

# Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council

May 2020

At the time of writing this report, Aotearoa New Zealand is in the first week of National Alert Level 2.

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## Responding to COVID-19 Risk Levels

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Within the overall national framework and guidelines, sector-specific guidelines apply to each risk level. The University will continue to follow guidelines applicable to the tertiary sector.

The Government lowered the National Alert Level from 4 to 3 on 28 April. The Incident Management Team (IMT) developed an in-depth implementation plan to guide how the University would transition to Level 3, while planning continued around transitioning from Level 3 to Level 2. The health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff continued to be foremost in UC's planning. The key message under Level 3 was that staff and students should continue to work and learn from home and only exceptional circumstances would be considered for access to the campus.

### Level 3

At Alert Level 3 UC was required to operate in line with the following key requirements:

- To enable contact tracing, tertiary education organisations (TEOs) must collect names, contact details, buildings visited and similar details of all staff, students and contractors who go on site.
- Physical distancing within tertiary facilities means keeping 1 metre away from people at all times.
- Only where it is not possible to deliver teaching online, some facilities may remain open (for example, for research, labs or workshops).
- Group sizes must be limited to 10 people or less.
- Physical distancing and health and safety protocols must be in place.

Departments and schools were able to apply for access to campus under Level 3 restrictions in line with Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) guidelines. Overall the IMT processed 142 applications, with Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) Academic and DVC Research providing final review and approval. Applications provided in-depth safety plans on controls to follow Government directives, manage risks and keep staff and students safe.

### Level 2

UC's Level 2 transition plan is based directly on the TEC's Bulletin the TEC distributed to tertiary institutions on Thursday 7 May, ahead of the Government's decision on Monday 11 May to shift to Alert Level 2 from Thursday 14 May.

Under Alert Level 2 the overarching message is: leave home but in a safe way. For the university sector, this meant that all on-site activities could resume but, to return safely, each activity must continue to be able to deliver courses remotely and have strict public health control measures in

place. The Ministry of Education has defined three types of spaces for TEOs to help their approaches to physical distancing and location tracking protocol. Those spaces are:

1. controlled learning space – any learning area where access can be effectively controlled and monitored, such as a lecture theatre, lab or classroom
2. other controlled environments – a single building or block of connected buildings with a range of common areas inside, such as a kitchen, lounge or bathroom
3. uncontrolled environments – places where access cannot be practically controlled and monitored, such as to outdoor areas on TEO campuses.

The Ministry of Education does not set a specific size limit for education-related gatherings (for example, for lectures and classes) but encourages 1-metre physical distancing.

The guidelines specify that contact tracing information should be collected and retained that identifies which students, staff and visitors have been in each controlled learning space or other controlled environment and at what time. Hygiene is a second area that is emphasised. On-campus businesses such as gyms, pharmacies and cafes can open but must operate in accordance with the relevant public health control measures.

The IMT created an initial UC framework for Alert Level 2 that identified the specific risks, resourcing and responsibilities to inform the University's approach. Developing this framework involved requiring all colleges, service units, residential halls and University tenants to complete in-depth safety plans that their relevant Senior Leadership Team member would need to approve before they were allowed on site. Each safety plan describes the measures that will be put in place to conduct teaching, research, administration and/or general activities in a way that meets requirements for physical distancing, cleanliness and hygiene. The IMT produced guidelines for the different types of spaces to assist with completing detailed arrangements such as how to implement physical distancing. Student common spaces that offer quiet study spaces, warmth and wifi, particularly the Puaka-James Hight Library, were identified as priority areas for the IMT on transition to Alert Level 2. This led to the Library Safety Plan, which was approved and implemented for opening at 9am on Thursday 14 May.

The University is using multiple methods to fulfil the location tracking requirement.

- The Cardex Canterbury Card access system was upgraded to provide the detailed information required to support COVID-19 contact tracing.
- QR codes have been placed outside each building entrance, teaching space and entrance to a building floor for students and staff to scan on entry to that space.
- Individual online registration is being investigated as an alternative for those students and staff who forget their Canterbury Cards and/or do not have an appropriate cell phone.
- We are encouraging use of personal logs such as on Outlook to supplement the automatic solutions above.

The use of data collected through the methods above is being managed in line with Privacy Act 1993 guidelines.

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## **May 2020 Government Budget**

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The Government's Re-Building Together Budget announced on 14 May, provides an investment of \$1.6 billion in Trades and Apprenticeships Training for New Zealanders of all ages. The package is broad with, in many cases, early effect. Within this package, a number of measures specifically target university level education. Measures include –

- \$334m for additional tertiary education enrolments to meet demand arising from an anticipated COVID-19 economic downturn.
- \$320m targeted investment support for free trades training for all ages in critical industries including construction, manufacturing and vocational courses such as counselling.
- Up to \$412m support for employers to retain and keep training their apprentices
- \$19m for group training schemes to support apprentices
- \$230m funding for Workforce Development Councils and \$46m for Regional Skills Leadership groups to begin to provide the crucial industry leadership to support the COVID-19 recovery through the provision of regional labour market disruption intelligence
- \$141m to increase tertiary education tuition and training subsidies by 1.6% to maintain the quality of learning opportunities
- \$16 million boost to Adult and Community Education
- \$50 million to support Māori trades training schemes that employ Māori as apprentices and support the placement of apprentices across a range of workplaces.
- \$11 million, plus \$15 million of capital investment, for Tiro Whetū, a new online careers advice system to support learners and workers throughout their lifetime to plan and manage their careers.
- \$6.1 million to administer a code of pastoral care for domestic tertiary students with effect from 2021.
- \$20 million hardship fund for learners where students face additional costs arising from the disruption caused by COVID-19. This package recognises the needs of both full and part-time learners and is available at the end of May.

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## Post COVID-19 Planning

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In parallel with our response to the changing pandemic risk levels, we are focusing on post COVID-19 recovery and continuity.

