AUT

AGENDA PAPERS

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

Notice is Hereby Given that a Meeting of the Council of Auckland University of Technology will be held:

Council Room, Level 7, WA Building, AUT City Campus
On: Monday, 23 February 2026

FROM: 3.45 – 6.00 PM

Andrea Vujnovich
COUNCIL SECRETARY

AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

Chancellor	**Rob Campbell** Appointed by Council
Pro-Chancellor	**Marama Royal** Appointed by Council
Members	**Professor Damon Salesa** Vice-Chancellor of the Auckland University of Technology
	Peter Treacy Appointed by the Minister
	Janine Smith Appointed by the Minister
	Shaun Clarke Appointed by the Minister
	Mark Darrow Appointed by the Minister
	James Portegys Appointed by the Auckland University of Technology Student Association
	Leo Foliaki Appointed by Council
	Michelle Huang Appointed by Council
	Welby Ings Elected by the Academic Staff of the Auckland University of Technology
	Lani Thomson Elected by the Professional Staff of the Auckland University of Technology

PART A
OPEN AGENDA

COUNCIL PART A OPEN AGENDA

Council Agenda Part A (Open Agenda)
Monday 23 February 2026 from 2.45 pm to be held in the Council Room, Level 7, WA Building, AUT City Campus

Karakia		
Mihi – Chancellor		
1. Welcome, Apologies and approval of agenda	The **Chancellor moves** that apologies be **noted** and that **Council approve** the assignment of agenda items to Part A and Part B of the Council agenda.	
2. Declaration/Recording of any Interests	2. The attention of Members is drawn to the Conflicts of Interest Policy and the need to disclose any interest in an item on the agenda of the meeting as set out in Schedule 11, Clause 8 of the Education and Training Act 2020.	The **Chancellor moves** that the declarations if any be noted and the action taken be **endorsed.**
3. Constitutional Matters, Conferment of Degrees, and Policy	3.1 Noting Chancellor delegation – Granting, Rescinding, Revoking and Amending Qualifications – December 2025 and February 2026.	The **Chancellor moves** that the following be **approved:** • See item 3.1
4. Council Meetings	4.1 Council Meeting Draft Minutes Part A Draft Minutes (Part A), 8 December 2025 and 19 December 2025 4.2 Matters arising from the Minutes Part A of the Council Meeting, 8 December 2025 not elsewhere on the agenda.	The **Chancellor moves** that the Minutes Part A of the Council Meeting held on, 8 December and 19 December 2025 be taken as **read** and **confirmed**.
5. Vice-Chancellor's Report	5. Vice-Chancellor's Report	The **Chancellor moves** that the Vice-Chancellor's Report be **received**.
6. Chancellor's Report	6. Chancellor's Report	The **Chancellor moves** that the Chancellor's Report be **received.**

7. Reports from Boards, Committees and Working Groups to Council	7. Reports and Minutes from the Academic Board,	No report
8. Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Report	8. 8.1 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Report for February 2026 8.2 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Framework	The **Chancellor moves** that the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report for February 2026 be **received.** The **Chancellor moves** - refer resolutions in the paper**.**
9. Te Tiriti	9. No report.	
10. Strategic Reports	10. Research Update report from Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Professor Mark Orams	The **Chancellor moves** that the Update report from DVC Research, be **received**.
11. Student Success	11. No report	
12. Correspondence referred by the Chancellor	12. No correspondence	
13. Other matters arising for decision or noting	13.1 Update from the President of AUTSA. 13.2 Update from the Council Member elected by the Academic Staff of the Auckland University of Technology 13.3 Update from the Council Member elected by the Professional Staff of the Auckland University of Technology	The **Chancellor moves** that the Update from AUTSA be **received**. The **Chancellor moves** that the Update from the Council member Elected by the Academic Staff of the Auckland University of Technology be **received**. The **Chancellor moves** that the Update from the Council member Elected by the Professional Staff of the Auckland University of Technology be **received**.
14. Items moved from Part B of the agenda to Part A and General Business		

PUBLIC EXCLUSIONS

The Chancellor moved that the public be now excluded from Part B of this meeting, and that the following matters be discussed without public disclosure. This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and section 9 of the Official Information Act, as the case may require, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting AND THAT W Lawson, L Williams, A Vujnovich and R Nottingham be permitted to remain at this meeting, after the public has been excluded, because of their knowledge of the matters to be discussed in the proceedings while the public are excluded. This knowledge, which will be of assistance in relation to the matters to be discussed, is relevant to these matters because they relate to aspects of the administration of AUT for which those persons are responsible.

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter. The public conduct of each item below would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 9 of the OIA identified below.	Ground(s) under section 48(1) LGOIMA for the passing of this resolution
15. Council Meeting Part B of the meetings held on 8 December 2025 and 19 December 2025	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), 9(2)(k)	7(2)(f)(i), 7(2)h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)
16. Vice Chancellor's Report	s 9(2)(a), 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), 9(2)(g)(i)	s7(2)(a), 7(2)(c), 7(2)(j), 7(2)(F)(i), 7(2)(f)(ii)

Part A OPEN AGENDA ITEM	3.1

Council Agenda Paper

Subject: **GRANTING, RESCINDING, REVOKING AND AMENDING QUALIFICATIONS – DECEMBER 2025 AND FEBRUARY 2026**

Date: **10 February 2026**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT COUNCIL NOTE THAT THE CHANCELLOR HAS EXERCISED A DELEGATION UNDER THE COUNCIL DELEGATION POLICY AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GENERAL ACADEMIC STATUTE AND SECTION 283 OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACT 2020 TO:

DECEMBER 2025

1. *GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE 2025 SUMMER GRADUATION CORPORATE CYCLE ON 16-17 DECEMBER.*

2. *GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE 2025 SUMMER OFFSHORE CYCLE ON 13 DECEMBER.*

3. *GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE DECEMBER MONTHLY CERTIFICAES CYCLE ON 16 DECEMBER.*

4. *GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE DECEMBER MONTHLY CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY'S (COP) CYCLE ON 16 DECEMBER.*

5. *REVOKE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE STUDENTS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE AHEAD OF THE 2025 SUMMER GRADUATION CORPORATE CYCLE ON 16-17 DECEMBER.*

FEBRUARY 2026

6. *REVOKE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE STUDENTS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE AHEAD OF THE 2026 FEBRUARY MONTHLY CORPORATE CYCLE ON 12 FEBRUARY 2026.*

7. *GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE 2026 FEBRUARY MONTHLY CORPORATE CYCLE ON 12 FEBRUARY 2026.*

8. *GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE 2026 FEBRUARY MONTHLY CERTIFICATE CYCLE ON 12 FEBRUARY 2026.*

9. *GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE 2026 FEBRUARY CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY (COP) CYCLE ON 12 FEBRUARY 2026.*

The schedules are in supplementary papers.

PART A	4.1
OPEN AGENDA ITEM	

Council Agenda Paper

Subject: **Minutes of Part A of the Council Meetings held on 8 December 2025 and 19 December 2025**

Date: **21 December 2025**

Author: **A Vujnovich**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE MINUTES OF PART A OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2025 AND 19 DECEMBER 2025 BE TAKEN AS READ AND CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD OF THOSE MEETINGS

MINUTES

Council Meeting

Meeting held 8 December 2025 at 2.30 pm
Council Room, WA Building, City Campus, Auckland

PRESENT:	R Campbell (Chair), D Salesa, J Smith, L Foliaki, W Ings, A Lemmer, S Clarke, M Darrow, M Huang, L Thomson, P Treacy, M Royal
SECRETARY:	A Vujnovich, Council Secretary R Nottingham, Minute Taker
IN ATTENDANCE:	James Portegys (Incoming AUTSA President) - observer; L Williams (Chief Financial Officer and AVC Finance and Infrastructure); W Lawson DVC Academic); S Davies (AVC People & Culture) – Item 8.1; A Binning (Acting HSW Director) – Item 8.1; M Fielding (Chief Executive Officer, AUT Ventures) – Item 17.1
IN APOLOGY:	Peter Treacy for late arrival (4pm)

PART A OPEN AGENDA
The meeting was opened with a karakia led by the Chancellor.

The meeting was opened with Council-only time. A number of matters were discussed. At the end of Council-only time, non-Council members returned to the meeting.

1   **WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS**
The Chancellor noted Council member P Treacy would join later due to a flight cancellation and welcomed James Portegys, as an observer to the meeting, and incoming AUTSA president.

   Resolved
   1.   *THAT APOLOGIES BE RECEIVED FROM P TREACY FOR LATE ARRIVAL.*
   2.   *THAT THE ASSIGNMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS TO PART A AND PART B OF THE COUNCIL AGENDA BE APPROVED.*

2   **DECLARATION/RECORDING OF INTERESTS**
The attention of Members was drawn to the Conflicts of Interest Policy and the need to disclose any interest in an item on the agenda of the meeting as set out in Schedule 11, Clause 8 of the Education and Training Act 2020.

   Discussion Items
   No items of conflict with today's agenda.

   Resolved
   THAT THE DECLARATIONS BE NOTED AND THE ACTIONS TAKEN BE ENDORSED.

3   **CONSTITUTIONAL MATTER, CONFERMENT OF DEGREES AND POLICY**

3.1   **Granting, Rescinding, Revoking and Amending Qualifications**

.   No papers

3.2   **Adopt Charter of Academic Freedom and Statement on Political Neutrality**

<u>Received</u>

Charter of Academic Freedom and Statement on Political Neutrality

<u>Noted in discussion</u>

- Charter of Academic Freedom had already been endorsed by Council, and was being formally adopted to align with legislative requirements;
- Assurances that AUT would act reasonably in enacting these postions, though intervention may be needed where disruption caused safety concerns or insurance issues, such as occupation of AUT buildings;
- Commentary on behalf of the university was closely managed by Management and Council, with appropriate consideration and discussion of messaging;
- Charter required AUT academics' commentary on issues to be informed and truthful if referencing their AUT role.

<u>Resolved</u>

THAT COUNCIL ADOPT:

1. *THE CHARTER OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM AS THE UNIVERSITY STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM; AND*
2. *THE POLITICAL NEUTRALITY STATEMENT:*

"AUT DOES NOT TAKE A POSITION ON ISSUES THAT DO NOT DIRECTLY RELATE TO AUT'S CORE ROLE OR FUNCTIONS.

WHERE AN ISSUE IS NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO AUT'S CORE ROLE OR FUNCTIONS, AUT DOES NOT ASSUME THE RIGHT TO EXPRESS AN OPINION, OR TO COMMENT ON BEHALF OF ITS ENTIRE COMMUNITY. INSTEAD AUT RECOGNISES AND RESPECTS THAT A VARIETY OF VIEWS WILL BE HELD. THIS POSITION UPHOLDS THE UNIVERSITY'S CHARTER OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM.
THE CHARTER ACKNOWLEDGES THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE AUT COMMUNITY TO ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION TO ENSURE THAT A DIVERSITY OF VIEWS CAN BE FREELY EXPRESSED AND HEARD, WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR.

THE UNIVERSITY MAY DECIDE TO COMMENT ON MATTERS RELATED TO ITS CORE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS, INCLUDING THOSE RELATED TO TERTIARY EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND ITS OTHER ROLES."

3.3   **Calls for Nominations for Chancellor and Pro Chancellor and Committee Membership**

<u>Received</u>

Calls for Nominations for Chancellor and Pro Chancellor and Committee Membership

<u>Noted in discussion</u>

- Noted there were no conflicts associate with the process that required any Council member to recuse themselves.
- Supported the proposed process as outlined in the paper.

<u>Resolved</u>

THAT COUNCIL APPROVE THE PROCESS FOR CALLS FOR:
1. *NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION AS CHANCELLOR AND PRO CHANCELLOR; AND*
2. *EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR COUNCIL COMMITTEES*

4   COUNCIL MEETINGS AND MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

4.1   Minutes of the previous meeting

Received

Draft Minutes (Part A), of the Council meeting held on 29 September 2025

Resolved

THE MINUTES OF PART A, COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2025 BE CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD OF THAT MEETING.

4.2   Matters Arising

Noted in discussion
- Received the paper outlining AUT's response to the consultation on proposed changes to NCEA qualifications.
- Management focus was on implementation, with some impact to teacher training pathways, as well as working constructively with the Minister;
- Vocational offerings from year 11 in schools could affect AUT student numbers though it was uncertain how many schools would be resourced to provide this;
- Dissatisfaction in teaching profession was concerning, and unclear whether the new educational direction replacing NCEA would improve the effectiveness of education in Aotearoa;
- Tertiary sector discussions on the value of a university degree, particularly as it related to employment, and whether university education should be ubiquitous;
- Delivering on AUT's commitment to priority student cohorts should remain a focus.

Resolved:
THAT THE STATUS OF THE MATTERS ARISING BE NOTED

5   VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Received

Vice Chancellor's Report plus separate page on AUT online student locations (handed out in meeting)

Noted in discussion
- AUT online paper showed most AUT online students were Auckland-based, with Management opportunities to scale including micro-credentialling and online papers for overseas students;
- The focus on practical application of knowledge remained an AUT competitive advantage though other universities had started to highlight this aspect too;
- AUT's future operating model, including the role of emerging technology, noting Management assurances that AUT's approach to artificial intelligence (AI) was proactive but measured given the pace of change;
- AUT should be mindful of inequitable access to advances in technology and AI for its students;
- Arrangements had concluded with three of the four academic publishing houses, with universities in NZ and Australia working together in negotiations with the fourth house and in mitigating effects of the absence of agreement for academics;
- Successes celebrated by AUT in the last year included WIPCE conference, national sign language award and pathways project that increased student success rates;
- Discussed the opening of a new national sports facility in Christchurch and possible impacts on AUT Millenium;

- Supported the strategic direction of AUT and encouraged management to consider the focus of the next few years and accelerate those outcomes;
- Significant value is placed on the partnership with AUT by Ngāti Whātua Ōrakei and how the governors of both could work more closely together to ensure relationships are enduring.

Action:
- Chancellor and Pro Chancellor to develop proposals for governors of Ngāti Whātua Ōrakei and AUT to work more closely together, such as through an annual wānanga.

Resolved
THAT THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT BE RECEIVED.

6   CHANCELLOR'S REPORT
No report

7   PART A – REPORTS FROM BOARD, COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS OF COUNCIL
7.1   Academic Board Reports and Minutes, 29 September and 24 November 2025
Received
Academic Board Reports and Minutes, 29 September and 24 November 2025

Noted in Discussion:
- Valuable for Council to understand the Tertiary Research Excellence Fund, which replaced Performance-Based Research Fund, and its implications for AUT.

