

Vice-Chancellor's Report



Dr Rod Carr

UC, like the rest of Christchurch, continues to transform itself — in the University's case, into a teaching and learning institution fit for the 21st century. While much of Christchurch is focussed strongly on building developments, UC is committed to transforming not only its campus, but also the sort of graduate it produces.

While state-of-the-art facilities are a vital part of a modern teaching and learning environment and a critical part of UC's future, we are very conscious that it is the people who make a difference. UC is determined more than ever that its graduates will leave not only with a quality, internationally-recognised qualification, but with the additional attributes that make their future success inevitable. To the greatest extent possible they will also have had opportunities to learn by practical experience during their course of study.

Through the UC graduate attributes we have sought to ensure that students will not only be critically competent in their chosen discipline, they will be employable, innovative and enterprising, with the key skills and attributes sought by employers that can be used in a range of applications. We've also sought to ensure they are biculturally competent and confident, with an awareness and understanding of the nature of biculturalism in a multicultural society. They will be engaged with the community, having observed and understood a culture within a community by reflecting on their own performance and experiences. We also want our graduates to be globally aware of the influence of international conditions on their discipline and competent in engaging in multicultural and worldwide contexts.

We see these attributes as a vital pathway to our students' future success, long after they graduate with their qualification. Two of these attributes, commitment to biculturalism and engagement with the community were embodied in Dr John Wood's appointment as a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to tertiary education and Maori. This prestigious achievement rightly recognises his distinguished career and wealth of experience and expertise. Most recently he led the University's governing body through the troubled aftermath of the Canterbury earthquakes in 2010 and 2011. Under his leadership, the University Council oversaw the development and adoption of the UC Futures plan for recovery and transformation. He led the plan to reduce the size of the Council to a compact skill-based governing body in response to the Minister for Tertiary Education's call for university council reform. In 2015 we launched UC7 to further highlight to students, their parents, teachers and careers advisors the complete educational experience on offer at UC. These seven dimensions build on the graduate attributes, and further highlight for students the skills and experiences they need to succeed and change the world.

Above all else, there is a commitment to the highest academic standard. UC is ranked in the top three percent of universities worldwide. Students learn from passionate lecturers in more than 100 programmes of study and have the chance to be part of ground-breaking research at our research centres and field stations. They graduate with a high quality internationally-recognised academic qualification.

UC Enterprise highlights that already, more than 30% of UC programmes of study get students out into the workplace or community, ensuring those students have the relevant experience employers are looking for. Budding entrepreneurs also have the chance to shine with *entré*, UC Innovators and the UC Hatchery, dedicated to supporting innovation and student start-up ventures.

We've built on the international reputation our students have earned for their community involvement. At UC, students can connect with a range of community organisations, join the Student Volunteer Army, or do community-related course work.

UC is committed to biculturalism and works with Ngāi Tahu, the tangata whenua in our region. UC students increasingly gain bicultural perspectives and experience in all

programmes of study, with specific learning opportunities in Te Reo, art, culture and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We aspire to ensure all our graduates have confidence and competence to live and work in a bicultural nation and multi-cultural society. UC has global reach, with exchange agreements with over 50 universities worldwide in North America, Europe, Asia and Australia. We also bring the world to UC. Our unique Erskine Fellowship programme brings nearly 75 international academics each year to teach at UC.

We're active. UC is on the doorstep of a massive outdoor 'playground' and encourages students to grab a snowboard, surfboard, mountain bike or trail shoes and make the most of the outdoor experience the Canterbury region has to offer. UC has a thriving and inclusive student culture, a strong students' association and more than 130 student-led clubs covering a diverse array of interests.

UC does all it can to support our students. Everyone has different strengths, interests and learning styles. At UC, students have a dedicated support system to help them find their way and make the most of university life, including mentoring by other students who've already learned the ropes.

While working hard to improve the quality of our on campus student experience, the quality of UC's core business — world-class research-led teaching and learning — remains high and has continued to improve. In 2015 UC's QS ranking increased 31 places to 211 in the world, retaining UC's ranking well inside the three per cent of the world's universities. Some 21 disciplines taught at UC are ranked in the top 200 in the world. We are focussed on retaining our place among the top three universities in New Zealand.

UC already has a record number of postgraduate students, and a record level of enrolments in the College of Engineering. We're enhancing our offering even further with a portfolio of new taught Masters qualifications.

Those successes are due in no small part to our dedicated staff from New Zealand and across the globe. Many of them have been recognised at the top of their chosen discipline in 2015 through a string of external awards that highlight UC's research credibility. Many of our students have contributed as well, or had their potential recognised through their own awards.

2015 has proven to be a year where even more of UC's future vision for the University has become apparent, not just through ongoing major projects, but also the development of the overarching plan that will guide future development across the University's Ilam and Dovedale campuses.

UC's extensive campus transformation programme continues to progress well. UC's \$1.2 billion programme is one of the major redevelopment projects in the Canterbury region, and one of the most advanced. It has already seen more than 20 major buildings remediated, improved, made more sustainable and future-proofed for generations to come.

Two multi-million dollar redevelopments, of UC's Engineering and Science facilities, supported by a Government investment of up to \$260 million, are under construction and on schedule to be ready for student use in 2016 and 2017 respectively. The world-class teaching and research facilities they will provide promise to attract even more top quality students to the region.

So does the redevelopment of the former Commerce building as the new home of the College of Education, Health and Human Development, bringing the College onto the Ilam campus from Dovedale for the first time, likely from mid-2017.

The new University of Canterbury Students' Association (UCSA) building will progress on the current site during 2016. This river bank location, with access from Ilam Road and the pedestrian bridge across University Drive, joins the campus with student accommodation. It will ultimately be part of a precinct focused on student wellness with the building of a new Recreation Centre, and the presence of the Health Centre.

UC has continued to operate successfully while this work has progressed, and will continue to do so. Our commitment is to continue to discuss with the community, individually and as a group, projects and plans that may have an impact on them.

Ultimately, the Ilam campus will be redeveloped into a series of precincts, with Matariki (the former Registry) — home to the majority of student services — and the central library in the Puaka-James Hight building at the heart of the campus. The Dovedale campus will be redeveloped for student accommodation and ancillary services.

The revitalisation will create a brighter, newer campus, one that is more stimulating for students and staff who work, study, and

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socialise in it. It aims to create a learning environment that is inspirational, innovative and engaging, and one that produces outstanding graduates in all disciplines, be it arts, business and law, education, science or engineering.

UC is considering options to cater for growth and a forecast increased demand for student accommodation. Through partners and independent halls, UC currently provides about 2,000 beds for student accommodation across eight sites but predicts it will need an additional 1,000 student beds in the next 8–10 years. UC's long-term focus to cater for this demand is the Dovedale campus, Homestead Lane and in the longer term, the area around Montana Avenue.

UC's ambition goes beyond its suburban Ilam surrounds. 2016 will also be the year that UC returns to its former home, what is now the Arts Centre of Christchurch in the central city, through a lease of the Chemistry building as a home for performance music, classics and the University's Logie Collection of Greek and Roman antiquities, which will be open to the public. We also look forward to further presence in the central city through involvement as a partner in both in the ICT graduate school and health precinct.

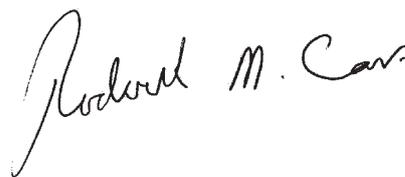
Our focus beyond Ilam, and efforts to engage with the community have progressed in other ways. This year the University progressed partnerships with the Crusaders, Tactix, the Student Volunteer Army and the Christchurch School of Music, seeking to engage with schools, students and parents in more effective ways. We are excited at how those relationships have created discussion and highlighted the opportunities available for young people in tertiary study at Canterbury.

While focussing on our local community, we have not forgotten that half of UC students come from outside the region; UC has opened offices in Auckland and Wellington in order to better highlight UC as a very real alternative to other universities. We see the Canterbury region as a land of opportunity, not only

through the many recreational opportunities available in Christchurch and its hinterland, but also for the careers of young people keen to have an impact while they study and after they graduate.

While 2016 might be the year when Christchurch's central city really kicks off, the University's progress is well advanced and well in hand. The University is determined to build on its proud 143-year history in the region and to endure as one of the rocks on which the continuing and future success of Canterbury is built.

I would like to thank staff again for a year in which their willingness to engage with the challenges and opportunities to undertake research, transform curricula and pass on knowledge and skills has again been exceptional. On behalf of all those who hold dear the future success of the University, thank you.



Dr Rod Carr
Vice-Chancellor Te Tumu Whakarae