

Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council

October 2021

Introduction

While lockdown caused some disruption, we were able to resume delivery of in-person courses in Level 2, while observing distancing and face covering use.

Facilities Management continues to monitor signage and Quick Response (QR) codes, as well as provision of hand sanitiser. Additional focus has been given to the cleaning of high-use research, teaching and learning, hospitality and ablution spaces.

UC has also worked closely with the Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) and Canterbury's Māori and Pacific providers to operate a pop-up COVID-19 vaccination centre on campus for students, staff and the wider community. The planned two days were so successful that the event was extended to a third day, with the result that more than 2,000 people in total were vaccinated. Music and kai were provided each day to create a fun and festival-like atmosphere for attendees.

UC is also working with the CDHB to develop a contingency plan for our response if a positive COVID-19 case is identified on campus.

As many planned events in the coming weeks – for example, the 'Tea Party' – are unable to be run under Level 2 conditions, Accommodation Services, along with the University of Canterbury Students' Association (UCSA) and the Security and Campus Community Support team, is working closely with the residential halls on a plan to educate students on safe and enjoyable end-of-year celebrations. This work also involves close liaison with the Police.

Engagement

The Canterbury Knowledge Commons has developed a youth ecology map and strategy and presented it to the governing partnership on 20 October. The map outlines the various youth advocacy groups in the city and how they interact with other organisations to support their work. The presentation included a recommendation on a coordinated 'Commons' approach to youth advocacy. Youth Liaison Officer Katie Mills worked with various youth organisations and groups to identify the barriers, opportunities and needs of different organisations across the region, with the aim of better organising, supporting and sustaining their important work. This work has had both local impact and a national influence, drawing interest from national bodies looking to elevate the voice and impact of youth advocacy.

As a consequence of the changes in Alert Levels due to the latest COVID-19 outbreak, a number of public events have been re-designed, while a smaller number have been cancelled or postponed. Affected events include Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori, the Editors' Symposium (postponed until 2022), Visualise Your Thesis and the Margaret Stoddart: Garden Scene Exhibition at Te Whare Waiutuutu | Kate Sheppard House (22 September – 12 December 2021).

The UC MBA graduate association conducted a webinar entitled “Longer COVID: How can NZ businesses succeed overseas?”. The webinar, facilitated by our own MBA instructor Stephen Hickson, featured panellists Charlotte Walshe, CEO, Jade Software Corporation; Rachel Taulelei MNZM, CEO, Kono; and Ben Reed, Managing Director, Hamilton Jet.

On 1 October, the School of Health Sciences held its annual Bachelor of Sport Coaching Internship Showcase, splitting it into multiple groups due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The showcase, modelled on a ‘speed-dating’ format, provided students with an opportunity to hear about possible internship and practicum placements for 2022 and to meet with representatives from various sporting organisations, including sports clubs, secondary schools and Canterbury sports organisations, in a short space of time. Either individually or in small groups, students moved around the tables of participating organisations to meet the representatives and discuss internship or practicum opportunities, with the option of leaving their resumé with potential providers.

Adrienne Paul, Faculty of Law, supported Dr Abby Suszko in a session of te reo Māori training for Police Communication Centre staff in Christchurch. Both Abby and Adrienne assisted the Centre staff with their pronunciation of place names in Te Waipounamu as well as in the Bay of Plenty region, which the Christchurch-based staff have recently begun to cover. This successful training session with Police staff will benefit our local communities.

A team of Engineering Geology students met with Belmont Productions on the Summit Road to film a short promotional video to present to the International Society of Rock Mechanics and Rock Engineering (ISRM). The promotional video is part of UC’s bid to host the ISRM2027 conference in Christchurch.

Twin sisters Kaitlyn and Jessica Lamb, current students at John Paul College in Rotorua, were interviewed on RNZ and will be joining UC next year to study Environmental Science. Kaitlyn and Jessica volunteer for Forest and Bird, along with Whakarewarewa Pest Control, and often run compost-making workshops on weekends. Kaitlyn is the only Kiwi invited to attend this year’s Bayer International Youth Summit, after being selected from over 2,000 applicants aged 18 to 25 years.

UC has played an important role in supporting the wider school community through the challenging lockdown period. Two initiatives in particular have provided learning opportunities and support.

