

Vice-Chancellor's Report

Te Pūrongo a te Tumu Whakarae



Dr Rod Carr

2016 has been a busy year with much to celebrate. We have moved from response through recovery to transformation, and UC is increasingly well positioned for ongoing success. Each year, new and returning students become the first to take full advantage of UC's ongoing campus transformation, including new state-of-the-art facilities that are proud milestones in the University's history.

Recovering student numbers

The University continues to focus on student recruitment which has had a steady, positive result. In 2016 every college, for the first time since 2010, reported an increase in new-to-UC domestic students. In March 2016, UC reported that student numbers had increased for the start of the academic year due to a rise in both domestic and international enrolments. New-to-UC total enrolments were up 13% when compared with the same time in 2015 – an additional 380 new students, bringing the number of new students at UC to 3,242 equivalent full-time students (EFTS), compared with 2,862 new EFTS in 2015.

2016 also saw record numbers of postgraduate students at UC at 2,777. This compares with 2,654 in 2015 and is an increase of 34% since 2011. In 2010, UC had about 750 full-time equivalent students in masters programmes; 660 of them were taught masters students, which increased to 1,177 in 2016.

In 2016, UC had more than 1,000 PhD students for the fourth year running, having first surpassed the milestone in 2013.

World-class learning environment – research and rankings

UC has continued to deliver our core services as a world-class, research-led teaching and learning environment. More than 3,000 students and staff have published hundreds of articles and undertaken over half a million hours of research in the past year.

UC rose in the Times Higher Education (THE) rankings, and the independent international rankings agency QS again placed UC amongst the top 3% of the world's tertiary institutions and just outside the top 200, retaining our relative QS ranking among Aotearoa New Zealand universities.

In the 2016 QS World University Rankings by Subject, UC ranked amongst the world's top 200 institutions in 19 of 25 of the subjects featured. In 2016 UC Civil Engineering was among the top 50 in the world and the highest ranked discipline at UC.

QS also ranked UC's academic faculty as having the highest citation rate, on average, of any Aotearoa New Zealand university and the only Aotearoa New Zealand university ranked in the top 200 by that measure.

UC has experienced unparalleled success in attracting research funding, earning a record level of research income in 2016. UC's annual research income approached \$60 million for the first time, due in large part to a collaborative strategy of working with other recognised research leaders.

UC has also seen increased Government investment in research, thanks to the willingness of the University's world-class researchers and academics to collaborate and participate in National Science Challenges, Centres of Research Excellence (CoREs) and elsewhere. To date, the University has secured around \$40 million in research contracts from 60 CoRE and Challenge projects.

In the last Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) assessment, UC earned the highest rate of funding per assessed academic staff member and had the highest proportion of all academic staff involved in both research and teaching. UC researchers were also the most successful of all the Aotearoa New Zealand research institutes and universities in the 2016 MBIE Smart Ideas investment process, with five new scientific research projects collectively awarded \$5 million in funding.

UC launched the new Geospatial Research Institute | Toi Hangarau in June. The Institute will deliver world-class geospatial

science projects and address the demand for collaborative industry and government research and will increase collaboration by providing the community with better access to UC researchers from different disciplines.

UC's Geographic Information Science expertise was further underlined in November, when College of Science Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Wendy Lawson received national recognition for her longstanding commitment to growing the geospatial sector in Aotearoa New Zealand when she won the Professional of the Year Award at the New Zealand Spatial Excellence Awards.

Professor Ian Wright took up the role of University of Canterbury Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation in October. Professor Wright brings to UC a wealth of knowledge of the research sector within Aotearoa New Zealand and overseas, and established relationships between the tertiary sector and Crown Research Institutes, as well as extensive strategic research and innovation leadership. Professor Steve Weaver, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) retired from the University after 38 years of service. His contribution was very significant; he held the respect of his colleagues and my appreciation. The leadership of Professor Jarg Pettinga during this transition is warmly acknowledged.

Transformation of the built environment, IT infrastructure and teaching pedagogy

Visitors to UC will immediately notice a vibrant campus with new state-of-the-art facilities already open and other construction projects progressing very well. These are outlined in the Chancellor's welcome. We are looking forward to several openings in 2017, as more than \$400 million of major projects reach completion.