Action: Management to present on Tertiary Research Excellence Fund and its implications for AUT at a future Council meeting.

Resolved
THAT THE ACADEMIC BOARD REPORTS AND MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 29 SEPTEMBER AND 24 NOVEMBER 2025 BE RECEIVED

8   HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT
8.1   Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report, September-November 2025
Received
Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) Report, September-November 2025

Noted in discussion
- Recruitment of HSW director was underway with an existing manager currently acting in the role;
- HSW training module to be rolled out to existing staff, with automated reminders and progress oversight;
- Summer period would be used to undertake works to implement audit recommendations to infrastructure and premises.

Resolved
THAT THE HEALTH SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2025 BE RECEIVED.

9   TE TIRITI REPORT
9.1   Report from Te Toi Aronui
Received
Report from Te Toi Aronui

Noted in discussion
- Strong partnership with Ngāti Whātua Ōrakei in delivering WIPCE conference, which had had positive feedback from attendees and positive profiling for AUT;
- Supported a letter of thanks from Council to AUT volunteers for their assistance with WIPCE;
- Noted the new Māori strategy would be presented to a Council meeting in quarter two 2026.

Action: Management to draft a letter of thanks on behalf of Council to be sent to AUT volunteers helping at WIPCE.

Resolved
THAT THE REPORT FROM TE TOI ARONUI PROFESSOR MEIHANA DURIE BE RECEIVED

10   **STRATEGIC REPORTS**
No report

11   **STUDENT SUCCESS**
No report

12   **CORRESPONDENCE REFERRED BY THE CHANCELLOR**
No correspondence

13   **OTHER MATTERS FOR DECISION OR NOTING**
13.1   **Update from AUTSA**

Verbal Update
- Presented a short video canvassing student views on AUT quality of teaching and other aspects;
- AUTSA supporting students through appeals and meetings following assessments;
- Positive outcome of negotiations with Auckland Transport with increased reduction for students;
- Reflected on achievements over last two years including student representative model, new national student association, free gym membership and financial contribution to student placements;
- Current focus was on a handover to new AUTSA president, who started January 2026.

Noted in discussion
- Council members acknowledged and thanked the AUTSA president for her contributions to Council and to the University.

Resolved
THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF AUTSA AND THANKED THE OUTGOING AUTSA PRESIDENT FOR HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO COUNCIL AND AUT

13.2   **Update from Council Member elected by the Academic Staff of AUT**
No update was provided as matters intended to be raised had been covered in earlier items.

13.3   **Update from the Council Member elected by the Professional Staff of AUT**
Verbal Update
- Positive feedback from staff volunteering and attending WIPCE which assisted with professional development goals;
- First round of graduations from the Aronui Ora programme and strong interest from staff in the programme.

Resolved

THAT THE UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED BY THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF OF THE AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY BE RECEIVED.

13.4   **Sustainability Update Report**

Received

Sustainability Update – International Students' Air Travel Emissions

Noted in discussion

- Supported the allocation of carbon budgets to faculties;
- Increases in international student would also increase carbon emissions, something that Management would need to consider how to mitigate.

Resolved

THAT THE SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE BE RECEIVED

14   GENERAL BUSINESS AND ITEMS MOVED FROM PART B TO PART A

None

RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

The Chancellor moved that the public be now excluded from Part B of this meeting, and that the following matters be discussed without public disclosure. This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and section 9 of the Official Information Act, as the case may require, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting **AND THAT** L Williams, W Lawson, A Vujnovich and R Nottingham be permitted to remain at this meeting, after the public has been excluded, because of their knowledge of the matters to be discussed in the proceedings while the public are excluded. This knowledge, which will be of assistance in relation to the matters to be discussed, is relevant to these matters because they relate to aspects of the administration of AUT for which those persons are responsible.

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter. The public conduct of each item below would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 9 of the OIA identified below.	Ground(s) under section 48(1) LGOIMA for the passing of this resolution
15. Council Meeting Part B of the meeting held on 26 May 2025	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), 9(2)(k)	7(2)(f)(i), 7(2)h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)
16. Vice Chancellor's Report	s 9(2)(a), 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), 9(2)(g)(i)	s7(2)(a), 7(2)(c), 7(2)(j), 7(2)(F)(i), 7(2)(f)(ii)
17 Report from AUT Ventures	s 9(2)(a), 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), 9(2)(g)(i)	s7(2)(a), 7(2)(c), 7(2)(j), 7(2)(F)(i), 7(2)(f)(ii)
19. Report from AUT Ethics Committee	s 9(2)(a), 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), 9(2)(g)(i)	s7(2)(a), 7(2)(c), 7(2)(j), 7(2)(F)(i), 7(2)(f)(ii)
21.1 Draft Minutes of Finance and Audit Committee held on 24 November 2025	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i) and s 9(2)(k)	s7(2)(b), 7(2)(h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)

21.1 Draft Minutes of People & Culture Committee held on 24 November 2025	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i) and s 9(2)(k)	s7(2)(b), 7(2)(h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)
23. Other Business	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i) and s 9(2)(k)	s7(2)(b), 7(2)(h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)

AUT

MINUTES

Council Meeting

Meeting held on or around 19 December 2025 by email

PRESENT:	R Campbell (Chair), D Salesa, J Smith, L Foliaki, W Ings, A Lemmer, S Clarke, M Darrow, M Huang, L Thomson, P Treacy.

PART A OPEN AGENDA

1 **WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS**
No apologies were received

2 **DECLARATION/RECORDING OF INTERESTS**
Th Chancellor, Pro Chancellor and Vice Chancellor declared their interest as Trustees of the AUT Foundation.

Resolved
PURSUANT TO SCHEDULE 11, CLAUSE 8 OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACT 2020 COUNCIL AGREES TO DELIBERATION OF ALL AGENDA ITEMS BY ALL COUNCIL MEMBERS.

3 **CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS, CONFERMENT OF DEGREES AND POLICY**

4 **COUNCIL MEETINGS AND MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

5 **VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**
No report

6 **CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**
No report

7 **PART A – REPORTS FROM BOARD, COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS OF COUNCIL**
No report

8 **TE TIRITI REPORT**
No report

10 **STRATEGIC REPORTS**
No report

11 **STUDENT SUCCESS**
No report

12 **CORRESPONDENCE REFERRED BY THE CHANCELLOR**
No correspondence

13 **OTHER MATTERS FOR DECISION OR NOTING**

14 **GENERAL BUSINESS AND ITEMS MOVED FROM PART B TO PART A**
None

RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

The Chancellor moved that the public be now excluded from Part B of this meeting, and that the following matters be discussed without public disclosure. This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and section 9 of the Official Information Act, as the case may require, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting **AND THAT** L Williams, W Lawson and R Nottingham be permitted to remain at this meeting, after the public has been excluded, because of their knowledge of the matters to be discussed in the proceedings while the public are excluded. This knowledge, which will be of assistance in relation to the matters to be discussed, is relevant to these matters because they relate to aspects of the administration of AUT for which those persons are responsible.

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter. The public conduct of each item below would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 9 of the OIA identified below.	Ground(s) under section 48(1) LGOIMA for the passing of this resolution
23. Other Business	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i) and s 9(2)(k)	s7(2)(b), 7(2)(h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)

COUNCIL MEETING RAISED	ACTION	WHO	STATUS/ TARGET DATE
28 July 2025	**7.1 Academic Board Reports and Minutes** • Management to present to Council on Academic Quality including data, benchmarks and framework.	DVC Academic	Open/April 2026
28 July 2025	**9.1 Te Tiriti** • Management to present on Māori student numbers and experience in AUT in a future report.	Te Toi Aronui	Open/July 2026
29 September 2025	**5. Vice Chancellor's Report** • Management to provide information on resource plans to support student success given planned growth of international onshore students.	DVC Academic	Open/April 2026
29 September 2025	**7.1. Academic Board Report** • Management to present update on negotiations with large academic publishing houses. <u>Update Feb 2026</u>: A verbal update on this topic will be provided at the February meeting.	DVC Academic	Actioned
29 September 2025	**8.1 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Report** • Management to provide further information on how clarity between divisional/functional responsibilities will be resolved.	AVC People & Culture	Open/April 2026
8 December 2025	**5.1 Vice Chancellor's Report** • Chancellor and Pro Chancellor to develop proposals for governors of Ngāti Whātua Ōrakei and AUT to work more closely together, such as through an annual wānanga.	Chancellor & Pro-Chancellor	Open/July 2026
8 December 2025	**7.1 Academic Board Reports & Minutes** • Management to present on Tertiary Research Excellence Fund and its implications for AUT at a future Council meeting. <u>Update</u>: Please refer TREF presentation included in February pack.	DVC Research	Actioned
8 December 2025	**9.1 Te Toi Aronui** • Management to draft a letter of thanks on behalf of Council to be sent to AUT volunteers helping at WIPCE.	Vice Chancellor's Office	Actioned

PART A	5
OPEN AGENDA ITEM	

Council Agenda Paper

Subject: **VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

Date: **23 February 2026**

RECOMMENDATION:
THAT THE VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT BE RECEIVED

SECTION 1. AUT'S CURRENT POSITION

1.1   Vice-Chancellor's introduction

AUT has begun the 2026 academic year with Semester 1 now underway. This is always a significant period for our University, as our campuses come alive again with students beginning or continuing their studies and with staff across AUT working together to ensure a positive and successful start to the year.

This report reflects activity across the final quarter of 2025, a year in which we marked 25 years as a university and continued to strengthen our identity as Aotearoa's university of technology and opportunity. Across 2025, our staff supported thousands of learners to progress in their studies, delivered research with real impact and deepened partnerships with iwi, industry, community organisations and civic leaders.

As we begin 2026, we continue to be guided by *Te Kete*, with its focus on graduates the world needs, knowledge discovery and application with purpose and partnerships that accelerate impact. I wish to acknowledge the leadership of the Executive Leadership Team, academic and professional/allied staff, and the contribution of faculties and divisions across the University, whose collective work has ensured a strong start to the year.

I also want to express my appreciation to the Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellor and members of the AUT Council for your guidance and stewardship. I look forward to our continued work together through 2026 as we advance AUT's strategic direction and strengthen our impact for our students, our communities and Aotearoa.

1

HIGHLIGHTS

- AUT is partnering with Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington and the University of Otago in a new pilot, Uni Exchange Aotearoa. This initiative will allow selected second year domestic undergraduates to study for a semester at one of the partner universities in another New Zealand city. [Read more](#)
- Iti Kōpara – AUT's Schools Partnership Programme, is entering its second year working alongside seven secondary schools to strengthen NCEA achievement towards University Entrance. [Read more](#)
- More than 180 staff attended a special graduation ceremony for completing the Aronui Ora programme. The programme is designed to scaffold and support all staff to build their confidence in giving meaningful expression to Te Aronui. [Read more](#)
- AUT has signed an open access agreement with global health publisher BMJ Journals in a move that will contribute to the visibility of AUT research. [Read more](#)
- New AI Guidelines and resources have been made available for AUT researchers. [Read more](#)
- The Pacific Islands Families Study, a unique longitudinal inquiry, celebrated 25 years of active research. The study has followed nearly 1400 Pacific children and their parents since the children were born at Middlemore Hospital in South Auckland in the year 2000. [Read more](#)
- A New Home for City Campus Student Medical, Counselling & Rainbow Student Services has opened on city campus in the WQ building. The newly appointed *Mōwai Student Health & Counselling Centre* provides students with a purpose designed state of the art health and wellbeing space. [Read more](#)

2

SECTION 2. TE KETE | GRADUATES THE WORLD NEEDS

University highlights, activities and updates on our initiatives to enhance student success under Te Kete.

2.1   Academic Transformation

Throughout 2025, AUT continued to progress its academic transformation agenda through targeted initiatives that strengthen programme quality, assessment practice, and alignment with emerging needs in an AI enabled environment. The Assessment Policy Project advanced during Semester 2 2025, with programme areas receiving guided support to embed stronger evidence of learning within non invigilated assessments. Workshops delivered by the Office of Learning, Teaching and Educational Design (LTED) focused on redesigning assessment for robustness in an AI context, with strong staff engagement across faculties.

Work also continued to refresh AUT's Graduate Profile. A revised draft was discussed at Te Hāutu in December and is progressing toward approval. This work ensures AUT graduates continue to demonstrate the capabilities required for the future of work and aligns with the broader Academic, Capital and Portfolio transformations underway.

The implementation of *InPlace*, AUT's new Work Integrated Learning platform, is progressing well. This system will improve data visibility, reduce administrative burden and support safer oversight of placement activity. It will launch first in Nursing in early 2026, with further phases to follow.

In parallel, ongoing work to modernise student facing systems continues. Core Arion Web functions, including online enrolment and graduation applications, have been migrated to the new MyAUT and AUT App environment to provide students and applicants with a more connected and contemporary digital experience. Remaining work focused on application workflows is underway.

Lastly, UniPrep maintained strong momentum into its second decade. Curriculum refinements strengthened academic readiness for learners transitioning into degree study, with Pacific learner success particularly notable through a 94 percent course completion rate in 2025.

2.2   Student Success

Throughout 2025, AUT continued to strengthen student success through coordinated efforts across Student Services and Administration, faculties and University-wide support teams. Enhancements to Orientation, led by Student Services, provided a more inclusive and connected experience for new students. Expanded faculty involvement, improved access to academic information and the introduction of low sensory environments supported a smoother transition into study and contributed to higher levels of student preparedness and confidence.

Throughout the academic year, Student Services and Counselling and Health strengthened AUT's holistic support framework by integrating academic, wellbeing and pastoral care approaches. New specialist roles for postgraduate research students, developed in partnership with the Graduate Research School, provided early guidance and clearer pathways for research progression. These developments improved access to academic support and enabled more consistent, student-centred navigation of postgraduate study.

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Wellbeing responses were further enhanced through expanded group-based interventions and strengthened collaboration between health professionals, advisors and student support teams. This work helped AUT respond to increasing student need in ways that emphasised continuity of care, cultural responsiveness and inclusive practice. Updated case management processes also enabled earlier and more coordinated intervention for students experiencing academic or personal challenges.

Financial assistance remained a key contributor to student success, with Student Services delivering targeted support to priority learners across the year. Initiatives such as the clinical placement hardship grant reduced financial barriers for students completing compulsory placements outside Auckland. Collaboration between Student Services, Student Communications and the Office of Pacific Advancement helped increase Pacific learner engagement with financial support and contributed to stronger equity outcomes.