The University has two major issues to address at this stage of the global pandemic: first, how to respond after the initial incident period and continue to be a high-functioning university (our Business Continuity response); and second, how to recover from the long-lasting economic, psychosocial and physical consequences (our Recovery response).

UC has formed a Post COVID-19 Core Task Group and a series of working groups. The Core Task Group is meeting weekly to consider plans and actions to address the immediate need for business continuity in these uncertain times and for recovery from the loss of revenue.

The seven Recovery working groups are: Future UC Business Model; Domestic Enrolment Growth; International Enrolment Growth; Cost Optimisation; Long Term Growth and Opportunities; Assets; and Alternative Laboratory and Studio Delivery Options. The most urgent work of these groups includes a range of enrolment growth initiatives for Semester Two and continuing to develop near-term solutions for continuing distance and online learning.

Key initiatives considered and approved include the new FutureU tuition grant for people in the community who have been made redundant and a Fast Track to Engineering for staff who have lost employment in aviation and other related industries.

**FutureU launched:** The roll-out of this UC initiative designed to support employees impacted by COVID-19 has drawn a great response from businesses, employees and media. Many businesses, small and large, are promoting this offer of enrolment in up to 60 points of UC courses with no

tuition fees this year to employees who have been or will be impacted by redundancies, suspensions or significantly reduced working hours.

In another example of agility, after a casual enquiry from an acquaintance of a College of Engineering Dean, the College has rapidly developed a Fast Track towards joining the second year of a BE (Hons) or any other technical degree in Engineering and Science. The courses started on 11 May in conjunction with CUP and treats the new students as a specific cohort with their own mentors and special catch-up maths courses. The College takes account of students' previous engineering experience and is not requiring a full complement of first-year courses.

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## **UC Strategy Implementation in a COVID-19 World**

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**The University's position is to be engaged, empowered and making a difference in society.**

The University's Strategy, which was developed in 2019, remains highly relevant. Indeed implementing some elements of that Strategy is now even more pressing.

The following sections of this report describe our continuing response to the Strategy and focus on its seven key themes.

### **Engagement**

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**Our Strategy aims to increase the University's presence in and impact on Ōtautahi Christchurch and Waitaha Canterbury.**

UC has twin objectives: to make a positive impact on social sustainability in Ōtautahi Christchurch and Waitaha Canterbury and to positively impact on the hauora wellbeing of our communities. Partner organisations and students in the College of Arts showed resilience and creativity in the face of COVID-19 when 42 of the 43 Professional and Community Engagement (PACE) internships went virtual. Students experienced first-hand that, like the rest of the workforce, they had to learn how to work in a professional capacity from home. Partner organisations showed huge goodwill in supporting students through a difficult period and adapting projects to suit the times.

The experience has also opened our eyes to an existing body of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) practice, in the form of Virtual Internships already offered by a few universities across the world. The College of Arts is fast developing Remote Internships as an alternative offering in preparation for COVID-type situations going forward as well as in recognition that remote working suits some organisations and some students. The College will continue to liaise closely with new contacts across the world in the online WIL space, especially through the Australian Collaborative Education Network, the professional association for practitioners and researchers from the tertiary education sector, industry, community and government representatives involved in WIL in Australia.

PACE internship arrangements for UC students have adapted rapidly to the COVID-19 situation. Interns have been learning invaluable skills around how to adapt to a challenging work environment. UC Partnerships Manager Clare Murray has initiated projects such as Ōtautahi Creative Spaces, an artist-centred wellbeing initiative that through the lockdown has continued to support its two UC student interns (including one from the USA), who are both working remotely. Another UC student intern has been working remotely to continue supporting a music therapy choir (Cantabrainers).

The College of Business and Law's Centre for Entrepreneurship (UCE) ran a Disrupt Challenge, which contributed to the social sustainability and wellbeing hauora of our region. It was called Virtually Together Challenge – creating social connections in an increasingly isolated world. The

first-ever fully online UCE Disrupt Challenge was held in late April in partnership with ChristchurchNZ. Some 40 students from across Canterbury's four tertiary institutions came together to find ways of enhancing social connectedness. Experts and mentors from across the wellbeing and health ecosystem advised participants, who also had support through regular check-ins with the UCE team to help them develop their ideas. The winning proposal was *Grand Skills*, a platform to connect university students with older people needing help with new technology so that they can stay in touch with family and meet new people. In second place was a pitch for a *Stories of Old* website to collect and preserve older people's recollections. *Heart to Art*, proposed by the third-placed team, envisaged young artists creating original artworks based on rest home residents' stories.

In a key move to remain closely engaged with the business community in our region and beyond, UC Business School has released the first edition of *Tīpako*, its annual magazine/review. *Tīpako* means to highlight, to select or to pick out and reflects the magazine's purpose and the Business School's commitment to bicultural competence and confidence. Consistent with the Business School's mission of being "in the business of making a difference", *Tīpako* highlights the many and varied ways staff, students, alumni and the business community have sought to make an impact locally and in the world. The Business School will use *Tīpako* to support its engagement with stakeholders, future students, alumni, donors and friends of the Business School.

The College of Education, Health and Human Development, Gateway Antarctica and the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP) have joined with the International Antarctic Centre, Antarctica New Zealand and the Christchurch Antarctic Office to collaboratively serve as the Learning Programme Sponsors for the Christchurch Pop-up-Penguin (PoP) event coordinated by Wild in Art. This year's charity event supports Cholmondeley Children's Centre. UC staff members Nikki Tod and Dr Patrick Shepherd (School of Teacher Education), Dr Michelle LaRue (Gateway) and Michelle Rogan-Finnemore (COMNAP) have developed the scientific, and teaching and learning content for the educational materials that will be distributed to 55 schools as part of the PoP campaign.