New spaces take into account trends in global tertiary education, balanced with the University's unique characteristics. A key consideration is long-term sustainability, that is, providing flexible learning spaces that can continuously evolve to support a greater range of teaching methods, underpinned by a robust IT infrastructure. As informal learning opportunities increase alongside the more traditional lecture space, our built environment will broaden opportunities for learning and innovation between a greater range of disciplines.

Transforming the Graduate Profile

The University continues to develop the UC Graduate Profile, ensuring that students graduate not only with a world-class qualification but with attributes that set them apart from other graduates around the world. As the Chancellor states in his welcome, our graduates are: employable, innovative and enterprising; biculturally competent and confident in a multicultural world; engaged with the community; and globally aware and connected.

Our graduates are globally aware. In 2016, UC was proud to host a record number (87) of Erskine programme visitors. This contributes immensely to the University's world-class learning environment and in building not only the global awareness of our graduates, but also their international connections.

Our graduates are increasingly able to demonstrate bicultural competence and confidence. Across disciplines, students have opportunities to work in partnership with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. Kā Waimaero Ngāi Tahu Research Centre is a leader in indigenous scholarship and provides a centre for the intellectual capital and development of Ngāi Tahu. The Māui Lab, a partnership between Aotahi – School of Māori and Indigenous Studies, Ngāi Tahu Research Centre and the Office of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor Māori | Amokapua Māori at UC, provides a range of scholarship and consulting opportunities readily transferred to the workplace.

Our students and graduates are renowned for their innovation and enterprise. The UC Centre for Entrepreneurship and the UC Hatchery, dedicated to supporting innovation and student start-up ventures, are producing a steady stream of success stories and invaluable networking in Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad.

Our students are actively engaged with the community. Christchurch and, more recently, Kaikōura residents, continue to benefit from the volunteer efforts of the Student Volunteer Army (SVA). In early 2016, UC and SVA were proud to honour the Anzac spirit through Serve for NZ: Anzac Day, which encouraged people to volunteer as part of a national day of service.

Linked to the Graduate Attributes is the University's Co-curricular Record (CCR). Introduced in 2015, it is going from strength to strength. Signing up to the CCR gives our students an edge in demonstrating

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they are work-ready by recording how their participation in non-academic student experience adds to their value for employers. In 2016, the CCR had excellent student uptake with more than 700 students opting in to a broad range of CCR activities that included mentoring, tutoring, digital content development, internships, social enterprise, refereeing and community volunteering, among others.

Transformation of the student experience

The University's Student Management System upgrade is part of the University's commitment to improving the student experience. This will impact across all phases of the student lifecycle, from recruitment to well after students graduate. The programme is a crucial element in further growing student numbers, improving service delivery, reducing administration and enabling the University to be more agile and responsive.

Transformation of our organisational culture and development

The University recognises that organisations with a constructive culture empower people to perform at their best. The organisation is working with key staff on a professional development programme at an individual, group and organisational level to enable those with people management responsibilities to grow a constructive culture.

Financial results

The University's consolidated audited annual result for 2016 was a \$1.837 million deficit, which compares with a \$3.531 million surplus in 2015. The University is managing the costs of its building programme, as well as demolition costs, and one-off expenditure as staff and students are moved around the campus as the buildings they work in are rebuilt or refurbished.

The University's cash resources are significant and are mostly committed to the major construction projects on campus, with a budgeted \$206 million allocated to capital projects in 2017. The net operating cash inflow of nearly \$65 million – over twice that budgeted – indicates we are managing within our means and remain on track to return to a sustainable surplus in 2019.

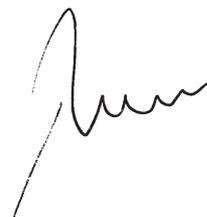
The University's net assets now stand at \$1.387 billion, an increase of \$76 million over the same period to the end of 2015.

Finally, the University is immensely grateful to businesses, alumni and friends of the University who make such a difference to the fundraising efforts for research, scholarships, programmes, services and campus development projects.

I would like to acknowledge and thank all the staff of the University for their efforts during 2016. We are fortunate to have such a talented and committed community.

2017 promises to be an exciting, challenging and rewarding year as recovery fades and transformation accelerates.

Nā reira, he mihi tēnei ki ngā kamahi o te whare wānanga i runga i tō rātou pukumahi i te tau kua pahure ake nei.



Dr Rod Carr
Vice-Chancellor | Tumu Whakarāe