First, Te Mātāpuna Mātātahi | Children’s University continued to connect with puni members and whānau, and to provide fun educational activities via its online portal throughout the lockdown period. The team noticed a significant increase in the number of submissions (a record high of 3,989 submissions), indicating that puni members were making the most of the online options available to them. Whānau, puni members and teachers have expressed their thanks for the interesting and varied learning activities, and the team has received further requests from potential puni and kura to join the programme.

The other initiative focuses on the secondary level: the Hōpara mentoring programme nimbly switched to online alternatives using Zoom and email so that our UC mentors could continue to support their Linwood College mentees. Our UC mentors’ robust commitment to this equity initiative was rewarded with feedback endorsing the value of the mentoring relationship. The feedback reflects the intention of Hōpara to develop the confidence and life aspirations of students working at National Certificate of Educational Achievement level in low-decile schools. It also speaks for the generosity

and commitment of our UC students who continued this work despite the challenges that they also faced during lockdown.

National media coverage included 1,340 mentions of UC. The location with the highest volume of coverage was Auckland, while coverage with the highest potential reach was in Wellington. With his extensive media engagement to discuss COVID-19 modelling as the virus continues to dominate the news cycle, Mathematics Professor Michael Plank accounts for the majority of mentions with Criminal Justice Director Dr Jarrod Gilbert quoted as a regular *New Zealand Herald* columnist and expert on gangs.

In October UC was proud to sign as a partner of the new South Island women's rugby team, Matatū. This new partnership enables internships for students and new research into women's performance and elite sport. Nearly a quarter of the players contracted so far for Matatū (the team name gifted by Ngāi Tūāhuriri) are UC-educated wāhine, and we are so proud to help support these elite woman pave the way for future generations. Matatū will compete in the Super Rugby Aupiki competition taking place over four weekends in March 2022.

Education – Accessible, Flexible, Future Focussed

The focus of education for this last quarter was the hybrid shift to Level 2, for which the University was well prepared. The Future Learning and Development (FLD) team worked closely with academics to deliver support at this alert level. The situation was unique in that some other parts of the country were at Level 3. Extra tutors were brought in to assist academics with online support for the students elsewhere who were impacted by the more severe lockdown levels.

Perhaps the greatest challenge is exams, with many more academics offering final examinations in a distance mode. FLD ran 11 drop-in sessions to support academics in this area. Exams have been scheduled with the ability to move seamlessly between alert levels if needed.

The second workshop for staff in the Aropapaki series on online course co-design was also adapted to run in hybrid mode. It demonstrated that an online delivery mode allows greater flexibility in meeting the individual needs of academics.

Associate Professor Cheryl Brown, School of Educational Studies and Leadership (EDSL), has again featured in *The Conversation* (23 September edition) as the co-author of “Beyond Zoom, Teams and video lectures – what do university students really want from online learning?” She also featured on the New Zealand Association for Research in Education blog (6 September) with a post on “University student online learning experiences (SOLE) in COVID-times”. EDSL's Digital Education Futures Lab, of which Associate Professor Brown is a Co-Director, is increasing its profile in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting uplift in digital learning.

UC's Japanese studies programme took out three of the seven [Japanese Studies Aotearoa New Zealand national awards](#) that have just been announced. Dr Masa Ogino was awarded the Most Innovative Lecturer and Eri Kojima-Mathieson the Most Caring Lecturer (Highly Commended), while one of our top students, David Wells, was awarded Most Engaged Second Year Student.

The Library spaces remain closed to the public under Alert Level 2. The Central Library in Puaka-James Hight is limited to 700 people at Alert Level 2 based on one-metre distancing. It is often close to or over this number between 11am and 3pm, with queues forming at times. Currently only staff and students can access the libraries as this allows for a higher number of people in the Library. It

also gives priority to students as the exam period approaches and students are already booking spaces in the Library for their online exams. The restrictions have particularly affected the Macmillan Brown Library because many in the wider community use it for research. The Central Library continues to provide online services such as AskLive and scan and post for those students unable to come to campus at Alert Level 2.

The Library has implemented the Omeka S platform for the creation of online resources. Omeka is a flexible, open-source web-publishing platform for the display of library, museum, archives, and scholarly collections and exhibitions. This platform is intended to be available not only for Library projects but also for all UC staff and students. The homepage shows past digital sites, which the Library is hoping to 're-create' in Omeka S in the future; it also highlights the first site created in Omeka S, which was for the University of Canterbury Library Provenance project.