An initiative by the School of Educational Studies and Leadership to co-design a new programme of learning is a great example of UC making a positive impact on the social sustainability of Ōtautahi Christchurch and Canterbury Waitaha. The School has started to host a sequence of sector collaborations to support the co-design of the new Youth Development pathway in the Bachelor of Youth and Community Leadership (BYCL). The first session was well attended and stakeholders expressed their appreciation to the University for beginning this developmental work. Following the Waikato Institute of Technology's recent withdrawal from the market, UC intends to become 'the' provider of youth development tertiary-level education, with recognition from all peak bodies for our responsiveness to the emerging needs in this field.

Under our Strategy, we aim to retain and grow the diversity of talent in Ōtautahi Christchurch and Waitaha Canterbury. A key part of that work is our strong support for the Children's University, which reaches into diverse schools, including those where university is not an accepted ambition. Despite the interruptions related to COVID-19, the Children's University Canterbury Partnership (CUCP) continued to deliver its excellent work to members via the Online Portal. The CUCP team offered 69 online activities developed by academics from the College of Science and the College of Arts. From March through to May, the children enrolled in CUCP took up the opportunity to complete the activities available in the portal over 1,000 times. The CUCP team was also successful in winning a \$17,500 grant from the Lincoln University Centennial Trust.

The Children's University Canterbury Partnership is delighted and honoured to have been given a te reo Māori name – Te Mātāpuna Mātātahi | Children's University. Special thanks to Ngāi Tūāhuriri and Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki for their ongoing support.

Turning to broader initiatives that support community understanding and engagement on key issues of contemporary interest, here are some examples of recent successes.

UC Law Professor Neil Boister appeared before the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committee on Thursday 30 April (along with Kennedy Graham from the NZ Centre for Global Studies) to urge inclusion of the crime of aggression within a set of amendments to the International Crimes and Criminal Court Act 2000. This is necessary step for New Zealand to ratify the Kampala Amendments to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which puts aggression into the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

The Art of Science Competition closed on Friday 8 May with 149 entries from year 1 to year 13 students across New Zealand. Links to online learning resources have been shared with science teachers from across New Zealand. These include Backyard science videos and a Geography lecture on COVID-19 and transport.

On an alumni note, the TV series based on the book *The Luminaries* started screening on TV One recently. Eleanor Catton wrote the book while she was a writer in residence at UC. In another connection, Aotahi staff member Teena Henderson, whose hapū Ngāti Waewae have mana whenua of Hokitika where the story is set, was a cultural consultant for the series and composed one of the waiata used in the series.

## **Education – Accessible, Flexible, Future-focused**

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**UC is embarking on the journey to achieve its most ambitious goal: to stimulate and support academic development and innovation to become the best educator in Aotearoa New Zealand.**

The events related to COVID-19 have accelerated the University's Strategy to ensure our education is accessible and flexible. Term Two began on 20 April with all courses being taught online, and in the subsequent weeks many students have also completed online assessments. It is pleasing to note that the IT infrastructure and the Learning Management System (LMS) have managed the increased demands well, thanks to the hard work of IT Services and e-learning teams.

The recent drops in COVID-19 Alert Levels enabled a limited number of fieldwork and on-campus activities to resume following a well-managed request and approval process to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Students have been supported in their online studies and general wellbeing in a number of ways, including though the provision of devices and internet access, e-learning guides and supports, online Library and Academic Skills support, ongoing responses via the UC Protect channel, Student Care, and specific support for international students. As students begin to prepare for exams, staff are monitoring performance and ensuring students are continuing to make good gains in learning.

UC aims to stimulate and support academic development and innovation so staff can become the best educators in Aotearoa New Zealand. UC has developed a tool for educators and students to help keep students thoroughly engaged in their learning. When a student might be falling behind or disengaged with their learning, Analytics for Course Engagement (ACE) alerts both educators and the student so that the student can receive support to get back to positive learning.

ACE launched the teacher-facing dashboard this week, which now enables all teaching staff in 100- to 400-level courses to monitor their students' level of engagement. Although 100-level at-risk students are centrally managed, teaching staff also have the capability to bulk email 200- to 400-level students who are not engaging, making outreach easier. Work will now begin on promoting the use of this tool among all teaching staff. ACE can already report some positive wins from the system as proactive interventions are underway in response to low engagement scores.

As part of this suite of tools to support learning, and in response to the rapid shift online, pulse surveys are being used. The pulse survey is a dynamic way of capturing feedback about the online environment and employs a single question embedded in the LEARN platform. It will be a critical tool for UC to monitor the e-learning environment with greater certainty and to inform future areas of professional development for staff and academic support needs of students.

UC aims to provide a learning environment that uses effective pedagogies, facilities and learning technologies to support the needs of each generation of learners and employers. Again the COVID-19 lockdown accelerated our moves to provide learning in accessible and flexible ways. UC staff had to quickly find new ways to teach and support students remotely. This was a particular challenge for lab-based courses. However, unique solutions have enabled students to carry on learning in lockdown. The following examples illustrate how our colleges are progressing and accelerating online learning and grappling with some of the bigger challenges.

In the School of Earth and Environment (SEE), staff and postgraduate students including Senior Lecturer Alex Nichols, Associate Professor Ben Kennedy and postgraduate students Kamen Engel and Sriparna Saha have been working together to develop a virtual demonstrator for exploring three-dimensional rocks up-close using interactive images of very thin slices of rock taken under a microscope.

The aim of the virtual demonstrator is to enhance students' lab skills in mineral observation and identification. Students studying remotely are using it while getting live online feedback from the lecturer and demonstrators. Through this process they gain the same or even better levels of feedback and have extra flexibility compared with 'normal' on-campus lab sessions. The virtual demonstrator is the latest in a suite of similar tools that UC has developed for students using state-of-the-art digital interfaces in combination with traditional field trips. For Christchurch geology and geomorphology trips, for example, some students can self-guide themselves around town using the resources on their devices, avoiding the need to crowd together in vans.

