

Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council

January 2022

Move to Red COVID-19 Protection Framework Setting

Following the Government announcement on 23 January 2022 that all of New Zealand would move to the Red setting of the COVID-19 Protection Framework, UC briefly stood up the Incident Management Team to ensure that the University moved seamlessly to the Ministry of Education (MOE) [Tertiary Education at Red](#) directive. The directive mandates vaccinations for all staff, students and visitors on campus, mask wearing within all buildings and 1-metre social distancing. UC moved to this status on Monday, 24 January. Preparations for operating at the Red setting have been well developed by UC's Health and Safety Improvement and Emergency and Business Continuity Managers, supported by a Steering Group from late 2021.

The move to the Red setting in January has produced minimal disruption to University operations thus far, and is providing additional time to plan for full teaching at the Red setting from the beginning of Semester 1 in late February. The intention is for the University to operate at the Red setting in a prudent and cautious 'business as usual' way, wherever possible, while complying with MOE public health measures.

2022 Applications and New Education Initiatives

Enrolments in the UC Summer School are higher than ever before, at over 2,100 students. The 110 courses offered over summer include a range of core compulsory courses for the third semester, as well as elective or interest courses.

Summer School can lead in many directions, as Aucklander Dr Kiri Solomon (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahu ki Whangaroa) found a few years ago. A Summer School course on Understanding Emotions in Education first attracted Kiri to enrol at UC. On achieving an A+, she decided to explore this topic further for her doctorate. She won a UC Matariki Doctoral Scholarship and began her PhD in 2018. She has immense passion for her work, in which she fosters the emotional literacy of her adult students, and completed her PhD late last year.

Takere 2 is in progress with 50 enrolments as planned.

Enrolment applications is to be 6% up for domestic students and 2% down for international students compared to last year. This makes an estimated total growth of 4.8%.

Nearly 1,000 applications have been received for the first 2022 Better Start Literacy Approach micro-credential. This micro-credential suite is an integrated classroom literacy programme for Year 0/1 classrooms. It includes credentials for facilitators, teachers and teacher aides | kaiāwhina.

Research – Impact on a Changing World

Late last year, 2022's finalists for the Strategic Research Capital round were chosen after a rigorous selection process run by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research. Ten initial expressions of interest were received for this \$1.5 million fund.

One of the successful proposals received a \$1 million investment spread over three years for “Dynamic Testing and Earthquake Simulation” equipment to be housed in the Structural Engineering Laboratory building. It will advance UC earthquake engineering research (across both civil and mechanical engineering) and potentially leverage industry interest in construction materials testing. Also successful was a proposal for an \$850,000 investment in a state-of-the-art “Atomic Force Microscopy Platform”, which will have applications across solid-state physics, molecular engineering, polymer chemistry, surface chemistry, molecular and cell biology, and materials science and medicine.

People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students

The new Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 came into effect from January 2022. This new code takes a ‘whole of provider’ approach and has a strong focus on four areas:

- listening to the learner voice
- honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Māori–Crown relations
- the wellbeing and safety of diverse learner groups
- delivering culturally responsive practices.

UC has done considerable work on planning for the implementation of this Code of Practice, building on our previous work for its predecessor, the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016. In 2022, we will see a full year of implementation of the new code.

UC has appointed a Director Student Well-being, Gilbert Tuarua, who is an alumni. This position is focussed on student wellbeing, oversees our response to the Student Pastoral Care Code and leads the portfolio containing the Health Centre, the Recreation Centre and the Student Care teams. Gilbert's career has been in social work, Māori health and many other parts of the health sector with most recent role being Chief Māori Strategy and Improvement Officer for the Southern District Health Board and WellSouth Primary Health Network. Gilbert starts with UC later this year.

After acting for over a year, Greg Scott has been appointed to the role as Director Accommodation Services.

On 24 January, Brett Berquist took the position of Assistant Vice-Chancellor Engagement | Amokapua. Brett is responsible for leading UC's engagement, institutional advancement and strategic partnerships at local, national and international levels.

Brett brings to the Senior Leadership Team extensive experience across a range of areas in academia in five countries. Most recently, he led the effort that doubled international enrolment at the University of Auckland. He also brings experience in alumni engagement, fundraising, communications and branding strategy. His recent co-edited book, *Community Engagement Abroad: Perspectives and practices on service, engagement, and learning overseas* (Michigan State University Press), proposes a new framework for community engagement.

Professor John Page has been appointed to the position of Amo Matua | Executive Dean for the UC Faculty of Law. John brings extensive experience to the role, with previous positions as Deputy Head of School and Dean of Law and his current role as Discipline Chair, Law and Justice Faculty at Southern Cross University, Australia. John's scholarship is in property law; theory, law and society; and legal geography. His first published monograph was *Property Diversity and Its Implications* and the most recent, *The Lawful Forest: A critical history of property, protest and spatial justice*, will be published in 2022. John has considerable teaching experience, including in the design of new and existing undergraduate and postgraduate law courses. His management experience has covered strategies for staff professional development, building new enrolments and ensuring financial sustainability. He has also been responsible for managing external relations with accreditation authorities, the national legal professional body and community stakeholders. We look forward to welcoming John in early 2022.

Awards

UC geologists Professor Ben Kennedy and Dr Jonathan Davidson have won this year's edX Prize for Exceptional Contributions in Online Teaching and Learning for the UCx course "Exploring Volcanoes and Their Hazards: Iceland and New Zealand".

The 2021 prize-winning [Exploring Volcanoes](#) course is described by edX as a "compelling example of effective pedagogy, engaging assessments and immersive learning environments".

Informed by 10 years of research into virtual field trips and field education, the course was designed to deliver an immersive and fun virtual science experience focused on volcanic landscapes. By integrating an emphasis on Māori knowledge as well, the course enables learners to empathise with and understand different perspectives.

This example is one of the massive open online courses (MOOCs) produced at UC for the edX platform, where UC now offers 21 free courses, which are available internationally. In 2022, UC will continue to produce high-quality MOOCs for the world.

Below are the UC staff and alumni who featured in the New Year Honours List 2022.

UC current staff

Professor Philip Howard Butler, of Christchurch. Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CNZM) for services to science, education and health.

UC alumni

Mr David Ronald Brunson, of Paraparaumu. CNZM for services to engineering and emergency management.

Dr Michael William Dunbier, of Christchurch. CNZM for services to agricultural science.

Mr Lewis Vernon Sanson, NZAM, of Wanaka. Queen's Service Order (QSO) for services to conservation and public service.

Mr Peter James Simpson, of Woodend. New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for services to education.

Mrs Monica Stockdale, of Napier. ONZM for services to Māori health.

Mr Victor Thomas Walker, of Tolaga Bay. ONZM for services to the Māori community.

Ms Frian Percy Wadia, of Auckland. Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for services to disability and education.

Mrs Jennifer Agnew, of Christchurch. Queen's Service Medal (QSM) for services to historical research and the Chinese community.

Mr Trevor Gordon Agnew, of Christchurch. QSM for services to children's literacy and historical research.

Mr Aart Brusse, of Dunedin. QSM for services to music.

Mr David Dennis Hinman, of Christchurch. QSM for services to tramways and heritage.

Mrs Jillian Meryl Lord, of Christchurch. QSM for services to genealogy.

Mrs Jane Painter, of Whangarei. QSM for services to the community.

UC former staff

Dr Kathleen Gaye Irwin, of Otaki. MNZM for services to Māori education.

Mr John Bowden Mackintosh, of Napier (also alumni). ONZM for services to the legal profession.