Belonging and engagement continued to be strengthened through Sport and Recreation and Student Communications. Te Āhuru Recreation Centre provided important opportunities for social connection and wellbeing, while high performing communication channels ensured students were aware of key services, events and academic milestones. Student Communications maintained strong engagement across newsletters and the AUT App, supporting timely access to information and fostering a greater sense of community throughout the year.

2.3   Technology Enabled Teaching and Learning

In 2025, AUT continued to advance technology enabled learning through work led by the Office of Learning, Teaching and Educational Design (LTED) and ICT Services (ICT). This work supported academic integrity, strengthened digitally enhanced teaching practice and ensured students experienced a more accessible and contemporary learning environment.

LTED progressed the University's assessment transformation agenda by supporting programme teams to embed stronger observation of learning within non invigilated assessment formats. This work was reinforced through academic development workshops that explored generative AI, academic integrity and evidence of learning, with strong engagement from academic staff across faculties.

The annual Learning and Teaching Symposium, delivered by LTED, further advanced this direction by bringing together staff to explore AUT's role as a university of technology and opportunity. The keynote addresses highlighted international perspectives on academic integrity and AI, aligning closely with AUT's approach to ensuring AI supplements rather than replaces student learning.

Significant progress was made on improving the student digital experience. In partnership with ICT Services, LTED oversaw the integration of student pronouns within Arion, MyAUT, Canvas and CRM systems, improving inclusiveness and ensuring a cohesive digital environment. ICT also advanced the migration of legacy Arion Web functions into MyAUT, creating a more intuitive, modern interface for applicants and students.

AUT also continued to explore AI enabled tools that enhance teaching and learning. Early development of the AUT Student Companion, an AI futures initiative designed to provide multilingual, coherent learning support, reflects the University's long-term ambition to

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strengthen equity of access through digital support. LTED also led work to evaluate future hosting arrangements for the Cogniti AI platform to ensure continuity and strategic alignment in a rapidly evolving AI environment.

Work progressed on technology infrastructure that supports flexibility and access in learning. LTED advanced the Lecture Recording Project toward implementation in 2026, ensuring AUT's teaching approach aligns with Disability Action Plan requirements and supports students' varied learning needs. In parallel, ICT continued to develop High Powered Compute access, anytime anywhere specialist software provision and AI enhanced research tools, enabling academic staff and students to benefit from modern, scalable digital capabilities.

2.4   Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environments

Across 2025, AUT continued to strengthen the inclusiveness of its learning environment through coordinated work across Student Services and Administration (SSA), Disability Support Services (DSS), Disability Resource Services (DRS), and Counselling and Mental Health Services, supported by partnership with other teams across the University. This work advanced the commitments of Te Kete by improving accessibility, removing barriers to participation and embedding more culturally responsive and learner centred practices across the student experience.

Progress continued under the Disability Action Plan, with SSA, DSS and DRS leading initiatives that enhanced staff capability, improved accessibility in learning and strengthened the institutional approach to supporting disabled learners. New frameworks for inclusive policy and procedure design, along with work toward implementing a university wide lecture recording approach, positioned AUT to better meet equity obligations and support diverse learners to fully engage with their programmes.

SSA also delivered new student-centred pilots that responded to specific learner needs, including the development of internal assessment pathways for students without formal diagnoses and targeted academic assistance for neurodivergent students. These initiatives supported improved academic confidence, smoother transitions into study and more equitable access to appropriate learning adjustments.

Counselling and Mental Health Services strengthened culturally aligned support by integrating new clinical roles, including Pacific focused counselling, and expanding group-based interventions focused on wellbeing, emotional regulation and executive functioning. These developments enhanced the diversity of care available to students and supported a more holistic University wide approach to wellbeing.

AUT also continued to grow spaces and services that recognise the needs of Rainbow learners. The Rainbow Support Service expanded its community building activities, strengthened pathways to affirming care and improved visibility of Rainbow inclusion across the University. Collaboration between Rainbow Support, academic staff and student groups enabled more inclusive learning environments and strengthened belonging for Rainbow students across programmes and campuses.

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2.5   **Pacific and Indigenous Student Achievement**

The Office of Pacific Advancement (OPA) led significant work in 2025 to strengthen Pacific student achievement across the learner journey. A key component of this was the continued development of UniPrep Uni101, delivered in partnership with Brand and Marketing, which supported Pacific and Māori secondary school leavers to build academic readiness, confidence and a strong sense of belonging. Refinements informed by the 2024 pilot contributed to a Pacific course completion rate of 94 percent in 2025.

OPA also enhanced transition support through events such as Fanau Talanoa, which deepened engagement between Pacific learners, their families and the University, and provided clear, culturally grounded introductions to academic expectations and available support. Vā Pasifika continued to offer culturally sustaining pastoral support and campus engagement opportunities that strengthened belonging and supported Pacific students' wellbeing and academic progression.

Collaboration between OPA and the Office of Māori Advancement (OMA) enabled the delivery of Aronui Ako, a culturally grounded academic mentoring pilot designed to build learning communities and enhance course level engagement for Māori and Pacific students. OPA further supported Pacific postgraduate achievement by providing research support grants and delivering Indigenous postgraduate wānanga in partnership with Te Ara Poutama Faculty, the Office of Māori Advancement and the Moanaroa Pacific Research Network. These wānanga strengthened research capability, supported confirmation of candidature and fostered deeper Indigenous knowledge exchange.

The Moanaroa Pacific Research Network advanced Pacific research excellence through hosting the 2025 Pacific Research Symposium and launching AUT's inaugural Pacific Research Guidelines, the first in Aotearoa to incorporate Indigenous Pacific AI and data sovereignty principles. These guidelines provide a strengthened ethical foundation for Pacific research across the University.

Development of AUT's Pacific Plan continued, with the Academic Capital Plan Portfolio Board endorsing five strategic objectives that will guide institution-wide action from 2026. This work aims to embed more culturally grounded practice across learning and teaching, research, staffing and external engagement. OPA also strengthened Pacific regional relationships through engagement with the University of the South Pacific, Fiji National University, the United Nations Pacific Development Team and other regional partners.

Early 2026 activity includes Pacific Connections Day, the commencement of the Moanaroa Pacific Research Network seminar series and delivery of the Pacific Learning Series pilot, designed to build staff capability in Pacific knowledge, culture and engagement.

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SECTION 3. TE KETE | KNOWLEDGE DISCOVERY AND APPLICATION WITH PURPOSE

University highlights, activities, and updates on our progress in fostering impactful and innovative research, learning, teaching, and technology, as guided by Te Kete.

3.1   Research Transformation, Research Culture and Performance

AUT continued to strengthen its research culture and institutional capability through coordinated work led by Te Kahui Poipoi Rangahau (the University Research Office), Te Mātāpuna Library and Learning Services and the Graduate Research School (GRS). This work supported AUT's long-term ambition to deepen impactful research, enhance researcher capability and improve the systems that enable high quality research practice.

Te Mātāpuna progressed the development of AUT's new research data repository, Tuwhera, in partnership with Te Kahui Poipoi Rangahau and ICT Services. This secure, centralised and AUT hosted platform embeds Māori data sovereignty and Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles in its design, and will strengthen research data management, discoverability and long-term storage. Implementation work progressed through 2025, with deployment scheduled for mid-2026.

Research culture was further supported through Te Mātāpuna's ongoing work to enhance frontline research engagement, including professional development focused on ethical use of AI in research and strengthened support for researchers managing visibility and impact. These initiatives contributed to a more cohesive and capability aligned research support environment across AUT.

The Graduate Research School reported continued growth in research degree enrolments, admissions and completions. Doctoral applications reached record levels in 2025, and admissions increased by 57.1 percent since 2023, with strong momentum continuing into early 2026. Master's level enrolments also remained above pre-COVID levels. Early 2026 enrolments indicate sustained interest and a strong pipeline of research candidates.

GRS continued to expand researcher capability building, offering revised supervisor development, enhanced induction resources and programmes such as 12 Weeks to Research Active and Te Ara Whakamua. New ethical guidelines for the use of generative AI in research were published to support responsible, high quality research practice, alongside practical tools and self-assessment resources for researchers.

Planning also commenced for Research Week 2026, which will continue AUT's focus on research that makes a difference through collaboration with iwi, communities, industry and international partners.

3.2   Adapting to Emerging Technologies

AUT continued to adapt to the rapid evolution of emerging technologies through coordinated work led by ICT Services (ICT) and the Office of Learning, Teaching and Educational Design (LTED), with a focus on strengthening research capability, supporting innovation and ensuring AUT's teaching and research environments remain contemporary, secure and future ready.

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ICT enabled the REANNZ FileSender platform for AUT wide use, providing researchers with a secure, high volume data sharing solution that supports large scale collaborations and enhances the exchange of research datasets across institutional and international partners.

Work progressed on the University's broader AI and digital enablement agenda. ICT advanced evaluations of generative AI tools, including AUTGPT and other AI assisted applications, to understand their utility for research data analysis, workflow optimisation and staff productivity. Beta testing of AI features within Canvas concluded with recommendations to monitor product maturity before implementation.

LTED continued work on the Cogniti AI platform, assessing future hosting arrangements in response to changes in external provision. This analysis considered cost, technical alignment and the broader strategic direction of AI enabled learning support at AUT. The recommendation to move initially to a Software as a Service platform will maintain continuity for staff and students while the University assesses long-term options.

ICT also advanced critical infrastructure projects that will support AUT's digital research and learning environment over the coming years. This included proof of concept work on High Powered Compute environments, development of anytime anywhere access to specialist software and early planning for modernised containerisation approaches that will strengthen scalability and support advanced AI, analytics and digital services.

3.3 Research Impact and Success

AUT's research impact continued to strengthen across 2025 through expanded engagement with industry, iwi, community organisations and national and international research partners. Te Kahui Poipoi Rangahau supported researchers to deepen these partnerships and progress new collaborations that reflect AUT's commitment to research that delivers societal, economic and environmental impact.

Externally funded research activity also continued to build momentum. AUT sustained strong participation in national funding schemes and industry partnerships, contributing to increased External Research Income and performance against performance-based research funding (PBRF) aligned measures in 2025. This growth reflects strengthened capability across faculties and improved alignment between research activity, institutional priorities and emerging opportunities.

Research capability was further supported by initiatives delivered through Te Mātāpuna Library and Learning Services, including professional development on ethical and effective use of AI in research, enhancements to research discoverability tools and strengthened engagement with researchers during Research Week. These initiatives supported higher quality research outputs and more consistent adoption of contemporary research practices.

The Graduate Research School (GRS) reported continued momentum in research degree enrolments, admissions and completions. Doctoral applications reached record levels in 2025, with admissions rising significantly over the past three years and continuing strongly into early 2026. Growth was also reflected in doctoral EFTS and increased participation by Māori and Pacific candidates. GRS expanded researcher capability programmes, updated AI ethics guidance and strengthened supervisory support, contributing to enhanced research quality and progression.

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SECTION 4. TE KETE | PARTNERSHIPS THAT ACCELERATE IMPACT

University highlights, activities and updates on our partnerships and engagements as outlined in Te Kete.

4.1   Government & Civic Engagement

AUT deepened its government and civic engagement throughout 2025, with activity led by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, supported by senior leaders and academic experts across the University. A significant focus was AUT's contribution to the Government's university and science system reviews, including ongoing engagement with the University Strategy Group responsible for shaping the new Tertiary Education Strategy. AUT advocated for the centrality of equity within these reforms and continued to support policy settings that uphold access and participation for all learners.

Government announced the replacement of the Performance Based Research Fund with the new Tertiary Research Excellence Fund, and AUT remained engaged in early policy work informing these changes. AUT also contributed to initial discussions on the review of university quality assurance and governance, led by the Minister of Universities, with further work expected to progress through 2026. Engagement with Ministers and Members of Parliament continued at pace across the year. AUT hosted visits from multiple Ministers, including the Minister for Tourism, Minister for Education, Minister for Health, Minister for Universities and Minister for Mental Health, as well as cross-party representatives. These engagements provided opportunities to showcase AUT's strengths in workforce development, applied research and community impact, and to inform wider policy discussions relating to tertiary education, economic development, and workforce capability.

AUT strengthened its civic partnerships by contributing to work on the Learning Quarter precinct plan in collaboration with Auckland Council, Auckland Transport and the University of Auckland. The University also supported regional development conversations through events such as the *Auckland at 15* forum, hosted with the Committee for Auckland and the Helen Clark Foundation.

International diplomacy and government relations were further advanced through engagement with foreign delegations and attendance at key offshore engagements. Highlights included participation in the Prime Minister's trade delegation to Vietnam and hosting delegations from Australia, the United Kingdom and the Pacific. These activities reinforced AUT's global partnerships and supported the University's international strategy.

4.2   University-Industry Collaboration

AUT strengthened its industry partnerships in 2025 through activity led by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, supported by the Employability and Careers team and faculties across the University. Engagements reflected AUT's commitment to partnerships that enhance student opportunity, deepen applied research and contribute to regional development.

AUT collaborated with Auckland FC and the Trans-Tasman Business Circle to celebrate the achievements of Auckland FC, hosting events that connected civic leaders, business partners and alumni with the University community. These engagements highlighted AUT's

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contribution to the region's sporting and civic ecosystem and reinforced the University's role in supporting leadership in emerging industries.

A new partnership with the King's Trust advanced opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation, reflecting AUT's commitment to applied learning and student-led enterprise. This collaboration supports emerging leaders to engage in programmes that explore social impact, enterprise skills and innovation pathways. Industry engagement was also supported through events such as the GEN NZ Unconference, opened by the Mayor of Auckland and hosted at AUT. This gathering brought together entrepreneurs, innovators and civic representatives and strengthened AUT's role as a convenor of sector wide conversations on economic and social development.

These partnerships contributed to expanding opportunities for learners, strengthening AUT's external relationships and advancing the University's position as a key collaborator in industry and community innovation.

4.3   International

AUT strengthened its global engagement and international reputation in 2025 through activity led by the International Office and supported by AUT senior leaders and faculty partners. The University expanded its international partnership network across key regions including China, India, the Philippines, Vietnam, Chile, Singapore, the United States, France, Sweden and Germany, with twelve new partnership agreements signed during the year. Additional partnership development continued across South and Southeast Asia, including India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand.