Learning how to sniff out the difference between fragrances such as lemon and bergamot is a key requirement for UC product formulation students studying fragrance design. The COVID-19 lockdown created a problem for lecturers who would usually teach fragrance fundamentals at on-campus lab sessions. Second-year students learn about 25 fragrance compound classes before using them to make a perfume of their choice. At third-year level, another 40 fragrance compounds are added in preparation for advanced fragrance design.

Led by Professor Conan Fee and two technicians, sample kits were developed, consisting of over 1,600 fragrance samples plus sets of mixing pots, eye droppers, smelling strips and more. The kits were then packaged up – using cardboard tube-holder racks laser-cut by a technician – and mailed to individual students. Super-sets were also sent to four lecturers including two industry guests.

Through live lab sessions on Zoom, students have been able to experience fragrance samples and learn how to blend them into sophisticated fragrances or various personal care products. Feedback from students and industry experts has been very positive: "I've been incredibly impressed with Conan's ability to 'pivot' and produce a Virtual hands-on experience for the fragrance course."

In contributing to our Strategy to deliver a curriculum that prepares our students to be enquiring and enables them to create and contribute knowledge for a better society, the College of Science is working on a range of new programmes that respond to current science challenges facing society. The College of Science continues to make substantial progress in developing new programmes and delivering a flexible on-campus undergraduate programme. This includes virtual options for

distance students and those unable to come to campus. The field trips for virtual delivery that College staff have developed lead global pedagogy in this area. Associate Professor Ben Kennedy and Technical Officer Dr Jonathan Davidson were invited to give an online seminar, “Virtual Field Trips ... What works?” , to the Undergraduate Field Experiences Research Network (U-FERN). The event had 230 academics and teachers from right around the globe joining in. In another example, Associate Professor Travis Horton and Dr Kate Pedley put together an outstanding virtual geological mapping field trip that starts from Glens of Tekoanear Culverden. The virtual field trip has been uploaded to the Teach Geoscience Online Website.

Across in the College of Education, Health and Human Development, staff have continued advancing a range of programme development and refinement activities, in response to both the UC Strategy and the circumstances of COVID-19. With the Education papers in the BA already fully online for several years, the College has collaborated with the College of Arts to accelerate the development of a fully online offering. Staff in the School of Teacher Education have created a full suite of innovative, practice-focused learning modules to support students in Initial Teacher Education programmes who have been unable to undertake practicum placements to meet the New Zealand Teaching Council standards. The Ministry of Education has asked staff in the Child Well-being Research Institute who work on the Better Start Literacy project to put forward a route to train facilitators in this research-based approach.

Like the rest of the University, the College of Arts has been focused on expanding modes of delivery. With the rapid move to online provision in Semester One, areas such as Human Services and Linguistics have stepped up their development of full distance versions of their programmes in Semester Two and beyond. Now the Master of Strategic Communication is one of two master’s degrees on offer fully online to international students, with a Semester Two start date. The College has also begun developing a range of possible massive open online courses (MOOCs) and micro-credentials in areas as diverse as Chinese for Business, Text Analytics, the Legacy of Alan Turing, Mahinga and Māra Kai (customary food gathering and cultivation), and Crime and the Media.

## **Research – Impact on a Changing World**

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**UC aims to increase and diversify funding sources for its research portfolio, including for research institutes, centres and clusters.**

The University continues to advance its aim of having a high impact in a changing world as it secures important research grants and its staff are engaged in research and communication with global impact.

**Centres of Research Excellence (CoREs) Fund.** As the TEC explains, CoREs “are inter-organisational research networks, with researchers working together on commonly agreed work programmes. CoREs make a contribution to New Zealand’s development and link to user groups. They also build research capacity and capabilities through post-graduate programmes and the training of new researchers.”

The CoREs Fund Expressions of Interest (EOI) led by Professor Jen Hay (Linguistics/New Zealand Institute of Language, Brain and Behaviour), and involving 71 academics from a range of institutions and disciplines, has made it through a demanding first-round process to reach the final round. Its proposed CoRE – Te Hiranga Reo – will be a centre of excellence focusing on the creation, curation and analysis of large collections of annotated language data (corpora) in languages of significance to Aotearoa New Zealand, including Māori, Pasifika languages, New Zealand English and New Zealand Sign Language. Researchers working across different disciplines will collaborate in curating and analysing language corpora to address social, scientific and technological challenges.



QuakeCoRE, hosted in the College of Engineering, has also made it through to the second round. This is an existing UC-hosted CoRE under Director Professor Brendon Bradley. The final 10 CoREs that are selected will be funded for eight years.

Staff in the HIT Lab have been successful in attracting to UC the prestigious and world's largest virtual reality conference, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Conference on Virtual Reality and 3D User Interfaces in 2022. That will make Christchurch the first city in the southern hemisphere to host the gathering of over 400 virtual reality experts from around the globe.

Four **Marsden proposals** with a strong social science focus led out of the College of Arts are proceeding to round two of the applications process:

- Associate Professor Nik Taylor and Professor Annie Potts – “Understanding and preventing human-animal violence links in Aotearoa, New Zealand”, with Associate Investigator (AI) Dr Yvonne Crichton-Hill
- Dr Lynn Clark – “Understanding the onset of vernacular reorganisation”, with AIs Dr Amy Scott, Professor Gail Gillon and Associate Professor Brigid McNeill
- Professor Bronwyn Hayward – “Critical hope: Supporting young people's citizenship capabilities in chaotic climate futures”, with AIs Professor Angus Macfarlane and Associate Professor Sara Tolbert
- Dr Jonathan Dunn (Fast Start) – “How do population movements influence language change?”.

**Research & Innovation (R&I)** continues to work with UC academics to develop proposals for the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE's) recently released \$13.7 million COVID-19 Innovation Accelerator Fund. Four applications have been submitted and three others are in development, within an ongoing and rolling MBIE decision process on funding. Interestingly MBIE is proactively encouraging and facilitating innovators to collaborate – an ultraviolet sterilisation proposal from UC has been invited to collaborate with two others making a proposal in the same field.