Access to Māori and Pasifika learning and research resources continues to be a focus. The Library is improving its records for core Māori publications, so that Māori students and staff can find useful content more easily. The Library is also updating core agreements and policies, including the Information Resources Policy, the Kaitiaki Agreement and emerging Research Data Policy, to take a more bicultural approach.

The Speech and Language Pathology programmes (Bachelor of Speech and Language Pathology (Hons) and Master of Speech and Language Pathology) completed a thorough accreditation review process. The verbal report provided by the New Zealand Speech Therapy Association accreditation panel chair following the visit was very positive. A written report and final approval will be forthcoming.

The new BA specialisations are now open for enrolments and already have students applying to start in 2022. The campaign to promote the new specialisations is delivering record results, with almost 6% click-through rates (depending on platform). The high level of interest is also reflected in visits to the UC website in September, where five of the specialisation pages are among the top 10 most-visited subject pages (across all of UC).

The Social Work programme's Field Education team has been managing placements disrupted by the COVID-19 outbreak for students in their final year of study. During the Level 3 and 4 periods, students were able to complete remote placement work. A five-day online module was developed to enable students to investigate a practice issue using research literature and use this analysis to inform their theory-practice integration when they returned to their placements. The team was also able to return four students to district health board placements in Level 3.

Level 3 impacted the preparation of massive open online courses (MOOCs) because it made the film studio and the editing suites inaccessible. However, following the move to Level 2, filming is almost back on schedule. *Exploring Volcanoes and Their Hazards: Iceland and New Zealand* is a finalist in the 2021 edX Prize for Exceptional Contributions in Online Teaching and Learning.

This past quarter also saw the launch of initiatives dedicated to work integrated learning (WIL). UC hosted Dr Karsten Zegwaard, Director of WIL Research in the WIL Central Unit at Waikato University and the academic lead for the work placement programmes for Health, Engineering, Computing and Science. Dr Zegwaard shared his experiences with many academics and professional staff in a seminar.

Associate Professor Donald Matheson, one of the 2021 group of Distributed Leadership in Teaching fellows, is carrying out research with students who have taken COMS 225 Politics and New Media over the past five years. This course, which Media and Communication has co-taught internationally with colleagues at Helsinki University, focuses on cross-cultural knowledge-making and collaboration on digital platforms and fosters the development of skills that students should value. The research uses focus groups to ask students to reflect on the long-term value of their learning, and the results will help Associate Professor Matheson to work with UC colleagues wanting to develop similar 'global classroom' initiatives.

Research – Impact on a Changing World

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact significantly on research activities at UC. Ongoing impacts involve delays to recruitment of students and fixed-term staff, managing students who are commencing their studies offshore, and overall workload pressures for researchers. These experiences are occurring sector-wide and not unique to UC. Contract variations due to COVID-19 impacts represent a significant issue for the sector.

The New Zealand Psychological Society has recognised School of Health Sciences and School of Teacher Education Adjunct Associate Professor Sonja Macfarlane and retired Professor Angus Macfarlane. Associate Professor Sonja Macfarlane was awarded the Dame Marie Clay Award for enhancing the quality of educational and developmental psychology. The panel said, “she has infused her work with the Māori understanding that people, their mana, and identity, grow and are nurtured within their network of relationships”. Professor Angus Macfarlane was named a Fellow of the Society, recognising his contribution to the advancement of psychological knowledge and practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/3CHBwm3>

A team from the Institute of Law, Emergencies and Disasters at UC Law were contributing authors to the Disaster Law report by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, *Law and Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic*, which was launched on 29 September.

A new publication, *Antarctic Cities: From Gateway to Custodial Cities*, highlights a four-year international study of the five Antarctic gateway cities: Christchurch (New Zealand), Hobart (Australia), Ushuaia (Argentina), Punta Arenas (Chile) and Cape Town (South Africa).

School of Earth and Environment PhD student Nicholas Patton received the best conference presentation at the Australasian Quaternary Association conference for his work on “Using surface roughness to determine ages of coastal dunes at K’gari (Fraser Island) and the Cooloola Sand Mass, Australia”.

The Food Transitions 2050 Joint Graduate School, a postgraduate research collaboration between UC, Lincoln University, AgResearch, Plant & Food Research, and Manaaki Whenua | Landcare Research, has just opened its annual call for a new cohort of PhD projects across this transdisciplinary programme. Offered projects are funded by UC, Lincoln University and the Ministry for Primary Industries, and UC has a strong representation of supervisors in the programme. Professor Jason Tylianakis (UC) is the Director Food Transitions 2050.