Growth in international full fee enrolments was a significant feature of 2025, with strong recruitment performance across South Asia, North Asia and Southeast Asia. Close collaboration between onshore and offshore recruitment teams supported this growth, alongside increased alignment with AUT's strategic priorities and enhanced cross-division coordination. Early 2026 activity remains focused on expanding postgraduate enrolments in new and emerging markets and strengthening the undergraduate pathway through enhancements to the AUT Foundation Programme with UP Education, as well as building the international secondary school leaver pipeline.

The International Office continued to support whole-of-university initiatives that strengthened the international student experience and AUT's global position. Key areas of focus included streamlining admissions processes, improving conversion from application to enrolment, contributing to institutional ranking activity and advancing AUT's international brand under the Knowledge that Works positioning.

Diplomatic and global engagement was further advanced through visits from international delegations and participation in offshore government-led events. These engagements provided opportunities to progress academic collaboration, strengthen government relationships and enhance AUT's visibility in international markets.

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SECTION 5. TE KETE | OUR OFFER AND APPROACH

University highlights and updates on activities related to our positioning in the market as a university of technology and opportunity

5.1   Technology-Driven Innovation in Learning and Engagement

Throughout 2025, ICT Services continued to progress key AI and automation initiatives that enhance the University's capability to deliver efficient and modern digital services. Draft guidelines for developing and testing generative AI powered agents were advanced by the AI Acceleration Centre, reflecting emerging institutional expectations for responsible design and use of AI driven tools. ICT also progressed development of AI agents that support core University processes, including enrolment enquiry and research ethics support, with pilot activity underway across selected faculties and professional units.

Work also progressed on evaluating Microsoft Fabric as a potential future data warehouse platform, including gap analysis and assessment of data quality requirements. Initial outcomes informed recommendations for next steps and provided clearer direction for the University's longer term data strategy.

ICT continued to support innovation through the integration of GitHub Copilot into development workflows, helping identify opportunities to strengthen coding efficiency and accelerate delivery of digital solutions. Trial activity continued into early 2026 and is informing future decisions on wider adoption.

GenAI literacy development remained a priority. AUT's GenAI training modules for staff continued to be delivered across faculties, with updated content under development in collaboration with People and Culture to ensure ongoing relevance and alignment with emerging capability needs. In parallel, ICT advanced offline AI transcription solutions that support secure research data management and meet requirements for information security and Māori data sovereignty.

SSA also progressed innovation that strengthens the student and applicant experience. The adoption of Drift Bionic Chat provided prospective students with a more responsive, AI supported enquiry channel. Additional work continued to improve access to specialist software through the *AnytimeAnywhere* initiative and to integrate automated system testing for the Canvas learning management platform, supporting improved reliability and a more seamless learning experience.

5.2   Domestic Brand Position and Marketing Activities

AUT strengthened its domestic brand presence in 2025 through coordinated work led by Brand and Marketing Services (BMS). A major milestone was the launch of Knowledge that Works, AUT's refreshed brand identity designed to reflect the University's commitment to practical learning, impact and the values of Te Kete. BMS executed an institution wide rollout of the new brand across digital, print and on campus channels, demonstrating strong capability in delivering complex, large scale brand transformations. Early results from brand tracking showed significant gains, with AUT rising to first in brand awareness across Auckland

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and the Upper North Island and achieving marked increases in unprompted awareness, consideration and preference.

BMS also completed website benchmarking across New Zealand and Australian universities to inform improvements to AUT's prospective student experience. AUT ranked first in New Zealand and sixth among nineteen Australian universities assessed, with the findings shaping a development roadmap focused on clearer course search, streamlined navigation, improved homepage and course page design and more accessible information on fees, study planning and next steps.

Domestic campaign activity continued to perform strongly despite reduced spend during the brand refresh period. Always on undergraduate and postgraduate activity delivered year-on-year increases in high intent engagement, lead quality and channel performance. Campaigns generated strong growth in form submissions and applications, supported by substantial increases in video engagement, including a notable uplift in TikTok remarketing performance.

Communications activity played a key role in supporting AUT's brand and reputation throughout 2025. In response to a shifting media environment, BMS advanced new platforms such as the Research Matters video series, the *Hey, Did You Know?* podcast and AUTnews social channels. These platforms expanded AUT's reach and provided new opportunities for academic experts to engage with audiences. Work also continued to strengthen corporate communications, including support for sponsorship activation, proactive media engagement, issues management and OIA responses.

BMS also advanced employer brand work in collaboration with People and Culture, developing Employee Value Proposition manifestos for academic and professional staff. These were informed by staff research and contributed to refreshed employer brand assets and a strengthened careers website. Data capability was further enhanced through the implementation of an enterprise level Power BI reporting framework, improving access to real time insights and supporting more evidence-based planning and forecasting.

Planning for the school leaver pipeline advanced with development of the 2026 to 2031 Right Growth School Leaver Recruitment Plan, aligning outreach and transition initiatives with high growth regions and underrepresented cohorts in accordance with Te Kete.

5.3   **Global Brand Position and Marketing Activities**

The University strengthened its global brand presence in 2025 through activity led by Brand and Marketing Services (BMS), with work focused on enhancing AUT's positioning in key international markets and supporting long-term recruitment goals. BMS advanced a refresh of AUT's international positioning informed by sector research, the Knowledge that Works brand platform and Te Kete, with new messaging and tools designed to better support agents, counsellors, parents and prospective students in selecting AUT.

To support international enrolment growth, BMS collaborated closely with the International Office to progress planning for a two-year global marketing and recruitment strategy, scheduled to begin from mid-2026. This work will guide targeting, channel investment and campaign development and is designed to contribute to AUT's long-term recruitment objective of 6,005 international students by 2035.

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International campaign activity continued to evolve as BMS refined digital channels and prepared for expanded global engagement. This included work to introduce WhatsApp as a new enquiry channel for international audiences in 2026 to support real-time, two-way communication, particularly in key markets such as India and Indonesia. BMS also progressed enhancements to the future student digital ecosystem, including the development of a revitalised high school student landing page and a Career Advisors and Agent portal, both scheduled for delivery in 2026.

These developments supported stronger alignment between AUT's global brand, its international recruitment strategy and the broader objectives of Te Kete.

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SECTION 6. TE KETE | OUR PLACE, OUR PEOPLE AND OUR CULTURE
Highlights and updates on activities related to the University's operations.

6.1   Sustainability

AUT progressed its sustainability objectives across 2025 through the completion of key decarbonisation projects and ongoing work to strengthen responsible campus operations. The University advanced its transition away from fossil fuel reliance through upgrades in AG and AH buildings and continued efficiency improvements across the wider estate, including WM, WQ, WF and AL. Work also continued to optimise building performance through the use of smart systems and fine-tuning programmes, including the integration of AI supported tools to improve operational efficiency.

Engagement initiatives across 2025 contributed to stronger sustainability awareness among staff and students. Nine Green Impact teams completed 455 actions, more than double the previous year's activity, reflecting strong engagement in behavioural change and collective action. The University also delivered native tree planting activities and sustainable travel events at North and South campuses. Green Labs certification processes began for selected AUT laboratories to support more environmentally sustainable research practices.

Development of AUT's Regeneration Action and Sustainability Plan progressed during 2025, with objectives, KPIs and priority activities established for 2026. Early work in 2026 will focus on implementing this plan and continuing the transition to low carbon operations, increasing active transport facilities and integrating sustainability improvements into future refurbishments.

6.2   Library and Learning Support

Te Mātāpuna, AUT's Library and Learning Services, continued to enhance research and learning support throughout 2025, with a strong focus on strengthening capability, modernising systems and providing more accessible support for staff and students.

A major area of progress was Te Mātāpuna's leadership in sector wide negotiations through the Council of Australasian University Librarians, which resulted in in-principle licensing agreements with four major global publishers, including Elsevier. These agreements represent a significant shift toward fairer and more sustainable open access publishing arrangements across Aotearoa and Australia, creating more opportunities for AUT researchers to publish openly at reduced cost. AUT will continue contributing to this work in 2026 through membership on CAUL's Open Access Negotiation Strategy Committee.

Work also advanced to redesign library engagement and frontline support. The new model, implemented in phases from January 2026, strengthens student centred support through more proactive outreach, culturally responsive practice and increased visibility across campuses. This redesign is informed by strong customer service foundations and aims to ensure students can access just-in-time support both within and beyond physical library spaces.

Te Mātāpuna also continued to support AUT's research environment through capability building, with ongoing workshops on ethical use of AI, data management and researcher

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visibility. The library's continued involvement in Te Wiki Rangahau and close partnership with the Graduate Research School helped ensure cohesive support for postgraduate and staff researchers.

In early 2026, Te Mātāpuna marked the departure of the Director, Collections and Engagement after 27 years of service. Recruitment is underway for a new leadership role focused on further strengthening AUT's digital collections and library infrastructure. Te Mātāpuna also continued to advance technology enabled learning support. Cogniti AI, now in its third year of use in Learning and Academic Engagement, supported more than 3,000 students across embedded learning contexts. AI agents designed for tasks such as APA referencing and source evaluation continued to receive positive feedback from academic staff and students

6.3   Leadership and Development

AUT continued to strengthen leadership capability throughout 2025 with strong participation in development programmes, expanded opportunities for reflective practice and ongoing investment in culturally grounded leadership learning. The Intentional Leadership, Ethnic Women in Leadership and Conversations That Matter programmes all concluded during the year, with positive feedback and strong completion across participating cohorts.

The Ethnic Women in Leadership programme completed its first full delivery cycle, supporting participants to explore how lived experience shapes leadership identity and aspirations. A graduation event celebrated the achievements of the cohort and reinforced AUT's commitment to growing diverse leadership across the University.

Development of the People Leader Essentials programme progressed, with the first module launched and further modules scheduled. Work also continued on creating a central Leadership Hub on TUIA to strengthen access to leadership resources and guidance, with planning underway to address integration opportunities across related platforms.

Engagement with Aronui Ora continued to grow across the University. Since its launch in 2023, more than 270 people leaders have engaged with the programme, including 93 who completed its three core modules and 54 who completed the full programme. A graduation held in 2025 brought together participants from across the University and acknowledged their contribution to strengthening AUT leadership grounded in values of pono, tika and aroha.

6.4   Culture and People

AUT continued to embed *Thriving People, Thriving Future*, the University's People Plan 2025 to 2030, with activity in 2025 focused on strengthening culture, wellbeing, conduct and inclusive practice. Progress included staff sessions, internal communications and planning work to identify priority initiatives for the 2026 business cycle. A KPI framework is under development to support monitoring of progress across the People Plan's twelve objectives.

Work to strengthen workplace culture advanced through the finalisation of AUT's updated Code of Conduct, following staff wide consultation and engagement with unions. An eLearning module will support rollout once the Code is formally endorsed. AUT also progressed

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development of a university wide Wellbeing Plan, informed by an employee wellbeing survey that achieved a 52 percent response rate, exceeding typical benchmarks for organisations of similar size. Early design work was supported by external organisational psychology expertise to ensure an evidence-based approach.

AUT also maintained momentum in building an inclusive staff experience. Engagement with the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower initiative continued to increase, with strong staff participation across frontline and student facing teams. Updates to the Reasonable Accommodation Guidelines, co designed with key stakeholders including the Access Inclusion Network, introduced clearer procedures and a new funding model to support consistent implementation across the University. These revised guidelines are scheduled for rollout in early 2026.

The University also delivered the second Navigate Professional Staff Conference, which brought together professional staff from across AUT. The conference theme, The Long Game, focused on wellbeing and career sustainability and received highly positive feedback for its relevance, organisation and impact. Staff stories, keynote speakers and interactive sessions contributed to a strong sense of connection and recognition for professional staff. Work also progressed on AUT's Values Visual Identity project to support a more visible and consistent expression of the University's values. Co design activity informed initial creative concepts and planning continued to integrate refreshed values language and design into physical and digital environments.

6.5 Spaces and Places

AUT continued to progress major capital works, asset renewals and space planning initiatives throughout 2025, supporting the development of high quality, safe and future-focused environments for learning, research and student life.

Facilities Services maintained steady performance over the period, responding to 1,694 work orders and coordinating more than 5,000 item deliveries. No material concerns were reported relating to compliance, health and safety or service performance.

A significant body of work took place over the 2025-26 summer period to deliver disruptive asset renewal projects across the three campuses. Key capital works reached important milestones, including completion of the AR demolition and the Wellness Centre in WQ4, which will open for Semester 1 2026. Construction progressed on the BEL relocation from WY to WF, north campus relocations associated with the AX building exit, and early design work on the WD refurbishment and North Campus Library redevelopment. Additional projects advancing during the period included WO cladding, north campus carpark mound removal, WW demolition planning and preparation for works on the Clinical Science Simulation Suite.

Beyond major capital projects, approximately 80 other Estates projects progressed across various stages of design and delivery, supporting improvements to safety, asset quality and future-focused campus development.

Timetabling and space planning activity also progressed under the Estates Policy Planning and Performance team, which completed its first full year of operation. Key achievements included enhancements to the Integrated Workplace Management System, improved contractor

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certification processes, strengthened data-driven planning capability, and contributions to the ongoing development of the TimeEdit timetabling system. AUT is recognised internationally by TimeEdit as a key co-design partner.

Commercial Services experienced strong underlying performance in 2025, with revenue growth across Events, Retail Outlets and Business Services. Internal room hire revenue increased significantly year-on-year and AUT hosted a larger calendar of events, including graduation, major conferences and community activations. Planning for 2026 includes transitioning to a more user-friendly event management system, integrating a new audio-visual contractor and progressing plans for the refurbishment of the City Campus Food Court.

Work also continued on property and lease management, with exit deals confirmed for AX and WR buildings, commencement of a NEMA licence for storage at MH, and renewal of key commercial agreements such as the MOJO café lease. Loss of parking capacity on the City Campus will be managed through increased utilisation of Akoranga parking, supported by planning for future demand.

6.6   Enterprise and Service

Enterprise activities across AUT continued to support a vibrant campus experience and strengthen the University's service offering for students, staff and external partners in 2025. Commercial events grew in scale and scope, with 666 events delivered and more than 63,000 guests hosted during the year. This included major University occasions such as graduation, alongside conferences and sector events that brought external organisations onto AUT campuses. Retail outlets also experienced strong growth in customer volumes compared with 2024, reflecting increased campus activity and improved service offerings.

Financial performance across Commercial Services improved, with strong revenue uplift in internal room hire and steady performance in sponsored events and catering. This strengthened AUT's ability to reinvest in facilities and services that support the wider student and staff experience. Planning for 2026 includes the introduction of a more user-friendly events management system, further integration of new audio-visual services and the next phase of refurbishment for key hospitality and shared spaces.