Through the Kiwi Innovation Network Limited (KiwiNet) programme, R&I has joined with MBIE and other innovation directors for the first in a series of workshops targeted at finding creative ways to use innovation to tackle COVID-19 and remobilise New Zealand's economy and society. In addition, R&I remains strongly engaged with ChristchurchNZ in developing the “Food and Fibre” supernode, for which UC is externally funded to map the local innovation ecosystem and develop a tool to enable greater collaboration and engagement among existing and new participants.

COVID-19 is having a significant impact on UC academics and actions of public research funders. In partnership with UC principal investigators, R&I is triaging the impact of COVID-19 on research, which typically involves no access to laboratories due to the campus lockdown, travel restrictions, and difficulties with recruiting international PhD students and postdoctoral fellows. Our major funders are sympathetic about the impact of this crisis on research and have indicated they are flexible about how we use existing research budgets to meet the objectives, which includes a willingness to accept reduced or modified deliverables. Due to the number of contracts affected, major funders have indicated they prefer to batch process variations, but all research providers are still waiting for clear instructions on this process. To date, only six-month funding extensions have been granted for MBIE Endeavour projects ending on 30 September. UC has 11 such projects in which it is the lead or a sub-contractor. As a consequence of these funded extensions, the 2020 Endeavour Smart Ideas round has been cancelled half-way. For UC, this means 28 proposals will not be considered this year. In addition, R&I is processing contract variations with smaller funders on an ad hoc basis where those funders have been willing to offer no cost extensions.

Allied with COVID-19, R&I has responded to multiple requests, including from MBIE, the Ministry for Primary Industries and the Children's Commissioner, on aspects of the impact of COVID-19.

The business of securing research income has continued apace. To date for 2020, total awarded research value is \$26.3 million, which comprises 96 funded proposals. Over 170 proposals are also still under review and decision. Of the 108 Marsden EOIs that UC put forward, 17 have been invited to submit full proposals, which represents a disappointing conversion rate of 16% for this round. In contrast, as noted above, two of four UC-hosted CoRE proposals have made the nationwide shortlist of 15 proposals (from an initial 31 submitted proposals) and now progress to "site visits" before final funding decisions.

Postgraduate research development has also had an expected COVID-19 focus. The wellbeing and continued progress of our doctoral cohort continue to be our prime focus, as we respond to areas of need students identify. For example, on the UC YouTube channel and PG Learn website, Professors McAuliffe and Veer from the Postgraduate Research Office (PGRO) presented their interview with IMT Leader Steve Gibling on concerns students had raised about what Alert Level 3 would mean for them. Planning for GradFest continues, which this year will be entirely online. Planning is also underway for the annual Thesis in 3 event.

The Dean of Postgraduate Research has been actively involved with university deans and directors of graduate schools across New Zealand to correspond with and respond to TEC and Immigration New Zealand (via Universities New Zealand) on funding of doctoral students and limitations of visas for international students affected by COVID-19. Responses from both agencies have been encouraging and pragmatic.

Associate Professor Rebecca Kelly-Campbell has joined the PGRO as an Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research. We wish to thank Professor Bronwyn Hayward, whose secondment as Associate Dean (Admissions) has ended, for her contribution.

As part of the **Library's COVID-19 response**, staff have been continuing to provide a wide range of online services while working from home. The Library has received very positive feedback from both staff and students.

The move to Level 3 led to an expansion of Library services. Under Alert Level 3, the 'click and post' service enabled postgraduate students and staff to access the physical collections and it has been well received. Library staff have been scanning up to 50% of the print copies of required textbooks and making these available via LEARN under the special conditions agreed with Copyright Licensing New Zealand.

The [subject librarians](#) and Macmillan Brown specialists have been supporting academic staff and students from their home offices using innovative approaches and drawing on digitised resources. Staff have delivered information literacy tutorials for multiple courses and have created or enhanced online guides to support teaching, including guides on Ōtautahi, rare books, Pacific gender and the Wai 262 claim.

The online enquiry service, AskLive, has continued to be busy and available during evenings and weekends. Responsiveness to student feedback has led to changes, for example in messaging to make it clear that Library services are available despite the physical closure of buildings. Library staff have expanded access to online resources and continue to negotiate with publishers through the Council of Australian University Librarians negotiating consortium for a 0% increase in the cost of

continuing resources at the next renewal time. Already, internationally other universities may have no option but to cancel resources as a consequence of COVID-19.

The Library is using the COVID-19 response and implementing UC's new Strategy to reimagine its environment and delivery of resources for both teaching and research. It will modify its early plans to operationalise UC's strategy to reflect a shift in priority and greater emphasis on online teaching. The Library is engaging in discussions about chatbots and new integrated ways to manage student engagement, including the greater use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and their role in supporting online learning.

Many academic staff have featured nationally and internationally in conferences, media and other forums to share their research and expertise. The following are some of the latest examples.

Staff and postgraduate students in the College of Education, Health and Human Development have been participating in the Cancelled Conference Conversations. This online forum was initiated and convened by the Associate Deans of Education (Research) for Auckland, AUT, Waikato, Wellington and Canterbury, as part of the research enhancement strategy of the New Zealand Council of Deans of Education. Associate Professor Annelies Kamp has been leading this effort at UC, working with the other university leads to host weekly virtual symposia where scholars present their national and international cancelled conference presentations. So far, five events have been hosted, with strong attendance both nationally and internationally.

UC Law Professor John Hopkins is one of a number of social scientists that Massey University's joint Centre for Disaster Research has invited to participate in the Health Research Council's review of the COVID-19 response. He is also involved in the Royal Society's COVID-19 work, first by contributing to the Royal Society Science Media Centre's 'expert opinion' on the Government's proposed changes to the Resource Management Act 1991 as part of its COVID-19 recovery package. Professor Hopkins has since been invited to join the Royal Society's COVID-19 academic panel, which will provide advice to Government and the media on policy issues related to COVID-19.