The Canterbury Medical Research Foundation awarded \$865,000 in funding to eight medical researchers – including five from the University of Canterbury – as part of its 2021 Major Project Grant funding round. The successful UC researchers (receiving approximately \$110,000 each) are:

- Dr Tim Allison (School of Physical and Chemical Sciences (SPCS)), to investigate the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which causes tuberculosis, a disease that kills over a million people per year
- Dr Daniel Foley (SPCS), for a project aiming to develop safe and effective treatments based on a better understanding of key molecular mechanisms underlying breast cancer
- Dr Vanessa Morris (School of Biological Sciences (SBS)), whose research focuses on tumour-suppressing proteins, which she hopes will provide new insights into cancer biology and new avenues for cancer therapy
- Dr Amy Osborne (SBS), for research on whether maternal cannabis use impacts the genome of their children and to provide more information on the potential risks
- Dr Catherine Theys (School of Psychology, Speech and Hearing), for a research project in collaboration with Fathiya Al'Amri (UC), Tracy Melzer (University of Otago) and Deryk Beal (University of Toronto) that focuses on treatment of stuttering in children.

German lecturer Dr Andi Dorrer's PhD thesis "Legitimation and De-Legitimation of World War I in German Dramatic Literature" was published recently as the first monograph in a German dramatic literature series. Dr Dorrer unearthed and analysed a whole new text corpus (about 650 texts), ultimately embedding it into research on World War One literature and into the field of literature and cultural studies on the Weimar Republic. In recognition of this achievement, his PhD thesis was joint winner (with Lucia Linares, Darwin College, Cambridge, UK) of the Friedrich Ebert Preis for the best PhD thesis or Habilitation on the Weimar Republic. This international prize is awarded by the Research Centre on the Weimar Republic at the University of Jena, Germany, and its public outlet the Weimarer Republik eV.

Aotahi lecturer Madi Williams' publication *Polynesia 900–1600: An Overview of the History of Aotearoa, Rēkohu, and Rapa Nuiby* was selected as NewsroomNZ's Book of the Week. At 76 pages, the book "has a Tardis-like quality: compact on the outside, but with a remarkably comprehensive interior," wrote reviewer Professor Paul Moon.

People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students

Course planning continues with students throughout the country, as we move into a key decision-making time for students. Accommodation and scholarship offers have also been sent, with domestic numbers continuing to look strong. Invitations to apply for the next cohort of UCMe students in the 2022 campaign have been issued and applications close this month. We encourage a diversity of experiences, backgrounds and areas of interest to showcase the opportunities students have at UC.

The Director of Pacific Development attended a National Pacific Education Forum online. In response to a general question around mental wellbeing for students during lockdown, she was pleased to be able to share what UC and specifically the teams were doing in support of students. Examples she gave included establishing a hardship fund, giving out devices to students in need, Pacific advisors calling all Pacific students to engage with them and check how they were coping, and offering Employee Assistance Programme services to staff for their own wellbeing.

Two School of Music students have been chosen for the [New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Todd Corporation Young Composer Awards](#). The award gives them the opportunity to travel to Wellington next month, where they will hear their compositions workshopped and performed by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. The works will also be recorded by RNZ Concert.

PhD student Natasha Gardiner from the School of Earth and Environment is a semi-finalist in the Three Minute Thesis Asia-Pacific Competition. Her thesis explores the relationship between the Antarctic research community and policy makers.

The recent lockdown has had an impact on many of our Takere students. Over the past month, Te Waka Pākākano (TWP) advisors have continued to meet regularly with those Takere students who have reached out, as well as proactively engaging with students who have been reluctant to reach out for much-needed pastoral, academic and financial support and guidance. Weekly in-person tailored Takere study sessions took place over the past month. In total, between eight and fifteen Takere students attended each of these structured sessions, where two to four tuākana (senior student) tutors supported them in their MAOR108 and SCIM101 studies and also in developing general essay writing and structuring skills. The format of these sessions was a blend of in-person and online.

Of the 105 eligible Takere scholarship applications received, 76 applicants were shortlisted for an interview. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, only local (Ōtautahi-based) applicants could be interviewed *kanohi ki te kanohi* (in-person); all others were interviewed via Zui (Zoom). Once the interviews were completed, TWP advisors phoned each applicant directly to inform them of the outcome before letters of acceptance were sent. Regardless of whether the applicant was offered a place on Takere or not, advisors used this phone call as an opportunity to introduce themselves to the prospective student and to offer support with their transition to UC. That support would cover assistance with enrolment and course and programme selection; more importantly, it would give students and their whānau a friendly voice and point of contact early in the year as they transitioned to UC.