Student accommodation remained an important part of AUT's service environment. Occupancy levels at Te Āhuru Mayoral Drive Student Apartments and Akoranga Student Village remained high across both semesters, supported by a focus on pastoral care, resident wellbeing and continuous improvement in facilities. A review of pastoral care and Residential Assistant recruitment and training was completed in late 2025 to strengthen role clarity, professional boundaries and support structures ahead of the 2026 intake. Accessibility improvements, including automated doors at Akoranga and enhanced wayfinding, were also delivered. Strategic planning work progressed to align accommodation provision with AUT's Academic and Capital Plan (ACP), including future options to support growth in international student numbers. Feedback mechanisms continued to inform service improvement. The University's central feedback channel recorded 195 submissions in 2025, providing insights into student experience across services and facilities and supporting targeted follow up and resolution activity.

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PART A	6
OPEN AGENDA ITEM	

Council Agenda Paper

Subject: **Chancellor's Report**

Date: **23 February 2026**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE CHANCELLOR'S VERBAL REPORT

AGENDA ITEM	**8.1**

Council Agenda Paper

Subject: **Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report: 1 November 2025 – 9 February 2026**

Date: **9 February 2026**

From: **Stephen Davies, Assistant Vice Chancellor People and Culture**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the current state of Health, Safety and Wellbeing at AUT and support Council's responsibilities for governance and oversight aligned with their duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

This report covers incidents reported in the period 1 November 2025 to 9 February 2026, with information and actions that have occurred or been reported over that period.

2. HSW Open Action Item

Action Item:
There are no action items being addressed under this report, the following will be brought to the full April council meeting:

24 November 2025	**5.2 Risk Report** Management to present a deep dive of the HSW risk, including review of ratings, at the next CFAC meeting.	April 2026/Open	AVC People & Culture

3. Governance Knowledge and Awareness

Key developments in legislation, regulation, or guidance

3.1   Research Lab Health and Safety reforms under the Health & Safety at Work (HSWA) Act

The Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety has confirmed the first tranche of HSWA reforms, designed to restore a fit-for-purpose regulatory approach for research laboratories. When labs were brought under the economy-wide framework in 2017, the promised tailored model did not eventuate, resulting in laboratories being treated as though they operated like large industrial sites. This mismatch created ongoing compliance difficulties and forced labs to develop intricate workarounds to meet requirements.

1. Stronger focus on critical risk
Businesses will only be required to manage critical risks, those with the potential for death, serious injury, or serious illness and must maintain basic facilities such as first aid kits and emergency plans. While universities are not classified as small businesses, lower-risk service areas should see reduced compliance expectations, which is our expectation for AUT Laboratories.

2. Clearer governance vs operational responsibilities
The reforms clarify the distinction between strategic oversight by directors/officers and day-to-day management by operational leaders, reducing over-compliance and concerns about directors' liability. This provides greater certainty for Council in its due-diligence role.

3. Changes to Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs)
Industries can now develop their own ACOPs, subject to ministerial approval. Once approved, compliance with an ACOP is deemed compliance with HSWA. This may create opportunities for universities to influence standards relevant to laboratories, fieldwork, and campus activities.

4. Reduction in over-compliance and regulatory burden
Notification requirements to WorkSafe will be limited to significant workplace incidents, and clearer boundaries between HSWA and overlapping regulatory systems will be established to reduce unnecessary compliance. This signals a more proportionate regulatory approach.

5. Landowner liability changes
Landowners will no longer be responsible under HSWA for injuries to recreational users on their land; responsibility shifts to the organisation running the activity. This has implications for university sports fields, recreational spaces, and public-access areas.

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4. Te Ara Haumaru Programme

The Safety Pathway programme continues to focus on delivering the 274 recommendations within scope. During the latest reporting period, key progress has been made across several workstreams:

- **Building Maintenance Remedial Workstream**: Considerable work has been undertaken over the past few months to remediate areas identified under the Lab Operational Review. All critical and high risks items have been addressed, with significant progress being made on the remaining items in preparation for semester 1 commencing.

   Additional work, in conjunction with Estates, around remediation of Hazardous Chemical Storage, Bio Waste Management and in lab safety controls is close to completion.

- **Safe Workplace, Safe Worker Workstream**: Work to remediate identified health risk has commenced, with improvements to hood designs, air flow and extraction, and bench set up underway.

  Streamlined laboratory and technical induction checklists have been digitised and ready for use from semester 1 and are supported by new module based technical training in Canvas.

As outlined in the table below:

- **128 items (47%)** have been completed, an increase of 22% from the previously reported **68 items (25%).**

- **124 items** are currently in progress, with approximately **75%** of that work already advanced.

- When semester 1 commences with the new induction and training framework, the programme should be over **70% complete**.

In the previous reporting period, 2 recommendations were identified as not yet started. The status of this remains unchanged:

1. **Biological Safety Officer Training**: Formal training for this role is currently unavailable within New Zealand's education sector. The programme will explore Australian-based training options in 2026.

2. **Legislative and Standards Awareness for Laboratory Managers and Technicians**: To address this, the central Health & Safety team will introduce a bi-monthly newsletter from early 2026, highlighting relevant legislative updates and industry changes. We expect to publish the first newsletter in early March.

These developments reflect measured progress and a proactive approach to resolving outstanding items, with continued alignment to strategic health and safety objectives.

Workstreams	Total Rec's	% of Rec's	Not Started	In Progress	Complete	Not Required	% Complete
Regulatory Compliance	130	47%	2	50	70	8	54%
Safe Workplace, Safe Worker	19	7%	0	12	7	0	37%
Risk Prevention & Control	52	19%	0	22	23	0	44%
Digital Solutions	19	7%	0	13	5	0	26%
Building Maintenance Remedial Work	37	14%	0	20	14	0	38%
Organisational Management	8	3%	0	3	4	0	50%
Strategic AUT wide Initiative/Future Strategic Planning	9	3%	0	4	5	0	56%
Totals	274		2	124	68	8	47%

5. Understanding AUT's Operations and Risk Landscape

Critical risk themes and trends

Between **1 November 2025 and 9 February 2026**, a total of **36 health and safety incidents** were recorded across AUT. This represents a **decrease of 7 incidents** compared with the **43 incidents** logged

during the preceding reporting period. This decrease reflects reduced student and staff numbers across all campuses during the out of semester period and the 3-week AUT closedown over the holiday period.

Incidents by Faculty/Directorate

Faculty / Directorate	Current Period	Previous Period	Change	% Change
Health & Environmental Sciences	22	25	−3	−12%
Estates	1	4	−3	−75%
Design & Creative Technology	2	3	-1	-33%
Culture & Society	1	2	-1	-50%
ICT	0	2	-2	-100
People & Culture	1	1	0	0%
Student Services & Administration	7	1	+6	+600%
Te Mātāpuna (Library & Learning Services)	1	1	0	0%
Business, Economics & Law	1	0	+1	+100%

Key insights

- Primary event types: Most events were injury-related (e.g. slips, falls, sports injuries, minor strains), followed by health-related events (fainting, illness during classes or clinical placements), with a small number of near misses (e.g. sharps hazards, equipment or building-related issues).
- Common locations: Events most frequently occurred in teaching and learning spaces (classrooms, laboratories, workshops), clinical placement environments, and sports or recreational areas, with several incidents also reported in stairwells and general circulation areas where slips and falls were a recurring theme.

Open Incidents

Overview

There are currently 42 incidents open, down from 115 under the previous period. 16 are older than 28 days. Education for people leaders around investigating and closing Noggin incidents continues.

Open Incidents by Faculty/Directorate

Faculty / Directorate	Open Incidents
Health & Environmental Sciences	34
Student Services and Administration	1
Design & Creative Technology	2
Estates	3
Te Mātāpuna (Library and Learning Services)	1
DVC Research	1

6. Risk Management Capability

HSW Assurance Programme

There are three current audits that HSW has responsibility or oversight for:

- Hazardous Substances Roles & Responsibilities (Internal Audit) – Completed with agreed action items for remediation.
- Hospitality Audit (Internal Audit) – Commenced.
- Transport Safety (HSW) – scope definition and vendor selection has commenced. This audit should commence in March 2026.

Independent Review

The HSW Executive Subgroup initiated an independent review in late 2025 to review a paper provided to the School of Science from the former Director HSW, and their responses. This external review is now complete. The HSW ELT subgroup is working through the recommendations and next steps. An update will be provided in the next council meeting.

Essential HSW All-Staff Training

The all-staff Essential Health & Safety e-learning is in final review and is due to be launched by the end of February. A communication plan to launch and follow up is being agreed between Organisational Development, Communications and HSW.

MPI Audit

The most recent MPI audit of AUT's Physical Containment (PC) laboratories was conducted in early February. While the facilities passed inspection and core laboratory practices were assessed as compliant, the audit identified several gaps in our supporting system, specifically in record-keeping documentation, approval processes, training, and communication with MPI.

Although MPI has not imposed any restrictions on current PC laboratory operations, the areas of concern require prompt and thorough remediation. MPI has granted AUT a one-month period to address the critical issues identified. In addition, MPI has shortened our audit cycle to a three-monthly frequency, reversing our recent progress toward a longer audit interval.

The School of Science, supported by FHES, Health, Safety & Wellbeing (HSW), and members of the Executive Team, is now implementing a focused corrective action plan. This plan includes clear ownership, defined timeframes, and immediate actions to restore compliance. A longer-term programme of work is also being developed to ensure AUT maintains its MPI approvals and is positioned to return to an extended audit cycle over time.

7. Forward Outlook

Priorities and planned initiatives to April 2026

- Implementation of Chemical Inventory Management software (Chemwatch). Training has commenced.
- Implementation of Laboratory Audit & Asset Management software (Safety Culture). In procurement.
- Roll out of AUT's Health & Safety Framework for Executive responsibilities and Risk Management.
- Continued work under the Te Ara Haumaru programme to address H&S recommendations

- Renewed focus on the Strategic Initiatives in Te Ara Haumaru to address the structural contributors to non-compliance
- Recruitment of a permanent HSW Director, and additional HSW team positions has commenced to increase capacity and capability with the central HSW function.

8. Conclusion

The Te Ara Haumaru programme remains focused on delivering its full scope of work, with completion scheduled for early April 2026. As the tactical delivery phase with the Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies and the School of Science concludes, programme activity will transition to the central Health & Safety team. This will ensure ongoing embedding of the improvements made to date and enable extension of this work across the wider University through HSW specialist portfolio engagement.

Sustained cultural change in Health & Safety will require time and continued commitment from the Executive, people leaders, staff, and students. The initiatives implemented through the programme, together with AUT's streamlined Health & Safety Framework, will provide a strong foundation to support this long-term shift.

9. Appendix 1 – Te Ara Haumaru high level timeframes & progress

Note 1: Inventory Management implementation late due to vendor availability. Training has commenced and will be live within February.

Note 2: The Organisational Management workstream is delayed due to HSW team changes, including the departure of the Director and Specialist who drafted the paper. This work will be prioritised in the new year with a H&S consultancy.

AGENDA ITEM	8.2
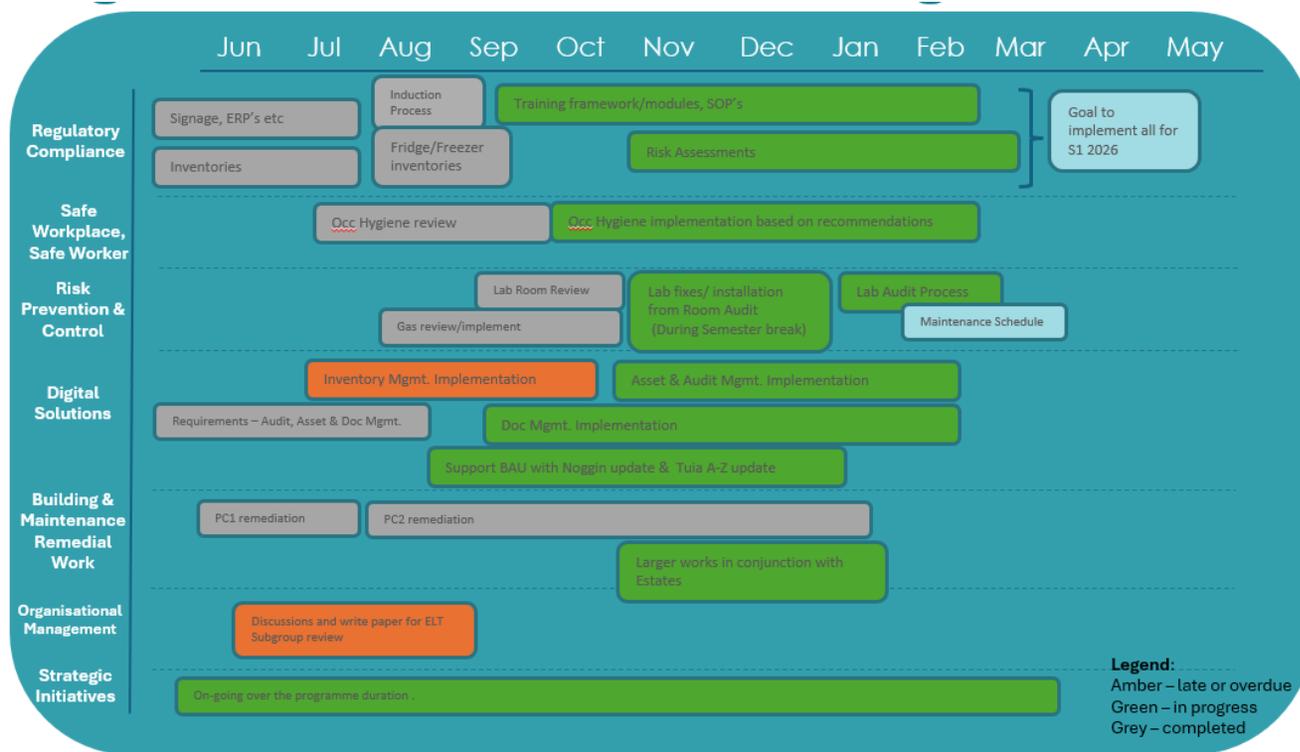
Council Agenda Paper

Purpose:	**For Discussion/Approval/Information**
Subject:	***AUT Health, Safety & Wellbeing Framework as the model for university-wide health, safety and wellbeing practice***
Meeting Date:	**23 February 2026**
Member:	**Stephen Davies, Assistant Vice Chancellor People and Culture**

Recommendation(s): Approval is sought from AUT Council for the AUT Health, Safety & Wellbeing Framework which has been endorsed by the University leadership.

