

A close-up photograph of reeds or grasses, with a prominent red horizontal band across the middle. The reeds are in various shades of green, yellow, and brown, with some showing a small water droplet. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue sky.

# Equity & Diversity

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**The University of Canterbury, in line with the Human Rights Act (1993) and Education Act (1989), is committed to ensuring quality of opportunity in employment and education for all its staff and students, irrespective of background. Thus it is accepted that age, gender, ethnicity or disability should not disadvantage or hinder appointment, professional development, promotion, advancement or successful study.**

The University recognises its responsibility to adopt procedures to ensure the absence of discrimination in relation to all facets of university life in accordance with prevailing community standards of best practice and relevant legislation.

Equity and diversity issues underpin the core business of the University and are therefore considered to be of concern to every member of the University community. The aim of the University's equity and diversity programmes is to foster a campus environment of inclusion, knowledge and understanding in which students and staff learn to value diversity and to respect individual differences that enrich the University community.

Formal oversight of equity and diversity rests with the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) and the Director of Student Services and Communications, and the Director of Human Resources who jointly hold the Equity and Diversity portfolio within the University's Senior Management Team. A Central Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee (CEDAC), under the facilitation of the Student Success Manager, meets bi-monthly and shares plans, initiatives and best practice, and leads educational initiatives across the UC community. Beginning in the 2014 academic year, the Team Leader for Disability Resource Services will serve as the Coordinator for Equity and Diversity programmes and assist in the implementation of university, college and service undertakings.

In 2013, the University recommitted to a strategic approach to equity and diversity and, in 2014, will undertake an inventory of existing and proposed programmes with a view to developing a more coherent UC-wide equity and diversity strategy. The University also sees this exercise as an opportunity to develop more student-focused strategies to support student success and retention, and to clarify the equity and diversity reporting framework.

Significant effort has been devoted in 2013 to developing the UC Māori Development Strategy and Rautaki Whakawhanake Kaupapa Māori. These reorganisation efforts reassert Māori developmental and student-centred strategies in supporting and empowering students while achieving personal and academic goals. In 2013, the UC Pacific Development Strategy contributed to an increase in University-wide activities and workshops incorporating the cultural perspective and considerations of Pacifika students. Pacifika students in 2013 were the recipients of a significant increase in the number of Emerging Leaders Scholarships.

As the University progresses its remediation and building projects, consideration is being given as to how to incorporate universal building design and improvement to support all students, staff and community members, including those with disabilities. Current and future building plans are continually considered for their impact on serviceability and accessibility.

During 2013, significant work undertaken by CEDAC included a summary report on the diversity of students at university and college levels. Factors including student gender, ethnicity, disability, age and citizenship were correlated with participation, pass and achievement rates. The results of this study directly inform equity and programming initiatives for the 2014 academic year.