As the Takere scholarship regulations state, recipients have been offered a full or partial subsidy towards full-year catered accommodation at Tupuānuku. The amount of subsidy awarded was worked out from the whānau interviews, using an equitably designed financial model for distribution that takes account of a range of information, including whānau income and the number of students and children that income supports. Not all successful applicants have opted in for the full-year accommodation beyond the six-week programme.

After a pānui was sent to all Māori and Pacific students, 20 expressions of interest for Taurima positions for the six-week Takere Academy have been received. Of these 20 student applicants, 10 are current Takere students. All applicants will be interviewed before the end of October and offers of employment will be sent in early November. Allowing for the end of exams on 11 November, a two-week training programme will begin in mid-November, which has been co-designed and will be co-led by UniLodge and TWP.

As always, the UC Centre for Entrepreneurship (UCE) has been a hive of activity even with carefully managed distancing. A number of events have taken place online or in person where possible and the team has taken several new initiatives. It set a new record for the number of applications for this year's Summer Startup programme, receiving 92 by the deadline in September.

In addition, the team set about creating and bringing to life the inaugural 'Innovation Month'. The purpose of the initiative was twofold: first, to engage all applicants with UCE and give them some

valuable learning around innovation and business; and, second, to raise the profile of the Centre and showcase the value it can bring to the student experience throughout UC. Innovation Month is free for any UC student to attend and involves workshops, speakers, experts in residence and community events throughout October.

Gerard Quinn commenced as the new Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurship on 18 October. He will be delivering the Summer Startup programme and planning for an even bigger and better 2022.

The ThinkLab Professional and Community Engagement programme cautiously recommenced in late September with a small cohort of founders delving into the topic of marketing. Modules on investment readiness and strategy will additionally be delivered before the end of the year.

The ThinkLab team was excited to launch a standalone website that will better reflect ThinkLab values around innovation. The [new site](#) has an easy-access content management system (CMS) and can be rapidly updated with news and programme information. The three pillars of the site content revolve around ‘people, programmes and place’, with a key focus point of showcasing the environs of the Rehua Building.

We’ve received over 20 applications for the Ben Gough Family Foundation Leaders Scholarship.

Jack Heinemann and Garrick Cooper from the School of Arts wrote a blog, [5 Simple Rules for Using Academic Freedom](#), discussing the need for conscience in academic freedom. In it they offer five key guidelines for deciding when to use academic freedom for the good of society.

The Human Resources Institute of New Zealand has developed a programme to allow human resources practitioners to add to their kete and further develop human resource practice in recognition of Māori as tangata whenua o Aotearoa and Treaty of Waitangi partners. Te Puni Kōkiri has funded a small number of sponsored placements on this programme. Congratulations to two of our Pūmanawa Tangata | People and Culture business partners, Tania Te Wake and Megan Te Kahu, who have both been selected for a placement on the programme.

A review of facilities for parents of very young children has resulted in a plan to have more breast-feeding spaces and baby change facilities in every building on campus. These will be available for both students and staff, of whom about 35 return from parental leave annually.

The School of Earth and Environment Health and Safety at Work group (known as SEESHAW) has been integrating processes from merged departments over the last two years and will receive an external review from SafePlus on 12 and 13 October. The assessor will tour the school, interview staff and give feedback on documentation.

People and Culture has been focusing on assisting leaders and staff with the issues associated with the Level 2 transition back to work on campus. Many areas ran a staged process whereby groups of staff rotated between working from home and working on campus. Work has also continued with the relatively small group of staff who, in the lockdown pulse survey, stated they needed additional help with their wellbeing.

Internationalisation – Locally Engaged, Globally Networked

Professor Natalia Chaban of the Department of Media and Communication established a Public Diplomacy and Political Communication Forum. This research platform unites UC experts from the Media and Communication team and Professor Mills of UC Business School with 14 experts in

international political communication, public diplomacy, foreign policy and communication studies, who are located in the UK, the US, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Ukraine, Spain, Israel, Lithuania and Austria. Within the framework of the Forum, Professor Chaban has initiated and leads a new virtual research project on the European media's narratives and frames in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic, involving scholars from Italy, Sweden, Germany, Austria and Poland. In another initiative, Professor Chaban has been creating a video archive of the Forum members' reflections on public diplomacy and political communication, which she is using as didactic materials in her course on Political Communication and Public Diplomacy. Within the Forum format, Professor Chaban engages with the diplomats in New Zealand as well as with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and involves them as expert contributors in the postgraduate Public Diplomacy course to provide students with feedback on group projects in the field of public diplomacy.

The College of Science worked with the International Relationships Office (IRO) to deliver a school influencers workshop, facilitated by Education New Zealand (ENZ), for 50 teachers from the Philippines and then 50 teachers from Indonesia. Dr Sriparna Saha delivered this virtual workshop, sharing knowledge and expertise in the digital sphere to help engage learners online. The College was grateful to UC Science graduate Mr Jon Gaviola for sharing his experiences with the teachers too.

ENZ continues to progress creation of the New Zealand Centres in Sri Lanka, Vietnam and China, and UC is playing an active role in this work. Regular meetings continue with ENZ, internally and with overseas partners, with the goal of commencing new programmes in late 2022.

Virtual events are still running in Indonesia, Malaysia and India as we prepare for the Semester 1 intake for 2022. The border is expected to remain closed, so the team is currently calling all students in our pipeline to confirm if they can start their chosen studies online, based in one of our offshore Study Centres, or if they now wish to defer.

Following on from successful virtual exchanges over the past year, advertising to UC students begins this week for short-term summer virtual exchanges in conjunction with UC Business School. Exchanges will be undertaken with two European partner institutions in January and February 2022.

Virtual recruitment activities with United States Study Abroad partners continue through October, culminating in International Education Week in November. We remain hopeful that a cohort of Study Abroad partners might be able to enter New Zealand in 2022, irrespective of this outcome, as the United States has begun Study Abroad with many universities around the globe so we need to maintain a presence to keep open future opportunities.

UC also attended the Europe-based European Association of International Education (EAIE) virtual conference at the beginning of October, a key industry event with a focus on connecting with existing and prospective Study Abroad and Exchange partners. Additional EAIE meetings and follow-up of potential new partnerships will be undertaken throughout the coming month to help build our network and diversity of partners.

Five UC international students have secured Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) vouchers to return to campus under the new MIQ voucher release lottery. They will return to UC as part of the 1,000 who make up the border exemption cohort, arriving between October 2021 and January 2022. Once they arrive, we will have a total of 57 UC returnees in this cohort. The IRO continues to work with the remaining students approved under this cohort to secure MIQ vouchers, while we await the announcement of a new border exemption cohort that was mooted by the Minister some months ago.

UC recently held its completion ceremony for students who studied with us on a Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Manaaki Scholarship. Graduating scholars attended the ceremony, cheered on by their fellow scholars, whānau and UC academic and support staff. It has been a very difficult period for these students as they have been unable to return home for a scheduled reunion trip as is normally allowed (many students have children and other dependants back home). They are to be congratulated for their resilience and persistence.

UC Study Centre ambassadors have been appointed at each of UC's three offshore Study Centres. These ambassadors (UC students who have already completed at least one semester at the centre) provide a layer of on-the-ground support to our UC students that is in addition to the online, remote support delivered by UC.

UC has selected four students to represent us at the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Voices of the Future conference. Bringing together APEC leaders and youth from around the region, this virtual conference presents the opportunity for our students to hear from experts, while also sharing their own perspectives with APEC leaders. Although it is disappointing this event cannot be held face to face, we are providing our nominated students with a COVID-19 safe space locally to share ideas and kai during this event.

Organisational Efficacy – of a sustainable scale by 2030

A Year 2 smart flatting accommodation campaign has just been completed to encourage students to consider staying in the halls of residence beyond their first year of study. The halls have had some accommodation available due to the border closure, and some of our facilities are arranged in flats that are akin to the normal flatting situations that students often seek in second year and beyond. The campaign has had strong engagement, with over 10,000 clicks through to the website to find out more.

Communications is working with the Information Technology unit to design a front page for the new intranet (staff-only website) to bring together staff updates, news and events in one accessible place. The Tū ki te tahi 'newshub' will improve the workplace experience by introducing a platform that informs and empowers staff in their work and makes it easier to find the information they need. The news hub will be launched in November and supports Katahitanga at UC.

Our Unibuddy trial is going well. Over the past few months current students have answered 325 questions from prospective students. Through this initiative, prospective students are gaining the opportunity to engage with the UC student community, as well as having a quick and effective way of getting answers to questions that are important to them.

Environmentally Sustainable

Professor Jan Evans-Freeman commenced in the role of Pro-Vice-Chancellor Sustainability on 1 October and is currently planning a work programme for 2022 together with the Sustainability Office. New work will include developing portfolios of sustainability activities in teaching and research as well as campus operations, and promoting our work much more widely in this area.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit occurred virtually due to the COVID-19 lockdown. The event, which capped off a Summit Series UC has co-hosted with Lincoln University since September 2020, succeeded in generating actions towards achieving the SDGs at multiple levels. Among the key outcomes were that 198 organisations and individuals – including the

University – signed the SDG Declaration, which commits signatories to collaborative action, and an Aotearoa SDG Alliance was established to drive further change. Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon Nanaia Mahuta gave the Government’s commitment to explore ways that it can do more on the SDGs.

The Summit Series consisted of five online events. In total, 1,356 people registered for these events, with over 950 people attending. There were 83 speakers and 16 project showcase presenters. Across the entire Summit Series (September 2020 – October 2021), 936,733 people were reached through social media channels, including those of the partner organisations.

In regard to carbon net neutrality, a consultant has been engaged to bring an additional 130 hectares of Mt Barker into the Emissions Trading Scheme. An early estimate suggests this block should sequester enough carbon to offset the lower level of emissions we will be making by 2030, once further carbon reduction projects have been implemented. These projects include not only the coal boiler project, but also the Air Travel Reduction Plan, which will be developed in 2022. The Air Travel Survey of staff run in August is being analysed and will contribute useful data to this project.

A review of UC infrastructure’s resilience to climate change has also been instigated. The full review will be conducted during 2022, considering UC’s vulnerability to heat and potential flooding events.

A waste reduction programme for 2022 is currently being devised to address poor contamination rates in some of the waste streams, and to make progress on work to reduce single-use plastic packaging.

Waterways monitoring has advanced and plans are continuing to install a flood protection pond (stormwater retention) on the edge of Ilam Fields by the tennis courts.

The Biodiversity Plan has been reviewed and the Biodiversity Working Group will be reconvened in 2022 to put forward a focus on work flagged in the plan.

VC Activities

Events since the previous VC report	
22 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended Universities New Zealand Vice-Chancellors meeting via Zoom
23 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Cheryl Hyman, Vice Provost from Arizona State University with Professor Catherine Moran via Zoom • Met with Amy Adams and Chancellor
24 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Amy Adams and Associate Professor Te Maire Tau • Met with Hon. Dr Ayesha Verrall with Professor Grant Edwards and Professor Jason Tylanakis
27 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Audit New Zealand with Keith Longden • Recorded interview with TVNZ. • Attended UC Business School Advisory Board meeting
29 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended and spoke at the UC Admin Plus Wellbeing Zoom meeting
30 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended New Zealand Qualifications Authority Board meeting in Wellington
1 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended UC Business School Awards morning tea • Attended and spoke at the UCSA Student Choice awards
6 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended and introduced 2021 Hopkins Lecture with guest speaker, Dr Rod Carr
7 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with CEO Research Education Advanced Network New Zealand, Amber McEwan
8 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended Universities New Zealand Vice-Chancellors meeting via Zoom
14 – 15 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VC on annual leave
18 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended launch of the UC Ruahinetanga Menopause Awareness Programme
21 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended Universities New Zealand Vice-Chancellors meeting via Zoom
22 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted alongside Professor Gail Gillon the Judge Andrew Beacroft retirement function

Upcoming Events	
28 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending New Zealand Qualifications Authority Board meeting in Wellington
29 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending Universities New Zealand Vice-Chancellors meeting via Zoom • Hosting UCSA Executive dinner for 2021
2 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending and speaking at UC Teece Museum 50k Visitor event • Attending Innovation Jumpstart Awards event
3 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting the Christchurch Knowledge Commons meeting
9 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending Tokona Te Raki Board meeting
16 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairing the Association of Commonwealth Universities Executive Committee meeting via Zoom
19 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending Universities New Zealand Vice-Chancellors meeting via Zoom
23 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending Academic Quality Agency Board meeting via Zoom • Chairing the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) Council meeting via Zoom