The Council is requested to:

1. Confirm adoption of the AUT Health, Safety & Wellbeing Framework as the agreed university-wide approach for managing health, safety and wellbeing.

2. Agree to a staged implementation of the Framework, informed by ICT capability, organisational capacity, and faculty-level readiness.

3. Agree to ongoing governance oversight, including receipt of a quarterly performance dashboard to provide assurance on implementation progress, effectiveness, and risk trends.

Executive Summary

The AUT Health, Safety & Wellbeing (HSW) Framework provides a clear, integrated, and university-wide model for managing health, safety, and wellbeing across all AUT activities, environments, and organisational levels.

The Framework responds to the complexity of AUT's operating environment — including teaching, research, laboratories, workshops, fieldwork, construction, events, and support services — while

remaining **clear, accessible, proportionate, and practical**. It is not a software system and does not introduce additional layers of compliance. Instead, it brings together existing and redesigned components into a single, coherent framework that clarifies expectations, accountability, risk management, and assurance.

The Framework comprises nine interconnected components that collectively define how AUT sets expectations, assigns responsibility, manages risk, meets its legal obligations, verifies control effectiveness, and provides governance oversight. Together, these components strengthen AUT's ability to meet its duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA), support effective officer due diligence, and provide Council and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) with reliable visibility of risk and performance.

Key features of the Framework include:

- Clear, shared expectations for safe, healthy, and psychosocially safe behaviours across AUT.

- Explicit role-based responsibility statements aligned to AUT governance and leadership structures.

- A consistent and proportionate risk management approach, including critical risk standards.

- An evidence-based catalogue of legislative obligations and controls.

- An "Assurance First" model that verifies control effectiveness rather than relying on documentation alone.

- Practical guidance and tools to support local implementation.

- A governance dashboard that enables transparent oversight and informed decision-making.

Background

AUT operates in a diverse and high-complexity environment, encompassing academic teaching, research, laboratories, workshops, field activities, construction projects, events, and extensive support services across multiple campuses and faculties. This diversity presents a wide range of health, safety, and wellbeing risks that must be managed in a consistent, transparent, and proportionate manner.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, AUT, as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU), has a primary duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of staff, students, contractors, and others affected by its activities. Council members and the Vice-Chancellor, as Officers of the PCBU, are required to exercise due diligence to ensure that effective systems are in place and operating as intended.

Historically, health and safety arrangements across AUT have relied on a combination of policies, procedures, tools, and local practices that were not always clearly connected or consistently understood. This created variability in implementation, limited visibility of control effectiveness, and placed a heavy emphasis on documentation rather than assurance.

The redesigned AUT Health, Safety & Wellbeing Framework has been developed to address these challenges. It brings together policy, expectations, responsibilities, protocols, risk management,

assurance, guidance, and governance into a single, integrated framework that is easy to understand and apply across the university.

The Framework is deliberately designed to:

- Be accessible to staff, students, leaders, and Council.

- Reflect AUT's actual risk profile and operating context.

- Support informed leadership and governance decision-making.

- Enable consistent implementation across faculties and directorates.

- Provide credible evidence of compliance and due diligence.

- Support continuous learning and improvement.

This paper presents the Framework, explains each of its nine components, and demonstrates how they operate together as a cohesive, university-wide approach to health, safety, and wellbeing management at AUT.

1. Overview of the AUT HSW Framework

The Framework comprises nine interconnected components, each serving a distinct purpose.

Together, they provide clarity, responsibility, accountability, and visibility for leaders at all levels.

Component 1 – AUT HSW Policy – (Appendix One)

The policy sets out AUT's commitment to providing a safe, healthy, and psychosocially safe and supportive environment.

It outlines:

- Leadership expectations

- Staff responsibilities

- AUT's commitment to risk management, assurance, and continuous improvement

This forms the foundation of the HSW Framework.

**The policy content is ready for approval, the template and official approval through the AUT Policy process will occur once Council approve the content.

Component 2 – "The Way We Work Safely at AUT" (Shared Expectations) - (Appendix Two)

This is a clear, inclusive statement of the behaviours and expectations all staff, students, and contractors are required to follow when working at AUT. It is not a list of technical rules.

It describes how we work safely, such as:

- We stop and speak up if something feels unsafe

- We look out for each other

- We follow agreed controls and seek clarity when unsure

- We openly report hazards and incidents

- We learn from events, not blame

This creates clarity and cultural alignment across AUT.

Component 3 – HSW Responsibility & Accountability Role Statements - (Appendix Three & Four)

To remove ambiguity about who is responsible for what, AUT will have HSW Responsibility and Accountability Role Statements aligned to the AUT organisational structure and to governance groups (Council, VC, ELT).

Each describes:

- Core responsibilities

- What good practice looks like

- How the role contributes to safe outcomes

- Four universal performance and accountability measures

This ensures every person at AUT knows their role in managing safety and wellbeing.

Component 4 – Core HSW Protocols

Protocols describe how AUT manages key HSW functions.

Examples include:

- Risk Management

- Incident & Learning Reviews

- Assurance & Monitoring (L1–L3)

- Wellbeing & Psychosocial Risk Management

- Obligations & Legislative Compliance

These protocols form the operating system of the HSW Framework and apply across all faculties and directorates.

Component 5 – Risk Management Framework

AUT's approach to risk is based on clarity, consistency, and proportionality and includes:

- A standard risk assessment methodology and matrix

- Digital risk assessment workflow (local ownership, HSW oversight)

- Faculty/Directorate and AUT-wide critical Risk Registers

- Critical Risk Standards (one-page clear requirements for laboratory risks, hazardous substances, working at heights, hot works, psychosocial safety, etc.)

This ensures AUT has a single, consistent approach to understanding and managing its highest-consequence risks.

Component 6 – HSW Catalogue of Controls & Obligations

This is an evidence-based library of AUT's responsibilities under:

- HSWA (Health and Safety at Work Act 2015)

- All relevant HSW regulations (GRWM, Hazardous Substances, Asbestos, Pressure Systems, etc.)

- Supporting legislation (ACC, Fire & Emergency, HSNO, Biosecurity, Electricity/Gas Safety, etc.)

Instead of broad statements, obligations are broken into atomic, actionable control requirements.

This gives AUT a very clear view of:

- What duties we must meet

- Who is responsible

- What evidence is required

- How compliance is verified

This is a major enabler of due diligence for ELT and Council.

Component 7 – Assurance First Framework (L1–L3)

Assurance First shifts AUT from a document-heavy environment to a control-effectiveness environment.

It includes:

- L1: Staff self-checks at the point of work

- L2: Manager verification of controls, training, and documentation

- L3: Independent assurance by the HSW Team (or external specialists)

Assurance results feed into corrective actions and create the evidence required for due diligence.

Component 8 – Guidance Materials & Tools

This library contains practical resources that support the Framework but are not core protocols, such as:

- Checklists

- Templates

- Safe operating guidance

- Local faculty procedures

- Toolbox talks

- QR-coded visual standards

These materials help people understand and implement safe practices in their specific context.

Component 9 – Council Governance and Executive Metrics Dashboard

To support effective governance and leadership, the Framework includes a live performance dashboard that provides:

- Risk status for AUT's critical risks

- Assurance completion rates

- Overdue actions

- Compliance status for legislative obligations

- Incident trends and emerging themes

Council receives a quarterly summary, supporting their HSWA due-diligence obligations.

Executive receives a more detailed operational dashboard to support leadership decision-making.

2. How the Nine Components Work Together

These components form an integrated framework that:

- Defines expectations (Policy + Way We Work)

- Clarifies who is accountable (Responsibility & Accountability Statements)

- Establishes how AUT manages key HSW functions (Protocols)

- Controls risk through a consistent system (Risk Management Framework)

- Ensures legal compliance is understood and evidenced (Catalogue of Controls)

- Verifies controls through Assurance First (L1–L3)

- Provides practical tools and guidance for everyday work

- Enables transparent governance and oversight (Dashboard)

Together, they create a proportionate, modern, and sustainable AUT HSW Framework suitable for a tertiary education environment.

DRAFT Appendix 1: Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy

Document Code: HSW-POL-001   **Version**: 1.0

Effective Date: [Insert Date]   **Review Due**: [Insert Date]

Approved by: Director, Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Our Commitment

Auckland University of Technology (AUT) is committed to providing a healthy, safe, and supportive environment for all staff, students, contractors, and visitors. We believe that excellence in health, safety, and wellbeing (HSW) is essential to achieving our purpose — advancing knowledge and transforming lives through education, research, and innovation.

Our approach is grounded in care, participation, and shared accountability. Everyone at AUT contributes to creating an environment where people can work, learn, and thrive safely.

Our Approach

AUT manages health, safety, and wellbeing through a Proactive HSW System that ensures:

- Visible leadership and accountability at every level.
- Clear and practical expectations that are easy to follow and apply.
- Staff participation and consultation on all HSW matters.
- Systematic identification and management of risks that could cause harm.
- Support for wellbeing and mental health as integral to a safe workplace.
- Continuous learning and improvement from experience, feedback, and assurance.

This approach aligns with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA) and ISO 45001 principles, ensuring AUT meets both its legal and moral obligations as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU).

Responsibilities

Role / Group	Key Responsibilities
Council	Provides governance and oversight of AUT's HSW performance and due diligence.

Executive Leadership Team	Demonstrates visible leadership, ensures resources, and monitors performance. Integrates HSW into portfolio planning and oversees local implementation.
Faculty / Directorate Leadership Teams	Promotes safe, healthy, and inclusive environments within their teams.
People Leadership	Ensure safe systems of work, provide information and supervision, and encourage reporting.
Staff / Students	Take reasonable care of themselves and others and follow AUT's HSW guidance.
HSW Team	Provides systems, advice, and assurance to support the University.

Our Expectation

Every person at AUT has a role in keeping themselves and others safe. We expect leaders to model safe and healthy behaviours, staff to be engaged and proactive, and everyone to contribute to a culture of care, respect, and accountability.

Endorsement

This Policy is endorsed by AUT Council and Executive Team and applies to all areas of AUT operations, teaching, research, and student activity.

Vice-Chancellor: _____   Chancellor: _____

Date: Date:

DRAFT Appendix 2: The Way We Work Safely at AUT

Document Code: HSW-FDN-001   **Version**: 1.0

Effective Date: [Insert Date]   **Review Due**: [Insert Date]

Approved by: Vice-Chancellor and Executive Team

Purpose

These foundations describe the essential expectations that apply to everyone at AUT — staff, students, contractors, and visitors — regardless of where or how they work or study. They represent the minimum standard of behaviour required to keep people safe, healthy, and well.

The Way We Work Safely at AUT

#	Foundation	What This Means in Practice
1	We speak up and stop unsafe work.	If something looks or feels unsafe, we pause and seek help before continuing.
2	We look after ourselves and each other.	We act respectfully, care for our own wellbeing, and support those around us.
3	We follow AUT procedures and guidance.	We know where to find current instructions and use them every time.
4	We report all incidents, hazards, and near misses immediately.	Reporting helps us prevent harm and improve systems — not to assign blame.
5	We use equipment and materials only when trained and authorised.	We maintain competency, use the right tools, and never take shortcuts.
6	We use personal protective equipment (PPE) when required.	We wear, maintain, and replace PPE as specified for our tasks or locations.
7	We manage fatigue and wellbeing proactively.	We rest, take breaks, and reach out early for support if struggling.
8	We consider others — students, colleagues, contractors, and visitors.	Our actions and decisions must never put others at risk.
9	We learn from experience and share what we know.	We participate in debriefs, learning reviews, and improvement activities.
10	We take responsibility for our environment.	We maintain safe, tidy spaces and report any hazards promptly.

Application

These foundations apply to all AUT environments — laboratories, workshops, offices, teaching spaces, fieldwork, construction areas, and events. Each is mandatory and forms part of AUT's Health,

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Safety & Wellbeing Management Framework. Breaches will be addressed through university conduct, performance, or contractor management processes.

Endorsement

This document is endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor and Executive Team as a statement of AUT's commitment to shared responsibility, care, and accountability.

Vice-Chancellor: _____   Date: _____

DRAFT Appendix 3:   Responsibility Role Statement – Council

Document Code: HSW-RC-001   **Version:** 1.0

Effective Date: [Insert Date]   **Review Due:** [Insert Date]

Approved by: TBC

1. Purpose

To outline the governance-level responsibilities of Officers (Council members) in ensuring AUT meets its duties as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU). Officers must exercise due diligence to verify that effective systems, resourcing, and assurance processes are in place to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of all people connected to AUT's activities.

2. Key Responsibilities

Officers of AUT hold governance-level responsibility to ensure that the University meets its legal duties as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

This responsibility is not passive — officers must actively exercise due diligence by taking the following practical steps:

1. **Maintain Health and Safety Knowledge**

   Officers must stay informed about current work health and safety laws, obligations, and emerging risks. They are expected to participate in briefings, training, and reviews to maintain an up-to-date understanding of how these matters apply to AUT's operations.

2. **Understand AUT's Operations and Risk Profile**

   Officers must understand the scope and nature of AUT's activities — including teaching, research, laboratories, fieldwork, construction, and service operations — and the key hazards and risks associated with them. This enables informed governance decisions on health, safety and wellbeing matters.

3. **Resource and Support the System**

Officers must ensure that AUT provides sufficient resources — people, systems, funding, and tools — to effectively identify, assess, and control risks. This includes supporting the implementation of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System and ensuring that it remains effective.

4. **Ensure Effective Risk and Incident Processes**

   Officers must confirm that robust processes exist for reporting, recording, and investigating incidents, hazards, and near-misses; and that information from these processes is reviewed and acted on promptly to prevent harm.

5. **Ensure Legal Compliance Processes**

   Officers must ensure AUT has systems and procedures in place to meet its obligations under the Act — such as *consultation*, training, emergency preparedness, contractor management, and worker participation — and that these processes are implemented consistently across all areas.

6. **Verify Implementation and Performance**

   Officers must regularly review evidence that health and safety resources, systems, and processes are being used effectively. This includes reviewing performance reports, audits, and assurance outcomes to confirm that compliance and continuous improvement are being achieved.

7. **Exercise Reasonable Care and Skill**

   Officers must act with the level of care, diligence, and skill that a reasonable person in their position would exercise, given their responsibilities and the nature of AUT's operations.

