qualitative information, and thus serves to complete our previous module.

2. Pawson, R., Greenhalgh, T., Harve, G. & Walshe, K. (2004). Realist synthesis: An introduction. ESRC Research Methods Programme, RMP Methods Paper 2/2004.

   Ray Pawson and his colleagues have developed an approach to synthesizing information from experience that contrasts with the prevalent 'systematic review'. The paper is on the long side, but you should be able to skim read in parts.

3. Barzelay, M. (2007). Learning from second-hand experience: Methodology for extrapolation-oriented case research. Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration and Institutions, 20(3), 521–543).

   Syntheses of all sorts look back, but policy prescribes forward. Often, a problem that is new to us is not new to others and we want to be able to learn from others. Barzelay takes on this challenge in this piece, which discussed the general issue and applies it to a case he was involved in. Although the focus in public management, the discussion is entirely relevant to public policy. It foreshadows our look at case studies in the third module.

4. Knopf, J. W. (2006). Doing a literature review. *Political Science & Politics, 39*(1), 127–132.

   This short article has the advantage of brevity, and the disadvantages of being somewhat academically focused and directed towards politics students, not policy students.

Example discussed in class:

5. Smith, K. A., & Cordery, C. (2010). What works? A systematic review of research and evaluation literature on encouragement and support of volunteering. Prepared for the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs. www.dia.govt.nz/pubforms.nsf/url/whatworksvolunteering.pdf/$file/whatworksvolunteering.pdf (summary in readings; full report at URL or on Blackboard).

Recommended reading (on Blackboard):

6. EPPI-Centre (March 2007) *EPPI-Centre methods for conducting systematic reviews*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

   Systematic reviewing is a highly formalised method, and the EPPI-Centre in the UK carries out many such reviews. This document is a very detailed guide to reviews.

Methods for qualitative inquiry

Required reading:

1. Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. 3rd ed., pp. 37–73. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

   Although this reading is drawn from a research and evaluation text, its virtue is a focus on what Patton calls 'strategic themes for qualitative inquiry'. The twelve themes, in categories covering design, data collection and analysis provide a sort of 'menu' of considerations for undertaking analysis, and also enable critical scrutiny of published research that may be drawn on by an analyst/advisor or summarised in some form of synthesis.

2. Clarke, S. E. Context-sensitive policy methods. (2007). In F. Fischer, G. J. Miller & M. S. Sidney. (Eds.). *Handbook of public policy analysis: Theory, politics and methods* (pp. 443–461). Boca Raton, New York, and Oxford: Taylor and Francis, CRC Press.

   One of the challenges running through this section of the course is making use of information that is specific to a particular context in some new setting (the policy development that we want to inform). Susan Clarke covers a range of methods specifically suited to the challenge of keeping what is relevant about context while also being able to more systematically learn from a collection of cases.

Recommended reading:

3. Hall, R. (2009). Qualitative research methods. In Argyrous, G. (Ed.) *Evidence for policy and decision-making: a practical guide* (pp. 218–239), UNSW Press.

Policy argument

Required reading:

1. Dunn, W. N. (2008). Developing policy arguments. In *Policy analysis: an introduction* 4th Ed., (pp. 377–419). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

   Concentrate on 377–363 and 389 on; skim the rest.

Module 3: Thursday 25 October 2012

Different ways of thinking about 'evidence'

The readings in this section have been selected to offer a range of perspectives on what 'evidence' is and, importantly, how we might think about and use evidence of different sorts.

Required reading:

1. Banks, G. (2009). Evidence-based policy-making: What is it? How do we get it? ANZSOG/ANU Public Lecture Series, 2009, Canberra, Feb 4.

2. Sanderson, I. (2009). Intelligent policy making for a complex world: pragmatism, evidence and learning. *Political Studies, 57*, 699–719.

3. Schwandt, T. (2005). The centrality of practice to evaluation. *American Journal of Evaluation, 26*, 95–105.

4. Schmidt, M. R. (1993). Grout: Alternative kinds of knowledge and why they are ignored. *Public Administration Review, 53*(6), 525–530

Recommended reading (on Blackboard):

6. Kay, A. (2011). Evidence-based policy-making: The elusive search for rational public administration. *The Australian Journal of Public Administration, 70*(3), 236–245.