UC Marketing Professor Michael Hall was featured in an article about COVID-19 and climate change. In the article, he shares his thoughts on rethinking tourism.

Dr Marwan Katurji (SEE) secured a \$1.2 million research contract for five years, as part of the Antarctic Science Platform research programme. Dr Katurji, who is leading the project, will be working with UC colleagues in SEE (Peyman Zewar-Reza, Heather Purdie, James Brasington) and Biological Sciences (Jonathan Tonkin), as well as with researchers from the University of Otago (Nicolas Cullen), NIWA (Jonathan Conway) and the University of Munster, Germany (Hanna Meyer). The research focuses on understanding the hydrological and climate systems of the terrestrial regions of the Ross Sea through continued support for fieldwork and subsequent modelling.

Staff in the College of Science continue to be heavily involved in COVID-19 responses. Associate Professor Malcolm Campbell (SEE) has been contributing significantly to tracking and tracing efforts. This work has recently been covered in articles in *The Conversation*, *Stuff* and the *New Zealand Herald*, as well as on television and in RNZ interviews.

Associate Professor Ann Brower has been busy supporting the complexity CoRE Te Punaha Matatini's (TPM's) health modelling efforts. She has taken on the role of 'science communicator' for the COVID-19 Take Control simulator. With the simulator, people can use TPM's models – which have had a high profile in the media – to set beginning and end dates for different COVID-19

levels and public compliance within those rules. In this way the public can see what changes do to both detected and silent case numbers. The Cabinet has also reviewed the simulator.

A 2013 *European Journal of Special Needs Education* paper in which Dr Dean Sutherland (School of Psychology, Speech and Hearing) and Dr Sonja Macfarlane (School of Health Sciences, College of Education, Health and Human Development) were co-authors achieved the top Altmetric score for the journal in 2019. In this measure of online attention, including press and social media as well as policy documents, the paper's score put it in the top 25% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric<sup>1</sup>.

Professor Philip Schluter (School of Health Sciences) is the New Zealand lead in a study that gathers data across six countries (Canada, United States, England, Hong Kong, Philippines and New Zealand). The project is entitled "The role of communication strategies and media discourse in shaping psychological and behavioural response to the COVID-19 outbreak: an international comparative analysis". It is principally funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, supported by the University of Hong Kong, and conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization's Thematic Platform for Health Emergency and Disaster Risk Management.

Associate Professor Arindam Basu has been providing many insightful contributions to public knowledge about COVID-19. He has appeared in Euronews Live TV about why New Zealand's response has been so effective to date, spoken to SBS TV on the meaning of herd immunity and masks, and was interviewed on RNZ to answer questions about lockdown and NZ's recovery. Associate Professor Basu has been mentioned in over 20 articles circulated in Australia, New Zealand, India and the United Kingdom on these topics, including in *The Conversation*.

Distinguished Professor Emerita Niki Davis commented on e-learning during lockdown for the Science Media Centre and in the *Gulf News*. She provided insight into the question: What should young people consider when structuring their day for learning remotely, especially when parents may also be working remotely?

Meeting three of our key themes in the Strategy (engagement, accessible education and international impact), the UC Science radio podcast offers a new episode each week. Its featured interviews to date are with UC scientists Simon Kingham, Sarah Masters, Tammy Steeves and Ben Kennedy.

In her UC Science Blog, MSc student Courtney Bennett explores the similarities between town planning in New Zealand and flatting – and where mana whenua fits in. Professor Julia Rucklidge (School of Psychology, Speech and Hearing) published an article in *The Conversation* on the effect of a healthy lifestyle on the immune system. It has been shared on Facebook over 1,500 times.

At the end of April, Associate Professor Ben Kennedy was featured in a *Stuff* article about White Island. He was also featured along with Professor Tom Wilson in the *New Zealand Herald* on other matters related to the White Island eruption.

## **People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students**

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**UC aims to develop and provide targeted interventions and a positive environment to support student and staff success and wellbeing.**

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<sup>1</sup> (Arthur-Kelly, M., Sutherland, D., Lyons, G., Macfarlane, S., & Foreman, P. (2013). Reflections on enhancing pre-service teacher education programmes to support inclusion: perspectives from New Zealand and Australia. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28(2), 217–233.)

## **Staff**

After the Government's announcement that Aotearoa New Zealand would move to Alert Level 2, I spoke to staff via a Zoom webinar about our return to campus. I congratulated staff on their hard work to get us to this stage and thanked everyone for their dedication to teaching and research, and for continuing to provide and support a high-quality student experience. I also spoke about UC's financial position and the importance of proactively supporting the physical distancing, location tracing and safety plan initiatives to keep COVID-19 out of UC when staff return to campus. Around 555 staff attended the webinar.

I also held an interactive Zoom meeting with the Admin Plus group about UC's response to COVID-19 and there were about 90 participants.

A second Pulse survey was sent to staff covering the same areas as the last one so we can measure trends. The main focus is people's wellbeing. The results are being analysed at the time of writing.

After the government announcement advising a move to Level 2 an email was sent that same day to all staff advising that the campus would open to staff and students on Thursday 14 May. It covered the key principles of our re-opening and included information on the facilities opening dates and times, Halls, parking costs, and supporting students. A key message to staff is to stay home if they are unwell, or if they have health vulnerabilities, and to return to the campus only after the safety plan for their area of operation has been approved and the protocols are in place.

## **Students**

Student wellbeing and support have been at the forefront of our plans and services. UC Wellbeing Services made a rapid transition to online service delivery and the Health Centre had the agility to devise safe means of continuing to service patients no matter where they were located and whether they were seen in person or virtually.

Wellbeing Services has also developed a range of new student care resources and procedures quickly to meet the needs of staff and students under the alert levels. A Student Wellbeing plan has been developed for Level 2, using the framework in the Interim Code of Pastoral Care.

A further initiative from Wellbeing Services has been to marshal a range of teams and individuals across UC to manage large student callouts, which has received some very warm and positive responses and has generated referrals as needed. The period has equally posed some challenges for the teams, with key areas including: hearing students' very real struggles with studying; experiencing issues such as juggling parenting with study and managing mental health issues; and feeling overwhelmed and isolated – all impacts of the COVID-19 lockdown.

UC Science held a student-led Facebook live session on 1 May for students. Here science students talked about their experiences and shared their ideas about studying online.

In terms of halls experience, all students living in halls apart from Rochester & Rutherford could opt to stay during the lockdown. Overall we have about 453 students and residential assistants and tutors staying in halls of residence, all but eight in Campus Living Villages (CLV) halls. Both UC and the halls emphasised the Government's advice to students that they should return home if it was possible and safe to do so. The international and domestic students still living in the halls had a variety of reasons for doing so, ranging from not being able to get to their home country safely, to having family members with an immune-compromised system, to having connectivity issues that would prevent them from learning online at home.

Some media interest has focused on the approach universities are taking to charging of halls fees. In CLV accommodation, students who are in a room and using all the services are paying 100% of the

normal fees. Those who have vacated their room pay 50% of the fees for the time they are away until they can return to the University and hall. The discount includes reductions in food, utilities, maintenance and overhead costs. CLV is providing online programming including tutorials and pastoral care. The other independently managed halls have yet to decide on the options for a rebate due to uncertainty about when students will be able to return. UC has reviewed the approaches taken across the country. Some universities, such as Waikato and Massey, have chosen to waive all halls fees during lockdown while halls associated with Auckland, AUT, Otago and UC have provided varying discounts. UC discounts are mostly aligned with those of others.

**Law ME:** The Law ME student mentoring programme has just concluded for 2020, under the leadership of Lynne Taylor. The School of Law is enormously grateful to the team of senior law student mentors who assisted our first-year students in their transition to university and the study of law, providing virtual support for their mentees during the lockdown period. As in 2019, first-year students have responded positively to the programme, describing it as providing “an emotional base and safe space” and “a breath of fresh air”.

**UC Business and Law Schools’ Autumn Arrival:** College student advisors, the outreach coordinator and the international business development coordinator took part in the virtual UC Autumn Arrival event on 7 May. This event, led by the University of Canterbury Students’ Association (UCSA) and the UC Student Success team to welcome students back to Term Two, is normally held on campus, but this year was a Facebook event with short recordings followed by an open Zoom session for Q&A. This event was well-attended, with over 100 views of our video. It also prompted a significant flurry of student requests to meet with Business and Law student advisors.

## **Internationalisation – Locally Engaged, Globally Networked**

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### **Enhance the internationalisation of the curriculum and student experience.**

The impact of COVID-19 is most notable in the international student arena. UC is working closely with other New Zealand universities and Education New Zealand in relation to market reassessment, recovery and growth strategies. Among the workstreams underway are those aimed at taking up the opportunities to engage with the Government on border opening, immigration policy and quarantine management. A scoping paper is in preparation to create consistent minimum standards for the sector, which is intended to give confidence to officials and Government, while ensuring risks are appropriately managed.

In terms of recruitment, applications over the last month are down 39% year-on-year, but offers of place are up 23%. Offers of place accepted are down 48%, but enquiries are up over both 2019 and 2018. The recruitment team has run in excess of 125 online webinars and information sessions during the lockdown period, including programme-specific webinars involving academic experts from the colleges. We are soon to launch a Semester Two “online to on-campus” pathway for a select group of programmes that traditionally have significant mid-year intakes. This will also mark the launch of our new “World’s Best Choice” marketing campaign and overhaul of the international-facing website. Further work involves enhancing UC’s online and offshore presence through web, social media and communications strategies.

UC International College (UCIC) has experienced a significant downturn in student numbers, which will impact UC’s future pipeline of students. The College has taken decisive action, in consultation with UC. First was a shift to online delivery of UCIC programmes to onshore enrolled students. This was managed swiftly with the support of UC colleagues, Navitas Learning and Teaching and the UCIC team. UCIC has retained these students, who are keen to come back to campus and continue their pathway towards UC when it is safe to do so.

Associate Professor Donald Matheson and Professor Natalia Chaban, working in collaboration with the College of Arts' International Committee and assisted by a PACE intern Joseph Perry, designed and conducted a study of perceptions, attitudes and narratives of learning experiences among international postgraduate students in the College. The study followed the UC-wide surveys of international students in 2019. A series of focus groups took place in summer 2020. A final report was presented to the International Committee and the College's leaders in April and May 2020, and will inform future development of postgraduate programmes and support in the College.

## **Organisational Efficacy**

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**Ensure the University's structures and systems empower those who work with them, are integrated and streamlined, promote a constructive culture, and have one focus – high-quality learning, teaching and research.**

### **Domestic recruitment**

As the secondary school term began online for the students we engage with, the Liaison Team has regularly 'zoomed' into schools and supported careers advisors with new online content. Preparations for online information evenings from 26 May to 11 June – which have drawn over 1,200 registrations to date – and a virtual open day in July are well underway. Recent mailings to students have attracted a 60% open rate.

In parallel, the Accommodation Services team is working on new ways to showcase our halls with 360 virtual tours, videos, updated images and presentations for information evenings. Content for the Whānau Guide, Undergraduate Prospectus and Accommodation Guide is progressing. Images for the new accommodation development Tupuānuku are now available and the hall has a logo that is representative of the cultural narrative and will help students to experience a real sense of belonging.

### **Advancement**

The UC Foundation (UCF) had an unqualified audit from Audit New Zealand for 2019, which was the first year its accounts were consolidated with UC. Newly appointed investment advisors, Craigs, are transitioning the UCF's investments from 14 different fund managers.