3. What Good Looks Like (Evidence of Leadership and Assurance)

- Regular review of HSW performance reports, incident trends, and audit outcomes at Council and Executive meetings.

- Demonstrated participation in health and safety governance training and briefings.

- Inclusion of HSW performance, risk, and assurance as standing agenda items for Council and Executive.

- Active endorsement and visible leadership of key initiatives (e.g., wellbeing strategy, risk management framework, major incident reviews).

- Evidence that decisions on capital, resources, or planning have considered HSW impacts.

- Officers request and act on independent assurance (e.g., internal audits, external reviews, regulator feedback).

- HSW metrics and issues are integrated into strategic and operational planning processes.

4. Support and Resources

- AUT provides guidance, tools, and specialist advice through the HSW Team, the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Management System, and Faculty/Directorate HSW Representatives. Role holders are expected to engage with these resources and request additional support when required.

5. Key Performance and Accountability Measures

Each role holder is expected to actively demonstrate these responsibilities through visible leadership, participation, and evidence of effective health, safety and wellbeing practices.

- Demonstrates visible commitment to health, safety and wellbeing by actively participating in reviews, discussions, and improvement activities within their area of responsibility.

- Ensures risks and controls are effectively managed by supporting or completing risk assessments, assurance checks, and timely corrective actions.

- Promotes a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture by engaging with workers, sharing learnings, and reinforcing safe behaviours and open reporting.

- Provides evidence of accountability through participation in assurance activities, completion of required actions, and contribution to quarterly performance reporting.

DRAFT Appendix 4: AUT Health, Safety & Wellbeing Responsibilities Statement – Executive Team

Document Code: HSW-RS-002   **Version:** 1.0

Effective Date: [Insert Date]   **Review Due:** [Insert Date]

Approved by:

1. Purpose

 To describe AUT's primary duty of care as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) — ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and wellbeing of staff, students, contractors, and others who may be affected by AUT's activities.

2. Key Responsibilities

AUT, as the Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU), holds the primary duty of care under the *Health and Safety at Work Act 2015*. This means AUT must take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of its staff, students, contractors, and any other persons who may be affected by its work.

This duty extends to both direct employees and those whose work activities are influenced or directed by AUT, such as contractors, volunteers, and students engaged in work or research.

To fulfil this duty, AUT will take practical, proactive measures to:

1. **Provide a Safe Work Environment**

    Ensure that all workplaces — including campuses, laboratories, workshops, fieldwork locations, and remote work settings — are designed, maintained, and operated so far as reasonably practicable to be free from health and safety risks.

Provide and Maintain Safe Plant, Equipment, and Structures

Ensure that all machinery, vehicles, plant, and facilities used in AUT's operations are safe, well maintained, and fit for purpose. This includes proactive inspection, maintenance, and replacement of unsafe equipment.

2. **Implement Safe Systems of Work**

Develop, implement, and regularly review safe operating procedures, risk assessments, and work methods to control risks associated with AUT activities, teaching, research, construction, and field operations.

3. **Ensure Safe Use and Management of Substances**

Provide for the safe purchase, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous substances and materials in line with legislative and internal requirements, ensuring that risks from exposure are minimised.

4. **Provide Adequate Welfare Facilities**

Ensure staff and students have access to appropriate welfare facilities — including clean toilets, handwashing facilities, drinking water, rest areas, and first aid resources — across all campuses and work environments.

5. **Provide Information, Training, and Supervision**

Ensure that everyone undertaking work or study at AUT receives the necessary induction, training, instruction, and supervision to perform their tasks safely. This includes clear information about hazards, risks, and controls relevant to their role or activity.

6. **Monitor Health and Work Conditions**

Establish processes to monitor both the health of staff (where appropriate) and the conditions of the workplace to identify, prevent, and manage health risks — including physical, chemical, biological, and psychosocial factors.

7. **Prevent Harm to Others**

   Ensure that AUT's operations do not create risks to the health and safety of visitors, students, contractors, or members of the public who may be affected by university activities.

8. **Maintain Safe Accommodation (where provided)**

   Where accommodation is provided or managed by AUT as part of employment or study, ensure it is maintained in a safe condition and free from health and safety risks, so far as reasonably practicable.

9. **Lead by Example**

   Embed a culture of health, safety, and wellbeing throughout AUT by integrating these responsibilities into leadership decision-making, planning, procurement, and performance management processes.

3. What Good Looks Like (Evidence of Leadership and Assurance)

- Safe work environments maintained across campuses, laboratories, and fieldwork sites.

- Active risk registers showing identification, assessment, and control of significant hazards.

- Regular workplace inspections, maintenance logs, and safety observations completed and documented.

- Up-to-date Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and safe systems of work.

- Training, inductions, and competency assessments completed for all staff and students.

- Incident reporting and investigations completed with corrective actions tracked to closure.

- Health monitoring, wellbeing initiatives, and environmental conditions managed proactively.

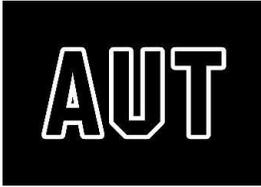- Positive worker feedback and participation in safety initiatives and committees.

4. Support and Resources

- AUT provides guidance, tools, and specialist advice through the HSW Team, the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Management System, and Faculty/Directorate HSW Representatives. Role holders are expected to engage with these resources and request additional support when required.

5. Key Performance and Accountability Measures

Each role holder is expected to actively demonstrate these responsibilities through visible leadership, participation, and evidence of effective health, safety and wellbeing practices.

- Demonstrates visible commitment to health, safety and wellbeing by actively participating in reviews, discussions, and improvement activities within their area of responsibility.

- Ensures risks and controls are effectively managed by supporting or completing risk assessments, assurance checks, and timely corrective actions.

- Promotes a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture by engaging with workers, sharing learnings, and reinforcing safe behaviours and open reporting.

- Provides evidence of accountability through participation in assurance activities, completion of required actions, and contribution to quarterly performance reporting.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3">**PART A**

OPEN

AGENDA ITEM</td><td>**10.1**</td></tr>
</table>

Council Agenda Paper

Subject: **DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR RESEARCH – 2025 UPDATE REPORT**

Date: **10 February 2026**

RECOMMENDATION: *THAT THE UPDATE REPORT FROM THE DVC RESEARCH BE RECEIVED*

Background

AUT continues to prioritise building a positive research culture, advancing key research priorities and addressing key constraints on research productivity. This report provides an overview of our progress with regard to our research endeavour over the past 12 months, and key challenges and priority areas for 2026.

Key Matters for Update

1. Rautaki Rangahau (AUT's Research Plan 2023-2028)

Rautaki Rangahau was developed and confirmed in the first quarter of 2023. It is one of our "Core Plans" for the university. The Plan sets out our ambition to "*create and support a thriving research community that undertakes high-quality research that creates beneficial impacts for our communities, our city and our nation*". Rautaki Rangahau outlines 74 key actions/investments directed at achieving this ambition. Of these 74 key actions; 68 have been implemented (designated as completed and ongoing, or underway), two have been folded into another project (new eMAP process for staff), one has been deferred (on-lining of PGR and research ethics processes), and one has been cancelled due to a change in government policy (cancellation of the PBRF and replacement by the TREF).

2. Key Achievements over the past 12 Months

- ✓ Annual AUT Research Week gathering momentum (3rd edition was Sept 2025). See Attachment 1 for summary data
- ✓ Researcher Education and Development Unit over-subscribed with requests and offerings. See Attachment 2 for summary data
- ✓ Record number of admissions into AUT's PhD programme. See Attachment 3 for summary data

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✓ 3/5 research KPIs achieved (one new KPI is a new baseline in 2025). See Attachment 4 for summary
✓ AUT Guidelines for the use of Generative AI in Research have been developed and published These guidelines are supported by additional resources to support academic staff and research students
✓ Research ethics "transformation project" initiated and progress is being made on simplifying our systems and processes, and increasing support for researchers
✓ Establishment of five AUT Research Networks:
   o *Te Ranga Tukutuku (AUT Māori Research Network)*
   o *Moanaroa Pacific Research Network*
   o *AUT Transformational Technologies Research Network*
   o *Toi o te Ora (AUT Wellbeing Research Network)*
   o *Te Whare Tūroa (AUT Regenerative Environments Research Network)*
✓ Building our contributions from AUT Ventures
   o Research consulting revenue $1.766m from 72 consulting projects in 2025 (up from $0.9m in 2024)
   o 1 new company spun out (Eccentric Fitness)
   o 1 product launched (Goodair Nosebuds)
   o 10 projects co-funded ($600k) by KiwiNet
   o $280k invested from the AUT Innovation Fund
   o 5 Tīmatanga Initiate grants awarded totalling $125k, for initiating research collaborations with businesses
   o Innovation Showcase as part of AUT Research Week most well attended event for the week
✓ Establishment and launch of the Women's Health and Neuroscience Research Programme at AUT Millennium supported by Abbott Health
✓ Establishing the AUT Innovation Fund ($5m)
✓ Submitted 348 research proposals to 79 external funders (a 15% increase on 2024 and a 35% increase on 2023)
✓ Signed 120 new externally funded research contracts (a 5% decrease from 2024 but a 16% increase on 2023)
✓ These contracts were led by 87 Principal Investigators (AUT staff)
× A decrease in active research contracts to 317 for 2025 (348 for 2024)
× A decrease in new research contracts signed to $13.6m in 2025 (2024 = $32.4m)
× A decrease in ERI earned to $23.6m in 2025 (2024 = $29.2m) * see below

3. Key Challenges

➢ *ERI is substantially lower for 2025 (despite increased numbers of applications from AUT) due to a range of external changes including:
   o Cancellation of the 2026 MBIE Endeavour Fund round
   o Cancellation of the Marsden Fund Social Sciences and Humanities Panel
   o Capping of number of applications into the MBIE Smart Ideas Fund (AUT is restricted by MBIE to a maximum of two applications)
   o Significant reduction in funding available via the Health Research Council
   o Changing of emphasis for government funded research to prioritise research with potential commercial outcomes
   o Lower success rates in government contestable funding rounds in 2025 (for all universities) due reduction of total amount of contestable research funding available (government has re-

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directed to support dedicated research platforms e.g. critical geothermal, NZ Advanced Technology Research Institute ...) and the creation of the new PROs, and Research Funding NZ

- o Changes in US government funding settings (e.g. USAID disestablishment, cancellation of research funding for any projects related to "diversity, equity and inclusion" topics)
- ➢ Slow movement in supporting a proportion of academic staff (currently around ¼ are "inactive" with regard to research outputs) to become (or resume) research activity (KPI 10 Attachment 4)

4. Priority Projects for 2026

4.1 Research Entities Framework

The new Framework has been established and alignment with the new structure has progressed in 2025. Most entities have now transitioned to the new framework (with a few still to be completed in early 2026):

Tier 1: Research Groups (at Department/School level)
Tier 2: Research Centres (at School level)
Tier 3: Research Institutes (at Faculty level
Tier 4: AUT Research Networks (university-wide):

4.2 Research Ethics Transformation

We initiated a transformation of our research ethics systems, processes and culture in 2025. This work remains a priority to complete in 2026. Progress to date:

- ➢ The Research Ethics Transformation Group has been working throughout 2025 to transform our research ethics system and processes to one that is simpler and more supportive of researchers
- ➢ We have appointed three new staff members (two Senior Research Ethics Advisers, one Research Ethics Education Specialist) to support AUT researchers
- ➢ We have recruited for a new Senior Research Ethics Manager (starting in March 2026) to lead out the change process and embed the new approach
- ➢ We have removed the need for "double approvals" and streamlined the application process.
- ➢ We are trialling a Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences Research Ethics Review Forum (about to commence Q1 2026)

4.3 Research Data Repository

- ➢ Business Plan approved, preferred system identified, procurement completed, implementation underway

4.4. On-lining systems for postgraduate research and for research ethics

- ➢ "Whakatere": New online system for PGR students and supervisors contract cancelled due to non-delivery from provider. Investigation of alternative system underway
- ➢ "Arataki": New online system for research ethics contract cancelled due to non-delivery from provider. Investigation of alternative system underway

4.5 Commercialisation and the AUT Innovation Fund

- ➢ The $5m AUT Innovation Fund has been established with AUT Ventures. Investments are managed by the AUT Ventures Investment Committee and the capital is being managed by Craigs Investment Partners
- ➢ In 2025 the Fund invested $275k into AUT spinouts Dot Ingredients, GoodAir, and Conical. Dot Ingredients is commercialising AUT technology that turns low-cost wood pulp into high value skincare ingredients. GoodAir launched its radical drug-free nasal decongestant Nosebuds, selling

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out its first tranche of production within 24 hours. Conical, which is staffed entirely by AUT alumni, spun out of AUT in 2016 and the investment was to support its first game development, the fantasy action game "Faeborne". The Fund's investments helped catalyse third-party investment

➢ There are two funding grants focused on building the pipeline of potential commercialisation opportunities arising from research:

Tīmatanga | Initiate Grants offer up to $40,000 to help AUT academics take the first steps toward commercialisation. The funding supports early-stage research activities, such as developing a proof of concept, especially where there's strong draw from industry and a commercial opportunity. 2025 saw proposals funded to conduct research into:

    i. Wool-based biodegradable dental floss
    ii. A low carbon alternative to cement-based building panels
    iii. AI-driven optimisation of motorsport gearboxes
    iv. App-based measurement of manu (dive-bomb), and
    v. Adapting humanoid robots to NZ cultural norms
       A commercial partner is involved in each project. The pipeline of opportunities is just as strong heading into 2026

Pito Mata | Potential Grants foster collaboration between researchers and AUT MBA students. Through the Pito Mata initiative, AUT researchers gain a professional, high-quality business case for their research project – a vital tool for commercial or impact pathways. Projects in 2025 included developing a business strategy for the Map of Meaning wellbeing framework, and market validation for "NextBP" an advanced blood pressure measurement technology

Summary

We continue to make good progress in building our research culture, contributions and impact. More important work remains to be done, particularly in the context of the range of external changes that affect research funding and opportunities. Positioning ourselves to respond and adapt to these changes whilst not compromising our values and our "why" with regards to research is the key priority.

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Attachment 1: 2025 AUT Research Week Summary

REVIEW OF THE 2025 AUT

WIKI RANGAHAU / RESEARCH WEEK

SNAPSHOT

Research Week / Wiki Rangahau 2025 in numbers.