Framing, scoping and conducting evidence tasks in challenging circumstances

Required reading:

1. Morgan, M. G., & Henrion, M. (1990). The nature and sources of uncertainty. In *Uncertainty: A guide to dealing with uncertainty in quantitative risk and policy analysis*, (pp. 47–72). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

   Although an older publication, it remains the best short overview I have come across.

2. Eppel, E. (forthcoming). What does it take to make surprises less surprising? The contribution of complexity theory to anticipation in public management. *Public Management Review.*

Example discussed in class:

3. Head, B. W. (2010). Water policy—evidence, learning and the governance of uncertainty. *Policy and Society, 29*, 171–180.

Recommended reading:

4. Farber, D. A. Uncertainty (February 18, 2010). UC Berkeley Public Law Research Paper No. 1555343. Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=1555343

Course Delivery

This course is delivered in a modular format, which includes a minimum of 24 hours contact. The 24 hours are broken up into three separate days of eight hours each (a 'module'). There are three modules in the course with approximately seven weeks between each module. **Attendance is required at all three modular teaching days (8.30am – 6.00pm).**

Expected Workload

The learning objectives set for each course are demanding and, to achieve them, candidates must make a significant commitment in time and effort to reading, studying, thinking, and completion of assessment items outside of contact time. Courses vary in design but all require preparation and learning before the first day of the course and regular learning is also necessary (students who leave everything to the last moment rarely achieve at a high level).

Expressed in input terms, on average, the time commitment required usually translates to approximately 150 hours for a 15-point course.

Group Work

All work is assessed individually. Some classroom exercises will be done in small groups. Participation and evidence of preparation may be used to where the total scores for written work falls close to a grade borderline.

Readings

There is no textbook for this course. Readings are supplied in three packets, with contents as described above (a few readings are accessed via the internet). Many readings will also be posted on Blackboard, if you prefer to read onscreen.

Blackboard is Victoria University's online environment that supports teaching and learning by making course information, materials and other learning activities available via the internet through the myVictoria student web portal.

To access the Blackboard site for this course:

1. Open a web browser and go to www.myvictoria.ac.nz .
2. Log into myVictoria using your ITS Username (on your Confirmation of Study) and password (if you've never used the Victoria University computer facilities before, your initial password is your student ID number, on your Confirmation of Study, Fees Assessment or student ID card – you may be asked to change it when you log in for the first time).
3. Once you've logged into myVictoria, select Blackboard (from the options along the top of the page) to go to your Blackboard homepage.
4. The "My Courses" section displays the courses you have access to – select the appropriate link to access the course-specific Blackboard site. Please note that only courses that are actually using Blackboard and have been made available to students by their respective course coordinator will be displayed.

You are recommended to ensure that your computer access to Victoria University's computer facilities, such as myVictoria and Blackboard, is working BEFORE your course starts. If you have any problems, you should contact the ITS Helpdesk on (04) 463 5050 or its-service@vuw.ac.nz , or visit the Helpdesk on level 2 of the Railway West Wing, Pipitea Campus. See www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/ for more information.

Assessment Requirements

Assignment	Details		
1. A. Statistical interpretation B. Application of cost-benefit analysis	Due Monday 13 August 2012	A: 500 words B: 1,250 – 1,500 words	15% 15%
2. Application of selected methods	Due Monday 17 September 2012	1,250 – 1,500 words	30%
3. Essay	Due Monday 29 October 2012	2,000 words	40%

Assignment details

All assignments will be made available well before class sessions and discussed further in class.

Please have a good look at the dates of modules and assignment due dates and allow adequately for module preparation and assignment completion. For example, there is a reasonably short time between module 2 and the due date for the second assignment and a very short time after the last module. Assignment three draws on learning across the course. You should read the course materials in advance and have started the assignments before the modules, especially for the third.

Please submit ALL assignments IN HARD COPY to:

> Post Experience Programmes,
> School of Government,
> Victoria University of Wellington,
> Level 8 Reception,
> Rutherford House,
> 23 Lambton Quay,
> P.O. Box 600,
> Wellington 6140.

> Assignments submitted by post are given two days grace to allow for delivery time, while assignments that are submitted in person should be placed in the secure box at School of Government reception (Level 8, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus, office hours = 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday) by the due date/time. The assignment box is cleared daily, and assignments will be date stamped.

Quality Assurance Note

Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of FCom programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

Students should keep a copy of all submitted work.

Class Attendance

Attendance is <u>required</u> at all three modular teaching days

If, before enrolment for a course, you are aware that you will not be able to attend for part of a day, you must notify the Director of Master's Programmes when you enrol explaining why you will not be able to attend. The Director of Master's Programmes will consult with the relevant course coordinator. In such circumstances, you may be declined entry into a course.

If you become aware after a course starts that you will be unable to attend a significant part of a day (i.e. more than two hours), you must advise the course coordinator explaining why you will be unable to attend. The course coordinator may excuse you from attendance and may also require you to complete compensatory work relating to the course content covered during your absence.

Penalties

The ability to plan for and meet deadlines is a core competency of both advanced study and public management. Failure to meet deadlines disrupts course planning and is unfair on students who do submit their work on time. It is expected therefore that you will complete and hand in assignments by the due date. Marks will be deducted at the rate of five per cent for every day by which the

assignment is late and no assignments will be accepted after five working days beyond the date they are due. For example, if you get 65% for an assignment, but you handed it in on Monday when it was due the previous Friday, you will get a mark of 50%.

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal circumstances beyond your control prevent you from meeting the deadline for submitting a piece of written work or from attending class to make a presentation, you can apply for and may be granted an extension to the due date. You should let your course coordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline (if circumstances permit) if you are seeking an extension. Where an extension is sought, evidence, by way of a medical certificate or similar, may be required by the course coordinator.

Mandatory Course Requirements

You must submit or participate in all pieces of assessment required for this course.

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information may be provided in class, by post, by email or via Blackboard.

NOTE: Information emailed to you via Blackboard can only be sent to your @myvuw.ac.nz email address (the free email address created for you when you enrol and accessed via the myVictoria student web portal). If you want to receive these emails at your preferred email address (e.g. your home or work email address), it is **essential** that you activate your @myvuw.ac.nz email address before the start of the course and you modify the settings so all emails sent to it are automatically forwarded to your preferred email address. Please go to www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/FAQs.aspx#Email_Forward for more information.

You are recommended to ensure that your computer access to Victoria University's computer facilities, such as myVictoria, Blackboard and email, is working BEFORE your course starts. If you have any problems, you should contact the ITS Helpdesk on (04) 463 5050 or its-service@vuw.ac.nz , or visit the Helpdesk on level 2 of the Railway West Wing, Pipitea Campus. See www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/ for more information.

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and the Use of Turnitin

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must still acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- material from books, journals or any other printed source
- the work of other students or staff
- information from the Internet
- software programs and other electronic material
- designs and ideas
- the organisation or structuring of any such material.

Acknowledgement is required for all material in any work submitted for assessment unless it is a 'fact' that is well-known in the context (such as "Wellington is the capital of New Zealand") or your own ideas in your own words. Everything else that derives from one of the sources above and ends up in your work – whether it is directly quoted, paraphrased, or put into a table or figure, needs to be acknowledged with a reference that is sufficient for your reader to locate the original source.

Plagiarism undermines academic integrity simply because it is a form of lying, stealing and mistreating others. Plagiarism involves stealing other people's intellectual property and lying about whose work it is. This is why plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria.

If you are found guilty of plagiarism, you may be penalised under the Statute on Student Conduct. You should be aware of your obligations under the Statute, which can be downloaded from the policy website (www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx). You could fail your course or even be suspended from the University.

Plagiarism is easy to detect. The University has systems in place to identify it.

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine www.turnitin.com . Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

There is guidance available to students on how to avoid plagiarism by way of sound study skills and the proper and consistent use of a recognised referencing system. This guidance may be found at the following website: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx .

If in doubt, seek the advice of your course coordinator.

Plagiarism is simply not worth the risk.

For the following important information, follow the links provided

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx

General University Policies and Statutes
Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study

Find out about academic progress and restricted enrolment at
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress.aspx

The University's statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy , except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Further information about the University's academic processes can be found on the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/default.aspx

AVC (Academic) Website: information including: Conduct, Academic Grievances, Students with Impairments, Student Support
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx

Faculty of Commerce Office
www.victoria.ac.nz/fcom/studenthelp/

Te Putahi Atawhai
Maori and Pacific Mentoring Programme
www.victoria.ac.nz/tpa/