UCF's income to date is \$4 million and it has received 414 donations from 248 donors, up on previous years. Distributions to UC stand at \$1.1 million. The Emergency Student Relief Fund has raised pledges and donations totalling \$127,500 from 84 people, which has been distributed in the form of food and other vouchers, and grants to students via UCSA.

In addition to providing alumni eNews, Chronicle and COVID-19 updates, UCF has liaised with particular groups of alumni including those in Malaysia, Singapore, the USA and the UK. It has contacted all pledgers, major donors and regular givers, and calls have been well received, with no particular problems in the community and no reduction in support evident so far.

From a strategic perspective, UCF is undertaking a major assessment of UC's approach to advancement and expects to be in a position to share the results in coming months.

### **News media**

It is pleasing to see UC's positive coverage at 73% and our Media Impact Score above the industry average at 2.6. Our volume of stories related to published research grew from 179 in the fourth quarter (Q4) 2019 to 249 in the first quarter (Q1) 2020. Over the same period, positive message

penetration improved from 17% in Q4 2019 to 50% in Q1 2020. UC's Media Impact Score<sup>2</sup> increased from 1.4 in Q4 2019 to 2.6 in Q1 2020. Most of UC's coverage is in broadcast media.

From 9 April to 11 May 2020, national online, print and broadcast media made 665 mentions of UC. Stories related to COVID-19 remained dominant in the media landscape, which favoured expert opinions on pandemics and development of innovations that prove useful in the age of COVID-19. Other coverage related to new geological research on Whakaari (White Island), a ground-breaking astronomical discovery and new research showing how heavy cannabis use affects human genome. In addition to the positive media coverage UC generated, over 70 media queries were handled over this period. The following UC news stories appeared in national media:

- UC epidemiologist on NZ Government's new lockdown rules
- Canterbury tech entrepreneur returns to help the SVA mobilise nationwide
- HIT Lab NZ Director advises on best practices for virtual conferences
- Astronomers discover the science behind star bursts that light up the sky
- Whakaari (White Island) rocks hold clues to eruption risk – new research
- University of Canterbury invention could 'beam up' faster 3D printing
- Why coronavirus emerges in clusters, and how New Zealand plans to eliminate outbreaks after lockdown
- UC engineers aid development of thermal imaging cameras to spot COVID-19 symptoms
- UC Fine Arts graduate wins inaugural national Springboard award
- UC discovery could help monitor inflammation in heart disease and SARS-like diseases
- New fast-track to professional Engineering degree for ex-pilots, technicians
- New UC study finds heavy cannabis use affects human genome
- Environmental and ecological research to benefit from generous bequest to UC
- NZ researchers lead new international book on Human-Robot Interaction
- Innovative students virtually solve social isolation
- UC launches FutureU \$7500 grants for businesses, employees affected by COVID-19
- UC planet-hunters discover new 'one in a million' Super-Earth

### **The Conversation**

In January 2020 we signed a one-year contract to become a member of The Conversation. This represents our strategy to increase awareness, and strengthen and grow UC's reputation globally.

The Conversation is an independent, non-profit publisher of commentary and analysis, authored by academics and edited by journalists for the general public. The articles are syndicated by media outlets across the world.

A small group of academics have led the way with articles on COVID-19 impacts. We are aiming to grow academic contributors from 10 to 100. In the period from 7 April to 13 May 2020, we published seven articles by seven authors. Our article reads total over 175,000 across the world.

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<sup>2</sup> The Media Impact Score is calculated based on the tone of the media coverage, as well as the likely impact of that coverage on our key audiences and communities. The benchmark for the Australia and New Zealand education sector is 2.5; the score can range from –10 to 10.





During the past month I participated in a panel convened by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) Forum on Postsecondary Response to COVID-19 and a podcast episode for the new Council for Advancement and Support of Education, CASE xchange series of conversations with global leaders around educational advancement. Both podcast series are listened to across the globe.

## Environmentally Sustainable

**Ensure UC research contributes to resolving global sustainability challenges.**

One of the effects of the lockdown at Alert Levels 3 and 4 has been a marked reduction in air travel. Annual flying days have fallen from 55,000 to 14,000.

With travel expected to be minimal in 2020, we are actively encouraging people to find new ways of remote working nationally, building on our experiences at Alert Levels 3 and 4.

## VC's Activities

Past Events	
30 April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended Universities New Zealand meeting via Zoom</li> </ul>
6 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Met with Chief Executive of Ara, Tony Gray, via Zoom</li> <li>• Met with Partner of More Partners, Moss Cooper, via Zoom</li> </ul>
7 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviewed via Zoom by Martin Ince, Chair of the Global Academic Advisory Board, for QS article</li> </ul>
7 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended Christchurch Economic Recovery Forum meeting via Zoom</li> <li>• Attended Universities New Zealand meeting via Zoom</li> <li>• Attended UC Foundation Board of Trustees meeting via Zoom</li> </ul>
12 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed UC staff members via Zoom</li> </ul>
14 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviewed by CASE xChange for a podcast series</li> <li>• Spoke at UC Admin Plus meeting via Zoom</li> <li>• Attended Universities New Zealand meeting via Zoom</li> </ul>
15 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chaired Academic Board</li> </ul>
26 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended UC College of Arts Executive Team meeting</li> </ul>

<b>Upcoming Events</b>	
28 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending Council Strategy Day</li> </ul>
4 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending UC Foundation DSG meeting</li> <li>• Attending Zoom meeting for Universities New Zealand</li> </ul>
8 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering welcome address at UC GradFest</li> </ul>
9 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending UC Business and Law College Executive Meeting</li> </ul>
10 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending UC College of Education, Health and Human Development Leadership Team Meeting</li> <li>• Attending AGM for The Canterbury Tertiary Education Chaplaincy Committee</li> </ul>
12 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairing Academic Board</li> </ul>
18 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending Universities New Zealand meeting</li> </ul>
19 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending Universities New Zealand meeting</li> </ul>