31 EVENTS — **2433 REGISTRATIONS** — **1278 ATTENDANCES** — **289 PRESENTERS**

EVENT SPOTLIGHT

AUT Innovation Showcase

200 — Internal & external attendees

Featuring dozens of exhibitors showcasing AUT products & inventions over six themed 'zones'

EVENT SPOTLIGHT

Pacific Research Day

125 — Internal & external attendees

Including a selection of leading Pacific research pioneers and the launch of the Pacific Research Guidelines

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

"Pacific Wednesday was truly unforgettable and quite moving to hear from our pioneers."

"Amazing hospitality and a very welcoming event."

"Everything about the event truly embodied AUT values and I am so glad that this exists, and proud that I work for this institution."

"Thank you for an inspiring event. I thoroughly enjoyed exploring the innovations and speaking with the researchers and founders."

"The conference in Te Reo Māori was the most enriching experience, and incredible to exist an academic institution."

COMPARING ACROSS YEARS

With Wiki Rangahau now having run for 3 years, we can compare data across years:

- Attendance in 2025 was 20% higher than in 2023 and 2024
- On average, 54% of those who register attend their event
- Special-interest events draw consistently higher crowds than general-interest events
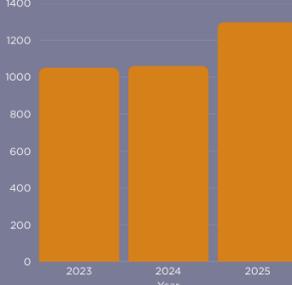
CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

"It felt like there was a bit too much on stretched over long days and across campuses. It is hard to get to early and late events."

"There definitely needs to be a hang-out space for AUT Research Week attendees. This is where we meet people and make connections."

"To improve turnout, I really think that leaders/ managers at AUT need to be convinced to attend. Once leaders attend, their teams are more likely to attend."

EVENT SPOTLIGHT

Ngā hua a Tāne-te-wānanga Māori Research Symposium was held entirely in Te Reo Māori for the first time (with simultaneous English translation via headsets)

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Attachment 2: Te Kura Hāpai Rangahau (Researcher Education and Development Unit)

RESEARCHER EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

AUT
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

| 2025 activities

What is RED?

Postgraduate Writers Retreat, May 2025

Te Kura Hāpai Rangahau, or the Researcher Education and Development unit, is based in the Graduate Research School. We provide opportunities for AUT researchers at all levels (including academic staff, postgraduate research students, and supervisors) to develop their capability.

Special Initiatives for 2025

For all researchers:

AUT Research Week | Wiki Rangahau 2025
Featuring 289 presenters across 31 events showcasing AUT's research excellence

AI Guidelines and Educational Resources for Researchers
New guidance includes 5 key principles for working responsibly with AI in research

For PG research students:

Te Ara Whakamua: Navigating our Doctoral Futures

An 8-week cohort-based programme preparing 30 doctoral students for their future careers. With training on leadership, resilience, academic / industry pathways, AI & the future of work, and entrepreneurial skills.

For academic staff:

12 Weeks to Research Active
A 12-week cohort-based programme empowering 20 staff to become (or become *more*) research active

Staff Research Inductions
A full-day programme to orient new staff to AUT's research landscape (2 p.a.)

Tiriti-Led Research workshops
A series of 3 workshops to familiarise staff with Te Tiriti and its implications for research

Ongoing support ('business as usual')

For PG research students:

- PG workshops - ~150 p.a. with Te Mātāpuna and others
- Doctoral inductions - 4 p.a.
- PG Writers Retreats - 2 p.a.
- PG Research Symposium - held annually
- 3 Minute Thesis competition - held annually
- PG Mix & Mingles and Doctoral Scholarship ceremonies
- PG_Me Canvas site for online resources

For academic staff:

- "Research Skills for AUT Staff" - Canvas site with 7 detailed sets of training modules
- Embed RED - workshops embedded within schools on request - 12-15 per year
- Supervision workshops and online modules
- 'Research Accelerator' packages for data analysis
- Participant recruitment website

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Attachment 3: Graduate Research School – PGR students summary

HIGHLIGHTS

Doctoral Applications reached an all-time high of 3,723 in 2025 and continue to trend upward.

Doctoral Admissions increased by 45.1% from 233 in 2023 to 338 in 2024, followed by a further 8.3% rise to 366 in 2025, an overall 57.1% increase since 2023, exceeding pre-COVID levels, with a strong start to 2026 already showing 58 admissions by February.

Master's (PBRF-eligible 90+ theses points) Admissions rose from 118 in 2023 to 179 in 2024 (+51.7%), increased further to 187 in 2025 (+4.5%), and remain well above pre-COVID levels, with 12 admissions recorded by February 2026.

Doctoral EFTS YTD EFTS for doctoral enrolments increased by 8.7%, rising from 222.84 in 2025 to 242.18 in 2026.

Research Week 2026 planning has commenced for 31 August – 4 September, while the '12 Weeks to Research Active' retreat concluded in November; applications are now open for a revised second iteration of the programme

AI in Research New ethical guidelines for generative AI have been published, supported by practical best-practice guidance and self-assessment resources for staff and research students.
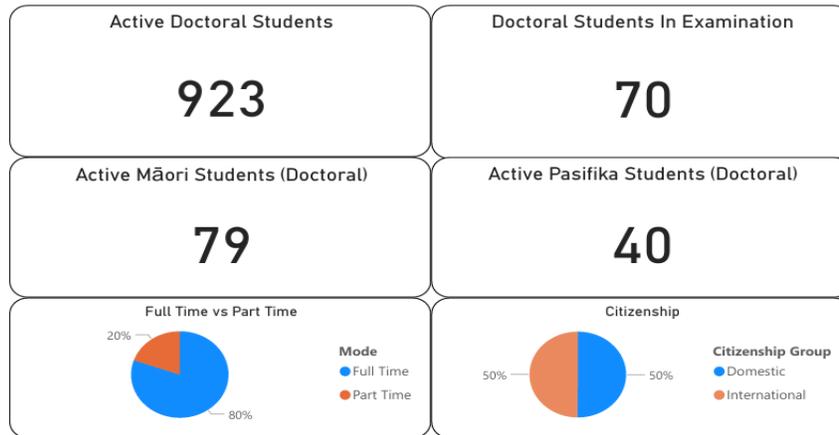
QUICK STATS
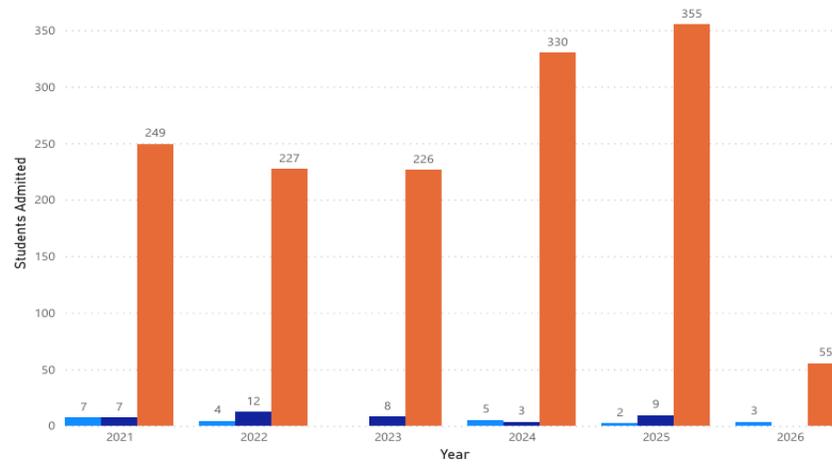
923 Active doctoral students
48 Active MPhil students

70 Doctoral students in examination
51 Deferred PhD students

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Active Doctoral Students	Doctoral Students In Examination
923	70

Active Māori Students (Doctoral)	Active Pasifika Students (Doctoral)
79	40

Full Time vs Part Time

20%

80%

Mode
- Full Time
- Part Time

Citizenship

50% — 50%

Citizenship Group
- Domestic
- International

Doctoral Admission

Programme ● Doctor of Education ● Doctor of Health Science ● Doctor of Philosophy

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Attachment 4: Research Key Performance Indicators

TEC required Educational Performance Indicator	Target 2025	Actual 2025	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
Knowledge discovery and application with purpose				
External research income	$29.3M	$23.6M	$29.2M	$26.6M
External research income declined significantly from the previous years, despite an increased number of applications from AUT. This is due largely to the changes in the research funding environment described under KPI 8 (below), including the cancellations of the 2026 MBIE Endeavour Fund round, and the Marsden Fund Social Sciences and Humanities Panel, the reduction in the number of applications permitted to the MBIE Smart Ideas fund, and a major reduction in Health Research Council finding. Along with the other universities, AUT has also been affected by changes in the international funding environment, including the disestablishment of USAID and the USA's cancellation of funding for projects related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. **Not achieved**				

Key Performance Indicator 8	Target 2025	Actual 2025	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
Knowledge discovery and application with purpose				
Number of active research contracts	355 (+2%)	317	348	344
Failure to meet target for this KPI was due largely to the major changes to the Government-based research funding landscape, compounded by a difficult economic climate. This reduced the availability of funding for research and development, disrupting the usual cycle of securing new contracts to replace those that successfully concluded in 2024. There were several significant Government funding opportunities either discontinued or paused over 2024 and 2025 and AUT has a strong track record of success in all of them. These include the National Science Challenges, Callaghan Innovation research and development student grants, the Marsden Fund's social sciences and humanities fund, the Teaching and Learning Research Initiative, and the MBIE Endeavour fund. Health Research Council funding also decreased and several opportunities were cancelled. Instead, AUT redirected applications towards newer opportunities such as Horizons Europe, the Artificial Intelligence Research Platform, and collaborations with the private sector (such as the partnership with Abbott). In addition, opportunities for appropriate research collaboration with the NZ Defence Force are being investigated. **Not achieved**				

Key Performance Indicator 9	Target 2025	Actual 2025	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
Knowledge discovery and application with purpose				
Number of quality-assured research outputs	2,029 (+2%)	2,104	1,989	2,047

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A quality-assured research output is defined as any research output that successfully completed a formal quality-assurance process before its final version was first made available in the public domain. It has been subjected to formal, independent scrutiny by those with the skills or expertise (or both) to assess its quality. This may include its rigour, clarity, intellectual significance, originality, impact, applications, and artistic merit. Formal quality-assurance processes vary between disciplines and output types, including (but not limited to): peer review by journals and book publishers; selection of conference papers; Māori or Pacific research-specific processes or methodologies; review and curation processes conducted by major galleries, museums, or broadcasters; and reviews by users of commissioned or funded research.

There has been a change in methodology for this KPI to better reflect the publication cycle; results are now reported as a rolling average of the number of outputs published in the current and previous year. Results for prior years have been updated to reflect the new approach.

Research activity increased over the previous year, with the target for 2025 comfortably achieved. Our new research entities framework aims to boost research activity across the University by providing opportunities for staff, postgraduate students, and external partners to collaborate on areas of interest and connect into university-wide, impact-focussed research programmes. One of these networks, Moanaroa Pacific Research, encompasses the Pacific Islands Families Study, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2025. We have published around 140 papers based on findings from this and the associated Healthy Pacific Grandparents study over the past 25 years, including two in 2025.

Achieved

Key Performance Indicator 10	Target 2025	Actual 2025	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
Knowledge discovery and application with purpose				
Proportion of academic staff who are research active	+1pp	72%	61%*	58%*

* The methodology for this KPI has been updated to better reflect the publication cycle by tracking activity over a two-year window. The scope was also refined to focus exclusively on staff in roles with a research remit. While data for these roles is robust from 2025 onwards, it cannot be reliably extrapolated to previous years. Results for 2023 and 2024 reflect the previous methodology and are not comparable to the 2025 data.

A central tenet of *Rautaki Rangahau* is to increase the depth and breadth of research activity across the University. Te Kura Hāpai Rangahau (the Researcher Education and Development Unit) introduced a new '12 Weeks to Research Active' programme in 2025, specifically designed to support staff who wish to become (or become more) research active. The programme combines reflection, learning, and planning in a range of relevant areas: including establishing Tiriti-led relationships; researching with integrity and purpose; designing for impact; joining a research community; and planning, resourcing, and funding. The course culminated with a three-day retreat for staff to accelerate the work on their project plan. Twenty staff attended the inaugural course in Semester 2, with further offerings planned for 2026. The 12-week course joins a suite of initiatives designed to support researcher development, including online research skills modules, a researcher induction for staff new to AUT, and a series of courses designed to fit within existing staff meetings.

Achieved

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Key Performance Indicator 11	Target 2025	Actual 2025	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
Knowledge discovery and application with purpose Graduates the world needs				
Number of academic staff involved in PGR supervision	+2%	585	*	*

* This is a new KPI that also focusses on staff with research responsibilities, using the same approach as for KPI 10. The 2025 result represents a new baseline.

Expanding our supervision capabilities is another critical focus area for AUT and Te Kura Hāpai Rangahau has developed in-person and online courses for beginner supervisors, along with toolboxes to guide supervisors on using thoughtful feedback to improve their practice. They also host regular supervision fora to share expertise across the University.

 * New baseline

Key Performance Indicator 13	Target 2025	Actual 2025	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
Knowledge discovery and application with purpose				
Proportion of research outputs that contribute to a UNSDG	35% (+1pp)	36%	34%	30%

Results for KPI 13 are sourced from Dimensions, AUT's bibliometric software provider.

Contributing to the body of knowledge surrounding the UN Sustainable Development Goals is a key pathway to research impact. According to Dimensions, 535 of the 1,460 publications they indexed in 2025 contributed to one or more SDGs, with our largest contributions to Goal 3 Good health and wellbeing, followed by Goal 4 Quality education and Goal 7 Affordable and clean energy.

Achieved

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PART A	**13.1**
OPEN AGENDA ITEM	

<u>Council Agenda Paper</u>

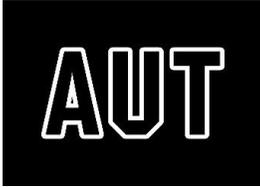**Subject:**   Update from the President of AUTSA – James Portegys

Date: **23 February 2026**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF AUTSA

PART A	
	13.2
OPEN AGENDA ITEM	

Council Agenda Paper

Subject: **Update from the Council Member Elected by Academic Staff – Welby Ings**

Date: **23 February 2026**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED BY THE ACADEMIC STAFF OF THE AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

PART A	
	13.3
OPEN AGENDA ITEM	

Council Agenda Paper

Subject: **Update from the Council Member Elected by Professional Staff – Lani Thomson**

Date: **23 February 2026**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTED BY THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF OF THE AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY