

**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, 28 April 2026**

**FROM: 2.30 – 5.30 PM**

**Andrea Vujnovich  
COUNCIL SECRETARY**



## AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

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

# Karakia

<b>Beginning and closing</b>	
<p>Tuia ki te rangi Dedicated to the sky</p> <p>Tuia ki te whenua and to the earth below</p> <p>Tuia ki te human kind are bound</p> <p>Ira tangata and inseperable</p> <p>Ka rongō te pō From the infinite potential</p> <p>Ka rongō te ao to the realization in light</p> <p>Tūturu whakamaua Let us come together</p> <p>Kia tīna with purpose</p> <p>Haumi e Hui e united and ready</p> <p>Tāiki e to progress</p>	<p>Kia tau iho Let the strength</p> <p>Te tauwhirotanga and serenity</p> <p>O te wāhi ngaro of our ancestors</p> <p>E pai ai te nohotahi guide us as we gather</p> <p>Ā tinana, wairua hoki in body and spirit</p> <p>Whakauenuku ake Holdfast to</p> <p>Te āio mō te katoa Peace for all</p> <p>Kia whakamaua kia tīna let it be realised</p> <p>Hui e Tāiki e for us all</p>
<b>Closing</b>	
<p>Unuhia, unuhia Draw on, draw on</p> <p>Unuhia ki te uru tapu nui Draw on the supreme sacredness</p>	<p>Kia tau kia tātou katoa May peace, love, and safety</p> <p>Te āio, te aroha me te marutau Be upon us all</p>

<p><b>Kia wātea, kia māmā, te ngākau, te tinana, te wairua i te ara takatā</b> To clear, to free the heart, the body and the spirit of mankind</p> <p><b>Koia rā e Rongo, whakairia ake ki runga</b> Rongo, suspended high above us</p> <p><b>Kia tina! Tina! Hui e! Tāiki e!</b> Draw together! Affirm!</p>	<p><b>Thei mauri ora</b> a promise of a glorious day</p>
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# PART A

# OPEN AGENDA



COUNCIL PART A OPEN AGENDA

**Council Agenda Part A (Open Agenda)**  
**Tuesday 28 April 2026 from 2.30 pm to be held in the Council Room, Level 7, WA Building, AUT City Campus**

<b>Karakia</b>		
<b>Mihi – Chancellor</b>		
1. Welcome, Apologies and approval of agenda	The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that apologies be <b>noted</b> and that <b>Council approve</b> 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 <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the declarations if any be noted and the action taken be <b>endorsed</b> .
3. Constitutional Matters, Conferment of Degrees, and Policy	3.1 Noting Chancellor delegation – Granting, Rescinding, Revoking and Amending Qualifications – March and April 2026.  3.2 Council Travel Policy	The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the following be <b>approved</b> :  • See item 3.1  The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the Council Travel Policy be <b>approved</b>
4. Council Meetings	4.1 Council Meeting Draft Minutes Part A, 30 March 2026.  4.2 Matters arising from the Minutes Part A of the Council Meeting, 30 March 2026 not elsewhere on the agenda.	The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the Minutes of Part A of the Council Meeting held on 30 March 2026 be taken as <b>read</b> and <b>confirmed</b> as a true and correct record of the meeting
5. Vice-Chancellor’s Report	5. Vice-Chancellor’s Report	The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the Vice-Chancellor’s Report be <b>received</b> .
6. Chancellor’s Report	6. Chancellor’s Report	The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the Chancellor’s Report be <b>received</b> .

<p>7. Reports from Boards, Committees and Working Groups to Council</p>	<p>7. Reports and Minutes from the Academic Board, 23 February and 30 March 2026.</p>	<p>The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that <b>Reports</b> and <b>Minutes</b> from the <b>Academic Board</b>, 23 February and 30 March 2026 be <b>received</b>.</p>
<p>8. Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Report</p>	<p>8. 1 Health, Safety &amp; Wellbeing Report for February-March 2026.</p>	<p>The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that Council <b>receive</b> the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report February-March 2026</p>
<p>9. Te Tiriti</p>	<p>9. WIPCE 2025 Impact and Legacy Report</p>	<p>The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the WIPCE 2025 Impact and Legacy Report from Te Toi Aronui, Professor Meihana Durie be <b>received</b>.</p>
<p>10. Strategic Reports</p>	<p>10. No report</p>	
<p>11. Student Success</p>	<p>11. No report</p>	
<p>12. Correspondence referred by the Chancellor</p>	<p>12. No correspondence</p>	
<p>13. Other matters arising for decision or noting</p>	<p>13.1 Update from the President of AUTSA.</p> <p>13.2 Update from the Council Member elected by the Academic Staff of the Auckland University of Technology</p> <p>13.3 Update from the Council Member elected by the Professional Staff of the Auckland University of Technology</p>	<p>The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the Update from AUTSA be <b>received</b>.</p> <p>The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the Update from the Council member Elected by the Academic Staff of the Auckland University of Technology be <b>received</b>.</p> <p>The <b>Chancellor moves</b> that the Update from the Council member Elected by the Professional Staff of the Auckland University of Technology be <b>received</b>.</p>
<p>14. Items moved from Part B of the agenda to Part A and General Business</p>		

**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 meeting held on 23 February 2026	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)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), s 9(2)(k)	s7(2)(b), 7(2)(h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)
17. Report from AUT Ventures	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), s 9(2)(k)	s7(2)(b), 7(2)(h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)
18. Report from AUT Millennium	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), s 9(2)(k)	s7(2)(b), 7(2)(h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)
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 13 April 2026	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), s 9(2)(k)	s7(2)(b), 7(2)(h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)
21.2 Draft Minutes of the People and Culture Committee held on 13 April 2026	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), s 9(2)(k)	s7(2)(b), 7(2)(h), 7(2)(i), 7(2)(j)
22. Other Business	s 9(2)(a), s 9(2)(g)(i), s 9(2)(g)(ii),	7(2)(a), 7(2)(f)(i), 7(2)(f)(ii)



Part A OPEN AGENDA ITEM	3.1
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## Council Agenda Paper

Subject: **GRANTING, RESCINDING, REVOKING AND AMENDING QUALIFICATIONS – MARCH AND APRIL 2026**

Date: **14 APRIL 2026**

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### **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:*

#### *MARCH 2026*

- 1. REVOKE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE STUDENTS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE AHEAD OF THE 2026 MARCH CORPORATE CYCLE ON 12 MARCH.*
- 2. GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE 2026 MARCH MONTHLY CORPORATE CYCLE ON 12 MARCH.*
- 3. GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE MARCH MONTHLY CERTIFICATES CYCLE ON 12 MARCH.*
- 4. GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE MARCH MONTHLY CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY'S (COP) CYCLE ON 12 MARCH.*
- 5. GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE 2026 MARCH OFFSHORE CYCLE ON 12 MARCH.*

#### *APRIL 2026*

- 1. GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE APRIL MONTHLY CORPORATE CYCLE ON 16 APRIL.*
  - 2. GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE APRIL MONTHLY CERTIFICATES CYCLE ON 16 APRIL.*
  - 3. GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE APRIL MONTHLY CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY'S (COP) CYCLE ON 16 APRIL.*
  - 4. GRANT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE GRADUANDS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE APRIL OFFSHORE CYCLE ON 16 APRIL.*
  - 5. REVOKE QUALIFICATIONS TO THE STUDENTS ON THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE FOR THE APRIL CORPORATE CYCLE ON 16 APRIL.*
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The schedules are in supplementary papers.



AGENDA ITEM	3.2
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## **Council Agenda Paper**

Subject: **COUNCIL TRAVEL POLICY**

Date: **31 March 2026**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

*THAT COUNCIL APPROVE THE COUNCIL TRAVEL POLICY*

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**Background**

Further to the feedback from Council at its meeting on 30 March 2026, the Council Travel Policy has been reviewed and re-written for consideration and commentary.

## *Council*

### *Council Members' Travel Policy*

Date of adoption: January 2001  
Date this issue: April 2026

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#### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements for travel undertaken by members of the Council in order to support the Council's governance, oversight, and statutory functions, ensure the prudent, transparent, and accountable use of public funds and comply with the University's and Council's obligations under the Education and Training Act 2020 and public-sector good-practice expectations.

#### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all members of the Council for all domestic and international travel undertaken in a Council or Council Committee capacity and expenditure related to Council member's travel.

Where a Council member is also employed by the University, this policy applies only when the member is acting in their capacity as a Council member.

#### **3. Legislative and Governance Context**

Under the Education and Training Act 2020, Council is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the University, ensuring effective and efficient use of resources and accountability for the performance and financial sustainability of the University. Council travel must, therefore, be demonstrably connected to the fulfilment of these responsibilities and meet public-sector standards of integrity, value for money and transparency.

#### **4. Principles**

Council travel must be necessary to enable the Council to discharge its governance or statutory responsibilities, be reasonable, cost-effective, and proportionate and except where it is not practicable, be approved in advance.

Council members must avoid actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest and travel must not result in a personal benefit to the Council member.

#### **5. Approval of Travel**

Domestic travel by a Council member must be approved in advance by the Council Secretary.

Domestic travel by the Chancellor must be approved by either the Chair of Finance and Audit Committee or the Pro-Chancellor.

All international travel by Council members, including the Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor, must be approved in advance by the full Council or by the Finance and Audit Committee. Approval must be obtained before any bookings are made or expenditure is incurred.

**6. Travel and Expenditure Standards**

Council travel must use economy or standard options. Accommodation and other expenses must be reasonable, safe, and represent value for money. Reimbursement of expenses requires appropriate supporting documentation and compliance with the approved purpose of travel.

**7. Health, Safety, and Risk**

The University has a duty of care to Council members while travelling. Council members must comply with applicable University health, safety, and risk guidance and take reasonable care for their own safety and wellbeing, particularly when travelling internationally or to higher risk locations.

**8. Conflicts of Interest and Third-Party Funded Travel**

Council members must declare any actual or potential conflict of interest related to travel.

Travel, accommodation, or hospitality funded by third parties must not be accepted without prior approval. Any approved third-party support must be transparent and appropriately recorded.

**9. Transparency and Reporting**

Travel by Council members must be reported annually to the Council. Council travel expenditure may be disclosed through University reporting to meet public accountability and audit requirements.

**10. Exceptions**

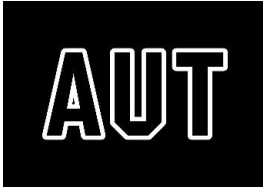
Any exception to this policy must be supported by clear justification, documented, and approved in advance.

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CHANCELLOR

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PRO-CHANCELLOR



PART A	4.1
OPEN AGENDA ITEM	

## Council Agenda Paper

**Subject:** Minutes of the AGM and Part A of the Council Meeting held on 30 March 2026

**Date:** 15 April 2026

**Author:** A Vujnovich

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

*THAT THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING PART A HELD ON 30 MARCH 2026 BE CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD OF THE MEETING*

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## MINUTES

### **Council Meeting**

Meeting held 30 March 2026 at 2.30pm

Meeting held online via Teams

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<b>PRESENT:</b>	M Royal (Acting Chair); J Smith; L Foliaki; J Portegys; S Clarke; L Thomson; M Huang; P Treacy; M Darrow; W Ings.
<b>SECRETARY:</b>	A Vujnovich, Council Secretary R Nottingham, Minute Taker
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	L Williams (Chief Financial Officer and AVC Finance and Infrastructure); H Rayner (Senior Manager Strategy & Planning), M Skinner (AVC Strategy & Planning).
<b>IN APOLOGY:</b>	R Campbell; D Salesa

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The meeting was opened with a Karakia by the Acting Chair.

#### **1 APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS**

Resolved

*THAT APOLOGIES BE RECEIVED FROM R CAMPBELL AND D SALESA.*

*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.

- M Royal noted she had resigned her position as director of ProCare.
- M Darrow noted changes to his interests that he would notify to the Council Secretary.
- No other conflicts declared or that needed to be managed in this meeting.

Resolved

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

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

##### **3.1 Approval of amendment to Council Travel Policy**

Received

Amended Draft Council Travel Policy

Noted in discussion

- An annual report on Council members travel should come to Council Finance and Audit Committee.
- The Travel Policy should be re-written to include criteria and approvals for domestic and international travel including the usual process for “one up” approval.

- The approvals and criteria for travel by AUT should be reflected in the Council Members' Travel Policy.

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

**4.1 Minutes of the previous meeting**

Received

Draft Minutes of the Council AGM and Part A Council meeting held on 23 February 2026

Resolved

*THAT THE MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2026 AND THE MINUTES OF PART A OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2026 BOTH BE CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD OF THOSE MEETING*

**4.2 Matters Arising**

Noted in discussion

- Noted the status of matters arising.

**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 HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT**

No report

**9 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**

No report

**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, A Vujnovich, M Skinner, H Rayner 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. Minutes Part B of the February Council meetings	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)
21.1 Draft Minutes of Finance and Audit Committee held on 16 March 2026	s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(i), 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	<b>7.1 Academic Board Reports and Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management to present to Council on Academic Quality including data, benchmarks and framework.</li> </ul>	DVC Academic	Open/April 2026
28 July 2025	<b>9.1 Te Tiriti</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management to present on Māori student numbers and experience in AUT in a future report.</li> </ul>	Te Toi Aronui	Open/July 2026
29 September 2025	<b>5. Vice Chancellor's Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management to provide information on resource plans to support student success given planned growth of international onshore students.</li> </ul>	DVC Academic	Open/April 2026
29 September 2025	<b>8.1 Health, Safety &amp; Wellbeing Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management to provide further information on how clarity between divisional/functional responsibilities will be resolved.</li> </ul> <p><u>Update:</u> Actioned at CFAC 24 November 2025</p>	AVC People & Culture	Actioned
8 December 2025	<b>5.1 Vice Chancellor's Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	Chancellor & Pro-Chancellor	Open/July 2026



<b>PART A</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>OPEN AGENDA ITEM</b>	

## Council Agenda Paper

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

Date: **28 April 2026**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

*THAT THE VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT BE RECEIVED*

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### **SECTION 1. AUT'S CURRENT POSITION**

#### **1.1 Vice-Chancellor's introduction**

AUT began 2026 with a strong sense of momentum as the academic year commenced and campuses returned to full activity. The reporting period reflects a shift from planning and preparation into delivery, with a sustained focus on student transition and success, academic transformation, research capability, and strengthening AUT's engagement across the tertiary, innovation and research system.

Across learning and teaching, AUT has continued to advance its academic transformation agenda in response to changing learner expectations and rapid technological change. AUT Online has moved confidently into scaled delivery, demonstrating strong demand for flexible postgraduate study and confirming its role as a core contributor to AUT's academic portfolio and future growth. Progress has also been made in strengthening assessment practice, work-integrated learning systems, and digital capability across teaching and learning.

Student success, wellbeing and inclusion remained a central priority as Semester 1 commenced. Significant progress was made in enhancing learning environments and student support, including the opening of the Mōwai Student Health and Counselling Centre, continued delivery of inclusive transition initiatives, and the introduction of new services responding to increasingly diverse learner needs.

Collectively, the activities reported this period demonstrate an institution focused on delivery, impact and readiness, reinforcing AUT's position as a university of technology and opportunity, grounded in Te Kete and responsive to an evolving national and global context.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- AUT Online exceeded enrolment projections and delivered its first graduating cohort.
- Completion and opening of the Mōwai Student Health and Counselling Centre at City Campus, strengthening student wellbeing and access to support

- Sustained growth in doctoral and master's research enrolments, alongside improved research throughput and strengthened researcher development pathways
- Achievement of top-tier international recognition in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026, including a top-25 global ranking in sports-related subjects and equal first in New Zealand for hospitality and leisure management
- Establishment of a Microgrid Research Initiative integrating sustainability, research, teaching and community engagement
- Launch of Ako Atawhai Inclusive Learning, strengthening support for neurodivergent learners and students for whom English is an additional language
- AUT's first Engagement Plan has been approved by the Executive and is progressing to staff consultation.

## **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**

AUT continued to advance its academic transformation agenda, with a focus on programme quality, flexibility and relevance in an increasingly digital and artificial intelligence-enabled environment. AUT Online has transitioned from establishment into scaled delivery, with Trimester One enrolments exceeding business case projections. The portfolio now comprises five master's programmes supported by embedded postgraduate certificates and diplomas, and the first cohort of students has successfully completed their qualifications. This milestone confirms AUT Online as a core contributor to AUT's postgraduate offer and future growth.

Work to strengthen assessment practice also progressed through implementation of refreshed Assessment Principles, Policy and Procedures, including guidance on the appropriate use of artificial intelligence in assessment and feedback. These changes support academic integrity while enabling innovation in learning design.

Progress continued on the staged implementation of the Work Integrated Learning placement platform (InPlace). Initial deployment within Nursing is well advanced, with improved oversight, consistency and data visibility across placements. Further rollout will support AUT's distinctive strength in applied, work-integrated education and enhance assurance across professional programmes.

### **2.2 Student Success**

AUT continued to strengthen student success through coordinated, whole-of-University approaches that support learners across the student journey. Work progressed on service model redesign to improve coherence, reduce fragmentation and enable staff to work more effectively together in supporting students from application through to graduation.

Momentum continued under the Disability Action Plan, with further embedding of accessibility across teaching, assessment and support services. Governance and delivery frameworks were strengthened, positioning the University well for sustained, institution-wide impact.

During the reporting period, Ako Atawhai Inclusive Learning was launched within Te Mātāpuna Library and Learning Services. Designed to support neurodivergent learners and students for whom English is an additional language, the service responds to changing learner profiles and expectations. Ako Atawhai reinforces AUT's commitment to equitable student success by providing flexible, strengths-based support that contributes to improved engagement, confidence and academic progression, aligned with Te Kete's focus on access, belonging and successful outcomes for all learners.

### **2.3 Innovative and technology-enabled teaching and learning**

AUT continued to invest in innovative and technology-enabled teaching and learning, reinforcing its identity as a university of technology and opportunity. Work to uplift artificial

intelligence literacy for staff progressed through refreshed training resources informed by staff feedback and capability assessment. This initiative supports confident, ethical and effective use of generative artificial intelligence across teaching, learning and assessment.

Enhancements to the digital student experience also continued, with legacy systems progressively migrated into the MyAUT and AUT App environment. This work is improving accessibility, usability and integration for applicants, students and alumni, supporting a more coherent learner experience across the lifecycle and strengthening lifelong connection with the University.

Investment in enabling digital infrastructure progressed in parallel, including completion of a proof of concept for centralised high-performance computing. This work informs development of a scalable, user-friendly environment to support advanced teaching and research across the University.

#### **2.4 Equity and opportunity**

AUT continued to advance equity and opportunity through initiatives that support learner success and institutional capability. Pacific Connections Day provided a culturally grounded welcome for new Pacific students and their families, strengthening relationships and belonging at the outset of study. The Pacific Learning Series pilot commenced during the period, supporting staff capability through professional development focused on Pacific knowledge, histories and contemporary contexts.

AUT also continued to strengthen inclusive practice for disabled students, Rainbow learners and other priority groups through targeted support, inclusive environments and culturally responsive approaches embedded across learning and support services.

Tiriti-led approaches to Māori learner success were further strengthened. A key development was the establishment of the Manu Taki role, a strategically positioned initiative with shared accountability between the Kaihautū Tiriti and the Chief Marketing Officer. The role focuses on relational engagement with Kura Māori, rangatahi and whānau, and on generating insight to inform future pathway and system design rather than transactional recruitment activity.

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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**

AUT continued to strengthen its research culture and performance during the reporting period, with sustained growth across the postgraduate research pipeline reinforcing the University's research capability and future workforce. Doctoral enrolments increased year on year, with master's research programmes continuing to attract strong international demand, reflecting the attractiveness of AUT's research environment and supervision capability. Research submissions for examination also increased, signalling improved throughput and candidate progression.

The release of the inaugural report from the Prime Minister's Science, Innovation and Technology Advisory Council marked an important shift in the national research environment, with increased emphasis on mission-led investment, advanced technologies and demonstrable impact. AUT is actively aligning its research strategy, partnerships and engagement to this evolving context, ensuring that research activity remains relevant, responsive and positioned for future funding and collaboration opportunities.

Collectively, these developments provide assurance that AUT's research ecosystem is supporting both scale and quality, aligned with the University's strategic ambition to grow impactful, applied research.

#### **3.2 Building research activity**

AUT continues to invest in building research capability and strengthening the research pipeline through coordinated activity led by the Graduate Research School and Te Mātāpuna Library and Learning Services as well as work by Te Kāhui Poipoi Rangahau (AUT Research Office). Structured researcher development initiatives are supporting early career researchers, postgraduate students and supervisors, strengthening research practice, supervision quality and academic leadership across the University.

Targeted programmes such as 12 Weeks to Research Active and Te Ara Whakamua: Navigating our Doctoral Futures provide focused support for research planning, progression and completion readiness. These initiatives contribute to a strong and consistent research culture, supporting both staff and doctoral candidates to develop confidence, capability and sustainable research careers.

AUT is also demonstrating sector leadership in postgraduate supervision development through national collaboration and shared training initiatives, reinforcing quality and consistency in supervision practice and supporting long-term research sustainability.

#### **3.3 Research impact and success**

AUT progressed work to strengthen research impact, visibility and external engagement in an increasingly competitive funding and policy environment. Development of a Research Engagement Plan is guiding more strategic relationship building with government agencies,

system leaders and research partners, supporting clearer pathways from research activity to real-world impact.

Preparation continued for Wiki Rangahau Research Week 2026, with a focus on applying research and technology for public good. This work supports greater visibility of AUT research, encourages interdisciplinary collaboration, and strengthens connections between research, industry, communities and government.

Graduate research activity continues to underpin AUT's broader research impact, with strong engagement across disciplines and a diverse research student cohort supporting internationalisation and global research connections at postgraduate level.

### **3.4 Adapting to emerging technologies**

AUT continues to respond to the rapid evolution of emerging technologies through coordinated activity across research and teaching. Internal engagement across University working groups focused on artificial intelligence and assessment supports the responsible integration of emerging technologies into research practice, supervision and academic decision-making.

AUT is also demonstrating national leadership at the intersection of emerging technologies and kaupapa Māori through Māori-led initiatives in artificial intelligence and Māori data sovereignty. During the reporting period, the Office of Māori Advancement convened a Māori Artificial Intelligence Wānanga, establishing a steering rūpū to develop a shared vision, mission and ethical direction for this work. This kaupapa positions AUT as an institution actively shaping culturally grounded and Tiriti-aligned approaches to technological development.

In parallel, AUT continues to advance digital and research-enabling infrastructure. A proof of concept for a centralised high-performance computing environment has been completed, informing the development of a broader strategy to support secure, scalable access to advanced compute and GPU capability. This work positions AUT to better support data-intensive research and emerging technology disciplines, consistent with its role as New Zealand's university of technology.

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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 Commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi**

Progress continues in embedding Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a living framework across institutional strategy, governance and decision-making. The Kaihautū Tiriti has provided strategic advice across a range of key university plans and programmes, including science, digital and data-enabled initiatives, sustainability and engagement planning. This work has focused on strengthening how Te Tiriti actively shapes purpose, priorities and outcomes at a strategic level, ensuring alignment with Te Aronui moves beyond compliance to meaningful impact.

This assurance role provides Council with confidence that Tiriti commitments are being integrated consistently and coherently across AUT's strategic portfolio and decision-making.

### **4.2 Iwi relationships**

AUT continues to deepen its relationship with mana whenua and iwi partners, with a focus on moving from intent to delivery. Engagement with Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei during the period centred on aligning tertiary pathways, workforce development and education outcomes with iwi priorities, supported by clearer accountability and the use of data and insights to benefit uri (descendants). Agreement has been reached to progress a dedicated wānanga during Matariki, supported by regular follow-up hui.

Preparatory kōrero are also underway with Ngāti Paoa, including engagement with new iwi leadership, to explore shared education priorities and collaboration opportunities as part of AUT's broader Māori Outcomes planning. These relationships reinforce AUT's place-based responsibilities and long-term partnership approach.

### **4.3 Government relations**

AUT continues to strengthen its engagement across central and local government to advance the University's strategic priorities and ensure AUT is well positioned in a changing policy and political environment. During the period, Assistant Vice-Chancellor Engagement Amy Malcolm was appointed to represent the tertiary sector on the Mayor's Central City Advisory Panel. Work led by AUT to make Auckland a great student city led to a contributing to a city-wide coordinated welcome to students at the start of Semester 1 and is progressing longer-term initiatives to enhance the student experience, including renewed consideration of graduation processions.

The reporting period also reflected significant change across the political landscape. AUT welcomed the then Associate Minister for Defence, Hon Chris Penk, to campus to engage with engineering and research activity undertaken in partnership with the Ministry of Defence. Following the subsequent Cabinet reshuffle, Hon Chris Penk was appointed Minister of Defence, and AUT looks forward to continued engagement. The reshuffle also saw responsibility for universities, and for research, science and technology, consolidated within Hon Penny Simmonds' tertiary portfolio, returning to an integrated approach to tertiary

education. AUT has initiated engagement and looks forward to hosting the Minister on campus.

AUT remains actively engaged in national policy development, including changes to the research and innovation system, with senior leadership contributing to discussions with the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and Tertiary Education Commission officials. The University also provided input to Education New Zealand's targeted consultation on the Government Policy Statement for International Education. Alongside this, AUT continues to engage with central and local government on emerging issues affecting the sector, with a focus on maintaining continuity of in-person teaching and learning and supporting student and staff wellbeing.

#### **4.4 Civic engagement**

AUT continues to strengthen its civic role through place-based partnerships that connect students, staff and communities with the social, cultural and economic life of Tāmaki Makaurau. During the period, the University worked with Auckland Council and its agencies on city-focused initiatives that support entrepreneurship, innovation and student engagement, reinforcing AUT's contribution to Auckland's economic and social development.

AUT also partnered with Heart of the City and Tātaki Auckland Unlimited to support activities that connect students and international communities with the city centre, positioning AUT as an active participant in Auckland's civic and visitor economy. In addition, the University hosted community-led events on campus in partnership with organisations such as Ko Wai Tātou – Multiethnic Young Leaders, providing space for civic dialogue, leadership development and cross-cultural connection.

#### **4.5 Community engagement and impact**

AUT continues to deepen its community engagement through partnerships and initiatives that support entrepreneurship, cultural leadership and meaningful student participation beyond the University. These activities contribute to social impact while reinforcing AUT's role as an open and connected institution.

During the period, AUT strengthened its partnership with The King's Trust through the Ara Tipu Startup programme, supporting emerging student entrepreneurs with training, mentoring and seed funding. The successful graduation of the first student cohort and the launch of a second cohort, with increased demand, highlight the programme's impact in building enterprise capability and practical experience for students.

AUT's commitment to community dialogue and Tiriti-based engagement was reflected in the hosting of Te Piriti o Waitangi II at Ngā Wai o Horotiu marae in March 2026, as part of the Tiriti Based Futures and Anti-Racism Conference. The event provided a reflective forum on Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a living commitment, with executive-led panels and kōrero from University Māori leadership strengthening institutional understanding of Tiriti responsibilities within the current tertiary and social context.

Community connection was further supported through AUT's partnership with Auckland Football Club (AFC). Successful half-time activations at the January and March matches, alongside strong student engagement during Orientation Week, extended AUT's community

reach. The final game on 19 April featured a half-time performance by Titahi Ki TUA, the AUT Māori student association, including a student performance of the New Zealand national anthem, showcasing student talent and cultural leadership in a high-profile public setting.

#### **4.6 Philanthropic opportunities and partnerships**

AUT continues to strengthen philanthropic partnerships through the AUT Foundation. During the reporting period, philanthropic activity has supported the continued development of programmes aligned with student success and equity, including leadership and enterprise initiatives delivered in partnership with The King's Trust. These partnerships reflect a shared commitment to supporting students to develop the skills, confidence and networks required to thrive in a rapidly changing environment.

The AUT Foundation is also preparing to launch its fourth annual staff giving campaign, alongside a range of corporate and community fundraising initiatives. These activities contribute to a growing culture of philanthropy at AUT and support targeted areas of impact, including student wellbeing, inclusion and community engagement.

#### **4.7 Alumni engagement and impact**

AUT continues to strengthen alumni engagement nationally and internationally, supporting lifelong relationships with graduates and leveraging alumni networks to enhance the University's influence and reach. During the period, AUT hosted alumni events in Auckland, online and offshore, including a major international alumni gathering in Guangzhou, China that brought together alumni from across southern China. Strong participation and leadership by alumni at these events reflects growing willingness to act as ambassadors for AUT and support future engagement.

Sector-focused alumni engagement, particularly in health, was a significant feature of the period. AUT hosted a Future of Health alumni event that convened senior alumni leaders from across the health system, including representatives from Southern Cross Healthcare, Orion Health, the Foot Mechanics Group and the Ministry of Health | Manatū Hauora strengthening connections between alumni, industry and the faculty, supporting professional practice and further learning opportunities for students and graduates.

Planning is underway for further alumni initiatives, including a proposed AUT Alumni Awards programme and enhanced digital engagement through the MyAUT environment, supporting more consistent and meaningful connection with graduates beyond completion of study.

#### **4.8 International**

AUT continues to advance its international strategy with a focus on enriching students' global perspectives, strengthening international partnerships, and supporting sustainable international engagement across priority markets in South Asia, Southeast Asia and China. During the reporting period, AUT expanded its international partnership footprint, including the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Universitas Airlangga in Indonesia, supporting longer-term collaboration in education and research.

Senior leadership engagement with international government, diplomatic and sector leaders reinforced AUT's reputation and visibility as a globally connected university. This included engagement with ministers and members of parliament, ambassadors and high-level international delegations, including representatives from Estonia, Finland, Bhutan, and prominent global leaders in international education and human rights. These visits supported government-to-institution relationships, academic diplomacy and the positioning of AUT within international education and research networks.

International mobility remains a core contributor to AUT's internationalisation objectives. Continued participation in Study Abroad and Exchange programmes enhanced campus diversity and supported globally connected learning environments. Pipeline development is tracking positively, with foundation pathway enrolments nearing pre-pandemic levels, supporting the sustainability of AUT's international contribution. Collectively, these activities position AUT to sustain and grow its international impact in line with Te Kete and the University's strategic ambition.

#### **4.9 Strengthening engagement framework and capability**

During the period, AUT progressed the development of its first Engagement Plan, establishing an enabling framework to support Te Kete and the strategic priority of partnerships that accelerate impact. The Engagement Plan will guide AUT's approach to engagement for the period 2026–2030, strengthening consistency, shared understanding and impact across the University.

The development of the plan has been led by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor Engagement, with a strong emphasis on co-design and practical relevance. An initial workshop was held with staff in engagement-focused roles towards the end of 2025, followed by a second workshop in April 2026. Together, these workshops brought together staff from across the University to contribute insights from lived practice, ensuring the plan reflects the diversity of engagement activity, partnership models and disciplinary contexts at AUT.

The draft Engagement Plan articulates clear principles for engagement, supported by agreed definitions and common understandings to improve clarity and alignment. It also identifies priority actions for improvement, provides strategic direction for engagement activity, and establishes a foundation for the framework to evolve over time as AUT's engagement practice continues to mature.

The draft plan has been approved by the Executive for staff consultation. Consultation is now underway, supporting broad participation across the University and enabling feedback to inform refinement and finalisation. This work represents an important step in strengthening AUT's institutional approach to engagement and ensuring partnerships are purposeful, reciprocal and aligned with strategic impact.

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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 Digital capability and artificial intelligence**

AUT continues to strengthen its digital capability as a core element of its market positioning as a university of technology and opportunity. Investment in enterprise-wide digital platforms is improving staff experience, institutional effectiveness and the University's ability to operate at scale in an increasingly complex environment. The rollout of *ServiceHub*, a digital assistant integrated within Microsoft Teams, provides staff with a single, user-centred point of access to support services across the University, enabling more efficient service delivery and allowing specialist teams to focus on higher-value activity.

Digital transformation is also supporting AUT's international ambitions. ICT-enabled improvements to international admissions processes are strengthening document management, data reliability and processing efficiency, while enabling the safe and governed adoption of artificial intelligence-supported workflows. This work responds to sector-level recommendations and contributes to improved responsiveness and experience for international applicants, supporting AUT's competitiveness in priority markets.

In parallel, AUT has progressed preparations for the broader rollout of AUTGPT, a secure, in-house generative artificial intelligence platform designed to provide staff with access to leading AI tools while maintaining data sovereignty and institutional control. Together, these initiatives reinforce AUT's positioning as a digitally capable, future-focused institution, with a strong emphasis on responsible, user-centred innovation.

### **5.2 Domestic Brand Position and Marketing Activities**

AUT continued to strengthen its domestic brand position over January and February through marketing activity that reinforced its distinctive, student-centred approach to access, transition and success. Brand and Marketing Services focused on improving the quality of prospective student engagement, supporting clearer progression from enquiry to enrolment rather than maximising volume alone.

Transition pathways such as UniPrep and Iti Kōpara were a central feature of this work, with integrated marketing and on-campus engagement highlighting AUT's commitment to supported entry into higher education. These initiatives increasingly function as conversion pathways as well as engagement tools, demonstrating AUT's distinctive strength in enabling access and successful transition for priority learners.

Domestic demand indicators remained positive despite expected seasonal moderation. Engagement shifted towards higher-intent activity, including increased course counselling appointments, signalling improved alignment between messaging, advice and student decision-making. In parallel, the refresh of core recruitment publications and continued embedding of AUT's updated brand voice and visual identity strengthened consistency across domestic channels.

Collectively, this work reinforces AUT's reputation as an inclusive, future-focused university that combines access with strong academic and student support, aligning with Te Kete and AUT's positioning as a university of technology and opportunity.

### 5.3 Global Brand Position and Marketing Activities

AUT's global brand positioning remained strong during the period, with sustained international demand and improving engagement quality across priority markets. International audiences continued to represent a significant proportion of new prospective student interest, reflecting the relevance and clarity of AUT's international value proposition.

Targeted activity across markets such as India and China supported pipeline development, while values-led initiatives, including engagement linked to Manaaki New Zealand Scholarships, reinforced AUT's reputation as an institution committed to opportunity, impact and global connection. *Always-on* digital marketing and increased use of marketing automation strengthened reach and efficiency, enabling AUT to engage prospective students at scale while maintaining message consistency.

Importantly, this period marked a transition from brand reset to brand maturity. Completion of foundational brand positioning work enabled greater focus on strategic planning, consistency and scaled delivery across international channels. Research-led storytelling, expert commentary and high-impact events further elevated AUT's profile, reinforcing its standing as a values-driven, applied university delivering real-world impact.

Together, these activities strengthen AUT's global reputation and support sustainable international engagement aligned with institutional priorities and long-term market positioning.

### 5.4 International rankings

AUT's international standing continued to strengthen with the release of the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026. AUT ranked among the world's top 25 universities for sports-related subjects and placed equal first among all New Zealand universities for hospitality and leisure management, reinforcing the University's distinctive strengths in applied, industry-connected education and research.

Overall performance in the 2026 subject rankings was strong. Of the 18 subjects ranked, 12 improved their position compared with 2025, three remained stable, and three moved down a band. This pattern reflects growing depth and consistency across AUT's teaching, research and reputation measures.

The 2026 results also demonstrate the expanding breadth of AUT's academic profile. Architecture and Built Environment was ranked for the first time, while Art and Design, Communication and Media Studies, and Anatomy and Physiology returned to the rankings, signalling strengthening performance across a wider range of disciplines.

The QS subject rankings assess universities using a combination of indicators, including academic reputation, employer reputation, research activity and international collaboration. AUT's results reflect a coordinated, university-wide contribution and reinforce its position as a university of technology and opportunity, delivering research and teaching that is excellent, relevant and connected to the world beyond the campus.

## **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 continues to progress a more integrated and regenerative approach to sustainability, strengthening governance, engagement and measurement to support long-term environmental responsibility. During the reporting period, work advanced on the Regenerative Action and Sustainability Plan, which sets out clear objectives, key performance indicators, targets and priority activities for 2026. The draft plan has been shared with senior leaders to support alignment, ownership and consistent delivery across portfolios.

To underpin this work, AUT established a Regenerative Action and Sustainability Committee, providing a formal governance mechanism to oversee progress, monitor performance and embed sustainability considerations into decision-making. This strengthens institutional coordination and provides Council with increased assurance that sustainability commitments are being actively stewarded.

Engagement and behavioural change remain a focus. The launch of Green Impact has generated strong early momentum, with staff and students forming teams to participate in sustainability actions across the University. Practical initiatives to reduce waste and support circular practices also continued, including a student-focused reuse initiative that redistributed household goods collected from student accommodation.

In parallel, data collection progressed to support calculation of AUT's 2025 carbon emissions, strengthening the evidence base for future emissions reduction planning and target-setting. Collectively, these activities demonstrate AUT's commitment to embedding sustainability as a core institutional capability aligned with Te Kete.

### **6.2 Library and learning support**

Te Mātāpuna Library and Learning Services continues to enhance its contribution to student learning, research capability and the broader academic environment. Early in 2026, the Library advanced a redesigned engagement and frontline service model, strengthening connections with student communities and supporting more responsive, student-centred service delivery across campuses.

Alongside its student-facing work, Te Mātāpuna continues to play a critical role in strengthening AUT's research infrastructure. Progress on the Tuwhera Research Data Repository supports open research practice and effective research data stewardship, contributing to research quality, visibility and compliance with emerging expectations.

Leadership capability within Te Mātāpuna was further strengthened with the appointment of a new Director of Collections and Infrastructure, reinforcing continuity, institutional knowledge and strategic oversight of core library systems and services. Together, these developments position Te Mātāpuna as a key enabler of student success, research excellence and academic culture across the University.

### **6.3 Leadership and development**

AUT continues to strengthen leadership capability across the University as a critical enabler of strategy delivery, organisational performance and culture change. During the reporting period, People and Culture focused on building a coherent leadership development pathway that supports leaders at different stages, from emerging people leaders through to experienced managers.

A suite of leadership programmes is now in place to support leadership transition, confidence and effectiveness, with a particular emphasis on inclusive leadership, cultural capability and leading in complex environments. These initiatives respond to identified capability gaps and staff feedback, supporting greater consistency in leadership practice across academic and professional contexts.

Progress also continued on Aronui Ora, AUT's core cultural capability programme, with growing participation from people leaders. This work supports shared language, behaviours and expectations aligned with Te Kete and AUT's values. Collectively, this focus provides Council with assurance that AUT is investing in leadership capability to support staff, manage change and deliver strategic priorities.

### **6.4 Culture and people**

AUT continues to progress its Thriving People, Thriving Future People Plan from strategy into delivery, with 2026 priorities now confirmed and increasingly embedded across the organisation. During the period, work focused on strengthening the line of sight between the People Plan and day-to-day operations, supported by clearer communication of expectations through people leader channels.

Foundational work to establish a robust People Plan KPI framework continued, ensuring indicators are measurable, data-supported and capable of providing reliable insight over time. This will enable improved monitoring of progress across culture, wellbeing, inclusion and workforce sustainability.

Progress was also made on culture and wellbeing initiatives informed by the Your Voice staff survey, including redevelopment of the Code of Conduct, supporting learning, and development of an evidence-based Wellbeing Plan. Work also advanced on the implementation of Reasonable Accommodation Guidelines, reinforcing AUT's commitment to accessibility and inclusion.

### **6.5 Spaces and places**

AUT continues to invest in its physical environment to support student wellbeing, high quality teaching and research, and long-term institutional resilience. During the reporting period, several high impact projects were completed or progressed across the campus network, with a focus on contemporary learning environments, compliance and future focused infrastructure.

Key completed works included the opening of Mōwai, AUT's new Student Health and Counselling Centre, alongside dedicated Rainbow Student Support spaces within the WQ building, delivery of a new PC2 rated teaching space, and the successful relocation of the City Campus gym within a constrained timeframe. Located above the Te Āhuru Recreation Centre,

Mōwai provides integrated mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing services in a culturally grounded and inclusive setting, reinforcing AUT's commitment to holistic student support, equity and manaakitanga. Together, these projects enhance student wellbeing, specialist teaching capability and demonstrate effective cross-university collaboration.

Progress also continued across the major capital programme, with relocations, refurbishments and specialist teaching and simulation facilities advancing to plan. Capital renewals and summer works focused on addressing legacy issues, improving safety and ensuring facilities remain fit for purpose. In parallel, space planning initiatives supported more efficient use of the estate through activity based working models.

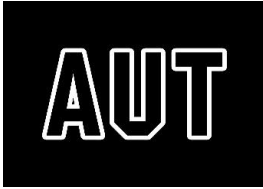
## **6.6 Enterprise and service**

AUT's commercial services continue to support the University's academic mission, campus experience and external engagement. During the reporting period, Estates Commercial Services demonstrated resilience and adaptability, supporting internal and external activity while maintaining service quality and alignment with institutional priorities.

Event-related activity continued to contribute to campus vitality and external engagement, supporting University-hosted conferences, academic events and orientation activity. Catering and hospitality services supported both teaching and community activity across campuses, contributing to student and staff experience.

Commercial performance reflected a mix of revenue growth and ongoing cost pressures, with active management of service delivery and margins. Continued review and modernisation of the commercial operating model, including future-focused event and retail systems, supports efficiency, user experience and long-term sustainability.

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PART A	
OPEN AGENDA ITEM	6

## Council Agenda Paper

**Subject:** The Chancellor's Report

**Date:** 18 April 2026

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

*THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE VERBAL REPORT FROM THE CHANCELLOR*

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<b>PART A</b> <b>OPEN AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>7.1</b>
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## **Council Agenda Paper**

**Subject:** Report from Academic Board

**Date:** 17 April 2026

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

*THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE ACADEMIC BOARD REPORTS AND MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY AND 30 MARCH 2026.*

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The reports and minutes will be sent under separate cover.

## Academic Board Report to Council

Meeting held 23 February 2026

### Strategic Matters and Policy Developments

#### **Academic and Capital Plan: Implementation update**

The DVCA updated the Board on implementation of the Academic and Capital Plan, including as embodied in the following projects:

- Academic Portfolio Management, including
  - implementation of a curriculum management system,
  - Development of an integrated academic quality framework
  - Enabling understanding of course delivery costs.
- University Graduate Profile
- AUT Online
- Strategic Science
- Project Navigator/Whole-of-University Service Model

### Committees of Academic Board

#### **Academic Planning Sub-group**

The Board:

- Noted a repositioning of APSG to enable a more active and strategic role in executive as well as academic decision-making
- Approved the closure of the Master of, and Postgraduate Certificate in, Creative Technologies

#### **Programme Approval and Review Committee**

The Board:

- Approved a recommendation for a new Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Assistance. This qualification was developed under an agreement with Health NZ Te Whatu Ora. The proposal now moves forward to CUAP (round 1).

#### **Research Committee of Academic Board**

The Board:

- AUT's partnership in a successful Horizon Europe consortium bid.
- AUT's participation in 4 of the 5 bids for an Advanced AI research platform to the second stage
- A contract has been signed with Catalyst IT for a research data repository
- The signing of an MoU with Fisher & Paykel Healthcare
- AUT submitted a response to MFAT's consultation on export controls.

## Academic Board Report to Council

Meeting held 30 March 2026

### Strategic Matters and Policy Developments

#### **Automated recording of learning activities**

The PVC Learning and Teaching and Director of Academic Quality updated the Board on progress towards systematised and automatic lecture recording, including but not only in the context of the Disability Action Plan. A pilot of automated recording in undergraduate lectures is planned for Semester 2.

#### **The New Tertiary Research Excellence Fund**

The DVC Research provided an update on the Tertiary Research Excellence Fund, which replaces the Performance-Based Research Fund. This new instrument will be phased in from 2027 and in full use in 2029.

### Committees of Academic Board

#### **Learning and Teaching Committee**

The Board:

- Noted draft principles on the Use of AI in Marking and Feedback, to be formalised as University Guidelines.
- Noted the one-year Academic Audit progress report was submitted to Universities New Zealand.

#### **Programme Approval and Review Committee**

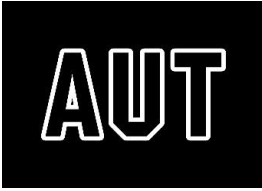
The Board:

- Approved recommendations to amend the Postgraduate Diploma in Registered Nurse Prescribing and restructure the Doctor of Health Science. These proposals move forward to CUAP (round 2).

#### **Research Committee of Academic Board**

The Board noted:

- Doctoral enrolments are showing strong intake growth, increasing from 25 in 2024 to 56 in 2026
- Staff research capability building continues to scale, with 20 staff selected for the Semester 1 "12 Weeks to Research Active" programme.
- Student peer support infrastructure continues to strengthen, with 12 active Research Student Peer Groups, including a new International Students' Group and a forthcoming DHSc peer group.



AGENDA ITEM	8
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## Council Agenda Paper

**Subject: Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report: 10 February 2026 – 24 March 2026**

**Date: 30 March 2026**

**From: Andrea Binning, Acting Director Health & Safety**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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*THAT THE COUNCIL PEOPLE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE RECEIVE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT*

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### **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.

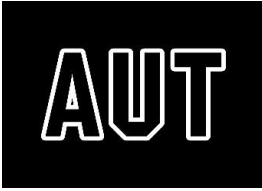
This report covers incidents reported in the period 10 February 2026 to 24 March 2026, with information and actions that have occurred or been reported over that period.

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### **2. HSW Open Action Item**

**Action Item:**

<b>Date Raised</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Current state</b>
<b>24 November 2025</b>	<b>5.2 Risk Report</b> Management to present a deep dive of the HSW risk, including review of ratings, at the next CFAC meeting.	<b>April 2026/Open</b>	The HSW strategic risk update is contained in the overall strategic risk update being presented to CFAC.
<b>23 February 2026</b>	<b>8.1 Health &amp; Safety Report</b> Management to request Mike Cosman to provide guidance on interim H&S governance approach for Council pending implementation of framework.	<b>May 2026/Open</b>	Response provided below



### **Interim H&S Governance Solution**

With the Council's recent endorsement of AUT's new Health & Safety Management framework, a question was asked about the timeframe to implement. It is expected that the implementation will take between 3-6 months for the full system to be written, digital tools created, tested & released and training to occur. Council asked if an interim solution for governance needed to be put in place during this period.

Mike Cosman, from Cosman Parkes, is working with AUT currently on Health & Safety Governance training for Executive and Council members. Mike's advice is that the effort to execute an interim solution would be better spent in expediting the new system. The on-going governance training, current reporting via Council and Executive meetings and the Te Ara Haumaruru programme provide sufficient coverage at present.

The central Health & Safety has recently brought in additional resource to expedite the delivery of the Health & Safety framework.

## **3. Governance Knowledge and Awareness**

### **Key developments in legislation, regulation, or guidance**

#### **WorkSafe: High Hazards Newsletter – March Industry Insights**

WorkSafe's latest update reinforces strong regulatory focus on preventing major accidents, drawing on learnings from major hazard facility forums, geothermal workshops, and past disasters such as Pike River. PCBUs in high-hazard sectors are expected to maintain robust safety case systems, verify critical controls, and strengthen incident reporting and emergency preparedness for low-likelihood but high-impact events.

#### **MBIE: Health and Safety Reform Programme Update (March 2026)**

MBIE has confirmed continuing reforms aligned with the Amendment Bill, signalling a systemwide shift toward clearer expectations and a strong focus on critical risk management. PCBUs can expect reduced ambiguity but higher expectations to demonstrate effective control of serious harm risks, with ACOPs becoming central compliance tools and officer due diligence expectations being clarified.

#### **Legislative Context: Health and Safety at Work Amendment Bill**

The Amendment Bill continues to progress and underpins the current health and safety reform direction, aiming to increase certainty, reduce unnecessary compliance, and strengthen Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs) as practical guidance. The regulatory system is shifting away from process heavy compliance toward evidence of effective management of high consequence risks, requiring PCBUs to prepare for updates to policies, training, and governance oversight.



### Key Themes

There is a clear shift toward prioritising critical risks, embedding learnings from major incidents and disaster responses, and moving to a more guidance-led system where ACOPs define what effective compliance looks like.

## 4. Te Ara Haumarū 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, Regulatory Compliance and Safe Workplace/Safe Worker Workstreams:** Installation of remedial works to support external chemical storage, dedicated nitrogen storage, relocation of external gas storage to a safer location, biowaste storage and safer internal lithium battery charging and storage units is now complete.

Remaining remedial works around safety showers & emergency plumbed eye wash stations, and extraction & ventilation continues. External testing and confirmation of spaces where these issues are present has concluded, minor works within the spaces is underway, where AUT can relocate activity, add additional enclosures around equipment or change chemical use to reduce risk. What remains is being classified as major works, in conjunction with Estates the programme is working through the scope to engage Beca engineering for feasibility of remediation, contractors for quotes to supply/install and with our AUT teams for suitable timeframes to under works. It is expected this work will last throughout 2026 due to the need for out of teaching time access.

- **Digital Solutions:** Chemwatch, the chemical inventory management solution, has had significant data loaded, including the full chemical and biological inventory across the School of Science and the faculty of Design and Creative Technologies, including over 4,000 unique chemicals and 10,000 lines of inventory. Work is underway to individually barcode each item to be used to track inventory movement, and to access safety data sheets.

Safety Culture has been procured to support Laboratory Audit and Asset Management and will be implemented in the coming months.

Digital solutions to support the implementation of AUT's new Health & Safety Management system continues.

As outlined in the table below:

- **194 items (78%)** have been completed, an increase of **66 items or 31%** from the previously reported **128 items (47%)**
- All recommendations are now in progress, with **59 items** remaining. It is expected that 41 of these will be completed within the coming 3 months, and the remaining 18 recommendations



AGENDA ITEM	8
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requiring larger building remediation works (major works as mentioned above), which will be delivered in conjunction with Estates throughout 2026.

Workstreams	Total Rec's	% of Rec's	Not Started	In Progress	Complete	Not Required	% Complete
Regulatory Compliance	130	47%	0	20	101	9	85%
Safe Workplace, Safe Worker	19	7%	0	9	10	0	53%
Risk Prevention & Control	52	19%	0	15	30	7	71%
Digital Solutions	19	7%	0	11	7	1	42%
Building Maintenance Remedial Work	37	14%	0	3	31	3	92%
Organisational Management	8	3%	0	1	6	1	88%
Strategic AUT wide Initiative/Future Strategic Planning	9	3%	0	0	9	0	100%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>274</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>78%</b>

**Programme Extension**

The Te Ara Huamaru programme had anticipated closing in April 2026. The HSW ELT Subgroup recently approved an extension of 3 months to support the ongoing delivery of digital solutions and to progress the major works with Estates. Transition of major works into the central Health & Safety team will occur to support delivery over the remainder of 2026 when the programme formally closes.

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**5. Understanding AUT’s Operations and Risk Landscape**

**Central Health & Safety team update**

Following a recent restructure, the former *Health, Safety & Wellbeing* team has transitioned to the newly named Health & Safety team, with wellbeing responsibilities now more clearly defined across the organisation.

Strategic oversight of wellbeing, along with the delivery of wellbeing initiatives and training, will sit with People & Culture’s Organisational Development (OD) team. The Health & Safety team will continue to support wellbeing activity where it intersects with health or safety, including the management of wellbeing-related incidents.

This change reflects AUT’s continued commitment to wellbeing. Aligning wellbeing strategy and initiatives with OD strengthens key partnerships across the University, while ensuring the Health & Safety team remains focused on core health and safety functions.

**Critical risk themes and trends**

The clearest critical risk themes in this period are concentrated in Health and Environmental Sciences and, to a lesser extent, Design and Creative Technology. The main trends are manual task and physical injuries (sprains, strains, crush injuries, falls and dropped objects), cuts and lacerations from



tools/sharps in workshop and practical environments, and several laboratory / hazardous environment control issues including chemical exposure, containment non-compliance, live electrical hazards, broken glass and water leaks creating slip risk.

There are also a small number of higher-consequence events such as collapse/seizure, fainting, psychosocial distress, threat of violence, and near-miss fire/electrical risks, which suggest that while many events are lower-level treatment cases, the dataset still shows recurring exposure to critical risk precursors that could lead to serious harm if controls are not strengthened.

#### Incidents by Faculty/Directorate

Faculty / Directorate	Current Period	Previous Period	Change
Health and Environmental Sciences	26	24	+2
Design and Creative Technology	11	1	+10
Not recorded	5	3	+2
Estates	3	4	-1
Business, Economics and Law	2	0	+2
Culture and Society	2	1	+1
Te Mātāpuna (Library and Learning Services)	2	1	+1
Student Services and Administration	1	3	-2
DVC Research	0	1	-1
People & Culture	0	1	-1

#### Key insights:

- Health and Environmental Sciences remain the main hotspot with the highest incident volume in the current period (26), increasing from 24 in the previous period. This suggests it continues to be the most significant area of operational risk exposure.
- Design and Creative Technology show the sharpest escalation, rising from 1 to 11 incidents (+10). Even allowing for a low previous baseline, this is the most notable change and warrants closer review.
- Most other areas are stable or low volume, with only small increases or decreases, while Estates, Student Services and Administration, DVC Research, and People & Culture all reduced. This indicates the main shift in risk profile is being driven by a small number of faculties rather than a university-wide increase.



## Open Incidents

### Overview

There are currently 70 incidents open, up from 45 under the previous period. 46 are older than 28 days. Education for people leaders around investigating and closing Noggin incidents continues, and targeted communication will be sent to people leaders to address older open incidents.

### Open Incidents by Faculty/Directorate

Faculty / Directorate	Open Incidents
Health & Environmental Sciences	45
Student Services and Administration	2
Design & Creative Technology	4
Estates	4
Te Mātāpuna (Library and Learning Services)	3
DVC Research	1
Culture & Society	3
Business, Economics and Law	2
Not recorded	6

## 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, reporting expected end May 2026
- Transport Safety (HSW) – Vendor selection underway. Expected to commence in Q2 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 was launched in February. At time of writing 83% of permanent and fixed term staff have completed this module and a further 7% in progress. There has



been higher than anticipated administrative support for the module, which are being jointly managed by Organisational Development and Health & Safety.

### **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.

Three formal Corrective Action Requests were raised, and have been addressed at AUT, with MPI formally signing off the action and closing each CAR accordingly.

AUT is scheduled to have our next MPI Audit in late April, with a dedicated task force appointed to oversee preparations for this audit to ensure full compliance and sign off is obtained. AUT's audit frequency is set at three monthly, the lowest available from MPI, the intention is to increase this to six monthly, which will be possible if our next two audits are clear and fully compliant.

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## **7. Forward Outlook**

### **Priorities and planned initiatives to July 2026**

- Embedding of Chemical Inventory Management software (Chemwatch), including barcoding off all chemical and biological materials.
- Implementation of Laboratory Audit & Asset Management software (Safety Culture).
- Continued roll out of AUT's Health & Safety Management System.
- Continued work under the Te Ara Haumarū programme to address major works.
- Renewed focus on the Strategic Initiatives in Te Ara Haumarū to address the structural contributors to non-compliance.
- Recruitment of a permanent Health & Safety Director.
- Deep dive of Incident Management (Noggin), including process and digital solution offerings.
- Relaunch of the central Health & Safety teams service delivery offering, including a full portfolio communication plan for increased engagement.
- Further alignment with OD on wellbeing delivery, reporting of wellbeing and shared responsibilities.

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## **8. Conclusion**

The Te Ara Haumarū programme remains firmly focused on delivering value to its key stakeholders, the School of Science and the Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies, while completing the remaining scope in partnership with Estates. Delivering nearly 80% of the original programme scope within 10 months represents a significant achievement and reflects the strong collaboration across teams and the shared commitment to improving health and safety at AUT, ensuring our people go home safe every day.



AGENDA ITEM	8
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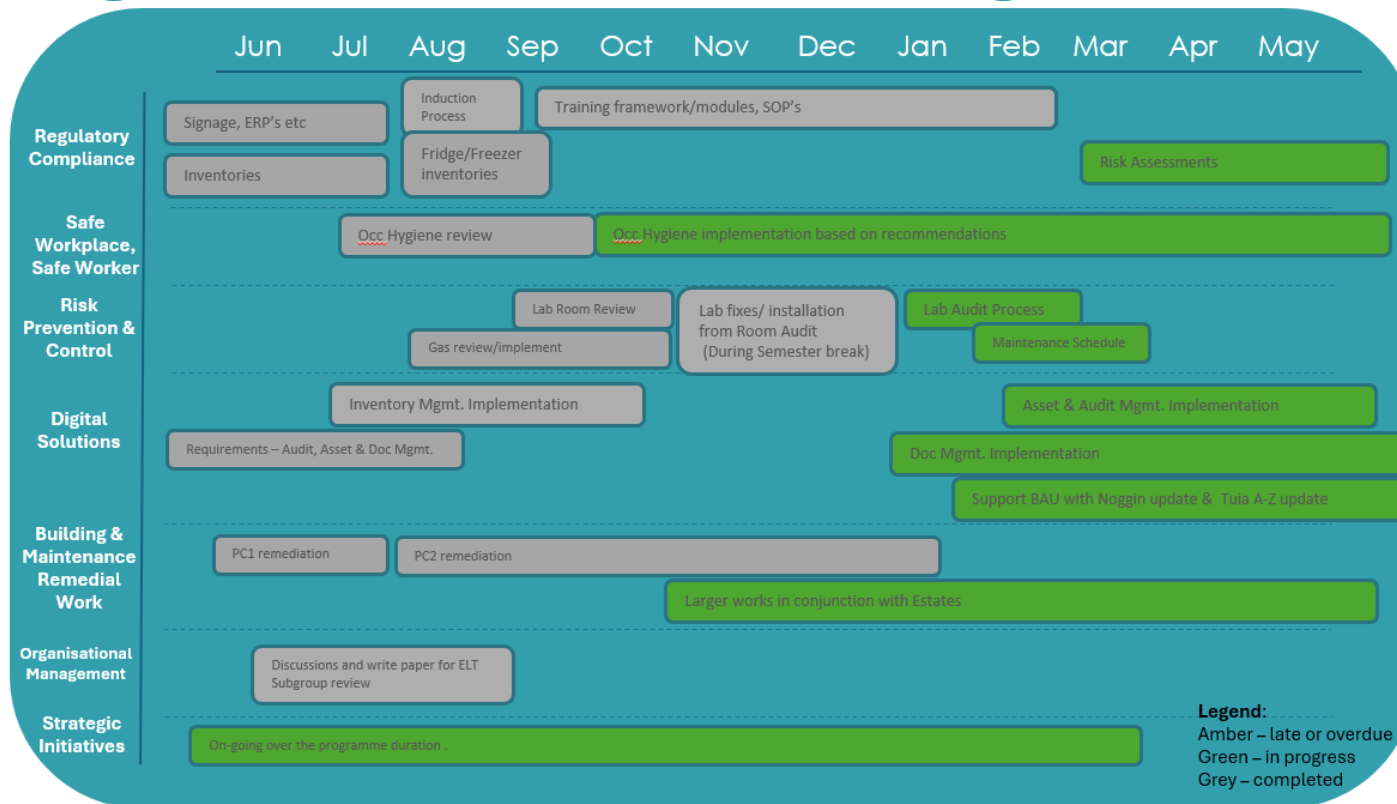
Sustained cultural change in health and safety will take time. Ongoing support from Council, the Executive, and our staff, students, and visitors will continue to be essential to strengthening AUT's health and safety culture.



AGENDA ITEM	8
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9. Appendix 1 – Te Ara Haumarū high level timeframes & progress

# High Level Timeframes – at a glance





<b>PART A</b> <b>OPEN AGENDA ITEM</b>
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<b>9</b>
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## **Council Agenda Paper**

**Subject:** WIPCE 2025 Impact and Legacy Report

**Date:** 18 April 2026

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

*THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT FROM TE TOI ARONU  
PROFESSOR MEIHANA DURIE.*

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# WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT 16 – 20 NOVEMBER 2025



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## INTRODUCTION

The World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education (WIPCE 2025) was delivered in November in Aotearoa, New Zealand, bringing together Indigenous leaders, educators, researchers, rangatahi and knowledge holders from across the globe. The conference was hosted by Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in partnership with iwi manaaki Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei for the WIPCE International Council.

This Impact Report outlines the scale, reach and outcomes of the conference, capturing its educational, cultural, civic, economic and legacy impacts. It reflects both quantitative data and qualitative insights gathered through delegate registration, programme delivery and participant evaluation.

WIPCE 2025 extended beyond a traditional conference model. It combined global Indigenous scholarship with public activation, cultural immersion, youth leadership and Indigenous enterprise engagement. Through initiatives such as Te Ao Pūtahi Festival, marae-based experiences and city-wide civic participation, the conference broadened access and strengthened community connection.

This report demonstrates how WIPCE 2025 delivered measurable regional economic benefit, advanced Indigenous education leadership, elevated Indigenous visibility in public space, and influenced the wider business events sector in Aotearoa New Zealand.



WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT

Photo credit: Tamaira Hook Pg 3

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WIPCE 2025 welcomed more than 3,800 delegates, representing 25+ countries/territories, and was identified by Tātaki Auckland Unlimited as the largest recorded education conference held in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Hosted by AUT in partnership with mana whenua Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, the conference created a global platform for Indigenous-led dialogue on education, sovereignty, language revitalisation and innovation.

With more than 550 presentations, 13 keynote speakers, 10 panel discussions and 160 poster presentations, WIPCE 2025 delivered one of the most substantial Indigenous education programmes convened internationally.



Its impact extended well beyond programme delivery: More than 3,000 participants took part in the opening pōwhiri and Queen Street parade, creating visible civic presence and strong media exposure.

Te Ao Pūtahi Festival engaged 40+ Indigenous stall holders and expanded access beyond registered delegates.

Over 1,500 delegates were welcomed onto marae, including more than 1,000 onto Ngā Wai o Horotiu Marae at AUT.

16,600+ visitor nights were generated, contributing an estimated \$8.275 million in regional economic impact. Significant procurement was direct to Māori pakihi and local suppliers.

Participant evaluation confirms strong delivery at international scale, with a weighted satisfaction score of 4.59 out of 5 across 734 responses. Feedback highlights the conference's successful integration of academic excellence, cultural grounding and operational capability.

WIPCE 2025 demonstrated that Indigenous-led conferences can deliver measurable economic return, sector influence and public visibility while remaining firmly anchored in cultural integrity and collective leadership.

WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT



*“Being able to gather en masse at WIPCE is critical, for Indigenous communities and for the world. At a time when Indigenous rights are under threat, and our contributions to humanity and the environment are too often ignored, it is through the power of our unity that our collective messages will reverberate around the world.”*

**Professor Meihana Durie – WIPCE 2025 co-chair**



## CO-CHAIRS MESSAGE

Tēnei tonu te reo maioha o Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makaurau e rere tonu ana ki te ti, ki te tā, ki te tai whakarunga, ki te tai whakararo, puta noa i ngā maunga kōrero, i ngā pari kārangaranga, i ngā ara tūpuna i ngā awa tupua, rere ki uta, rere ki tai. Ki ngā moana i hoea mai ai e o tātou mātua tūpuna. Tēnā huihui mai rā tātou kartoa

Ka huri tonu ngā whakaaro ki a nūnui mā, ki a rōroa mā, rātou katoa kua ngaro i te tirohanga kanohi, kua takahia te ara hokinga kore ki muri. He rarangi maunga tū te ao, tū te pō, engari he rarangi tāngata ka ngaro. Tauāraia te pō, tītoko ake ki te ao marama.

It is our immense privilege to present this Impact and Legacy Report for the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education 2025. We wish to acknowledge the work of the WIPCE International Council and particularly the contributions of WIPCE International Council Co-Chairs, Dr Noenoe Wong-Wilson and Dr Bentham Ohia. Their insights and wisdom were immensely valuable in ensuring the success of WIPCE 2025 alongside the valued contributions of International Council members.

It is fitting that we also make important mention of the immense contribution of the WIPCE 2025 Academic Board under the outstanding leadership of Chair, Professor Ella Henry. We also wish to take this opportunity to also recognise all Indigenous nations and representatives who entrusted us with the responsibility of hosting this most significant event in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) and of course in Aotearoa.



Toeolesulusulu Professor Damon Salesa | WIPCE 2025 Co-Chair  
AUT Vice-Chancellor  
*Satapuala, Neiafu, and Falealupo*  
First Samoan (Pacific) Vice-Chancellor in Aotearoa New Zealand



Professor Meihana Durie | WIPCE 2025 Co-Chair  
AUT Te Toi Aronui  
*Rangitāne, Ngāti Kauwhata, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Porou, Rongowhakaata and Kāi Tahu*

One of the most distinctive features of WIPCE 2025 has been the strength of our enduring partnership with our iwi manaaki for WIPCE 2025, Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, who played such a pivotal and central role in hosting our manuhiri tūārangi from around the world.

Kei ngā mana rangatira o Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, kei ngā kaihapai i tā tātou kaupapa, tēnei te whakamānawa atu nei i a koutou. He kokonga whare e kitea, he kokonga ngākau e kore e kitea.

Their leadership, guidance and warm embrace of our longstanding partnership together meant that we were able to ensure all of our manuhiri could be looked after in ways consistent with the guiding principles of manaakitanga, tika, pono and aroha.

WIPCE 2025 welcomed more than 3,800 delegates, the largest global Indigenous assembly ever held in Aotearoa, (quite possibly one of the largest in the world) and reportedly the largest academic conference New Zealand has hosted. The scale of participation affirmed the continued importance of WIPCE as a leading forum globally for Indigenous scholarship, leadership and international collaboration.

We extend our appreciation to the university staff and the organising team for delivering a remarkable conference at an unprecedented scale and complexity. Their professionalism, cultural responsiveness and resilience enabled WIPCE 2025 to proceed smoothly, with tikanga and manaakitanga upheld throughout. While the success of WIPCE was the effort of the entire AUT hau kainga, and a vast range of partners, contributors, whānau and supporters, we wanted to particularly acknowledge Colleen Leauanae and Torise Flay for their sustained and inspired leadership.



Throughout the week, participants experienced an extensive and culturally rich programme. Keynotes, panels and research presentations were accompanied by marae-based learning, civic activation, public celebration and intergenerational engagement. For many, WIPCE 2025 was not merely a conventional conference. It was an Indigenous gathering, where knowledge was expressed through ceremony, food, song, movement, story and connection. It demonstrated that our knowledge systems live not only in research and academia, but also in practice, relationships and collective experience.

Hosting WIPCE 2025 was a milestone moment for Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau, Auckland University of Technology. It affirmed AUT's identity as a university committed to Indigenous education leadership, to Te Tiriti, and to advancing knowledge in ways that honour both tradition and innovation. Delivering an event of this magnitude and cultural significance strengthened AUT's international standing and demonstrated the university's capability to host complex, culturally grounded global gatherings.



The legacy of WIPCE 2025 will continue to influence AUT's work in Indigenous scholarship, community partnership and global collaboration.

As we reflect on WIPCE 2025, we are reminded of the wisdom in the Hawaiian saying, 'A'ohē pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho'okahi. Not all knowledge is found in one school. WIPCE demonstrated that insight comes from our universities, our communities, our marae, our rangatahi and our collective experiences, and AUT endeavoured to uphold this vision.

These efforts saw the influence of WIPCE 2025 extend well beyond the University, the venue and city and our formal programme. The event strengthened global Indigenous relationships, elevated Indigenous presence in the centre of Tāmaki Makaurau, and provided a benchmark for how major events in Aotearoa can be delivered in culturally grounded and community-centred ways. These outcomes reflect a model where academic excellence, cultural integrity and public engagement operate together as interconnected expressions of Indigenous knowledge and leadership.

The Samoan proverb, E lele le toloa ae ma'au i le auvai, reminds us of how the toloa bird may fly far yet always returns to the water. In the same way, WIPCE travels across the world, yet always returns to the foundations of Indigenous knowledge, relationships and shared purpose.

We acknowledge with respect and with grateful hearts all who contributed to the success of WIPCE 2025. The relationships formed, the knowledge shared and the memories carried forward will continue to shape Indigenous education leadership in years to come.

**Toeolesulusulu Professor Damon Salesa**  
Vice Chancellor, Auckland University of Technology

**Professor Meihana Durie**  
Te Toi Aronui, Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makaurau



*"A truly amazing and overwhelming experience that I am blessed to have been a part of. Every element brought something unique and special and created one of the best experiences of my life so far. No words can explain the feeling of being surrounded by some many Indigenous People from around the world and sharing and appreciating everyone's Culture. It filled me with so much pride to be an Indigenous person."*  
**Curtin University, Perth, Australia**

## EVENT PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

The World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education exists to create a global platform where Indigenous voices lead, Indigenous knowledge systems are centred, and Indigenous futures are shaped on our own terms.

Bringing together educators, researchers, leaders, youth and knowledge holders from across nations, the conference provides structured dialogue on Indigenous education, language revitalisation, sovereignty, cultural continuity and intergenerational knowledge transmission.

In a time of global uncertainty – marked by social, political and environmental disruption – WIPCE 2025 intentionally created a space of cultural safety, belonging and affirmation. It sought to provide an environment where Indigenous peoples could gather as themselves, grounded in identity and community, and celebrate the strength and 'super power' of indigeneity.

Beyond academic exchange, the gathering served a deeper purpose. Through ceremony, storytelling, research and cultural practice, the conference affirmed identity, strengthened collective resilience and uplifted the spirits of those present. For many participants, the act of gathering contributed to healing – reinforcing solidarity and shared purpose across nations and generations.

### Point of difference – Te Ao Pūtahi Festival

A defining feature of WIPCE 2025 was the development of Te Ao Pūtahi Festival, a public-facing component designed to extend learning beyond registered delegates.

The festival created accessible entry points for members of the public, local Indigenous communities and those unable to attend the full conference due to financial or other constraints. By opening elements of the programme to a wider audience, Te Ao Pūtahi festival broadened participation and enabled education beyond the walls of the conference venue.

This initiative strengthened community engagement, increased accessibility and reinforced the conference's role not only as a scholarly gathering, but as a community-centred platform for shared learning and cultural celebration.



# 1. IMPACT OVERVIEW

## 1.1 GLOBAL & ACADEMIC IMPACT

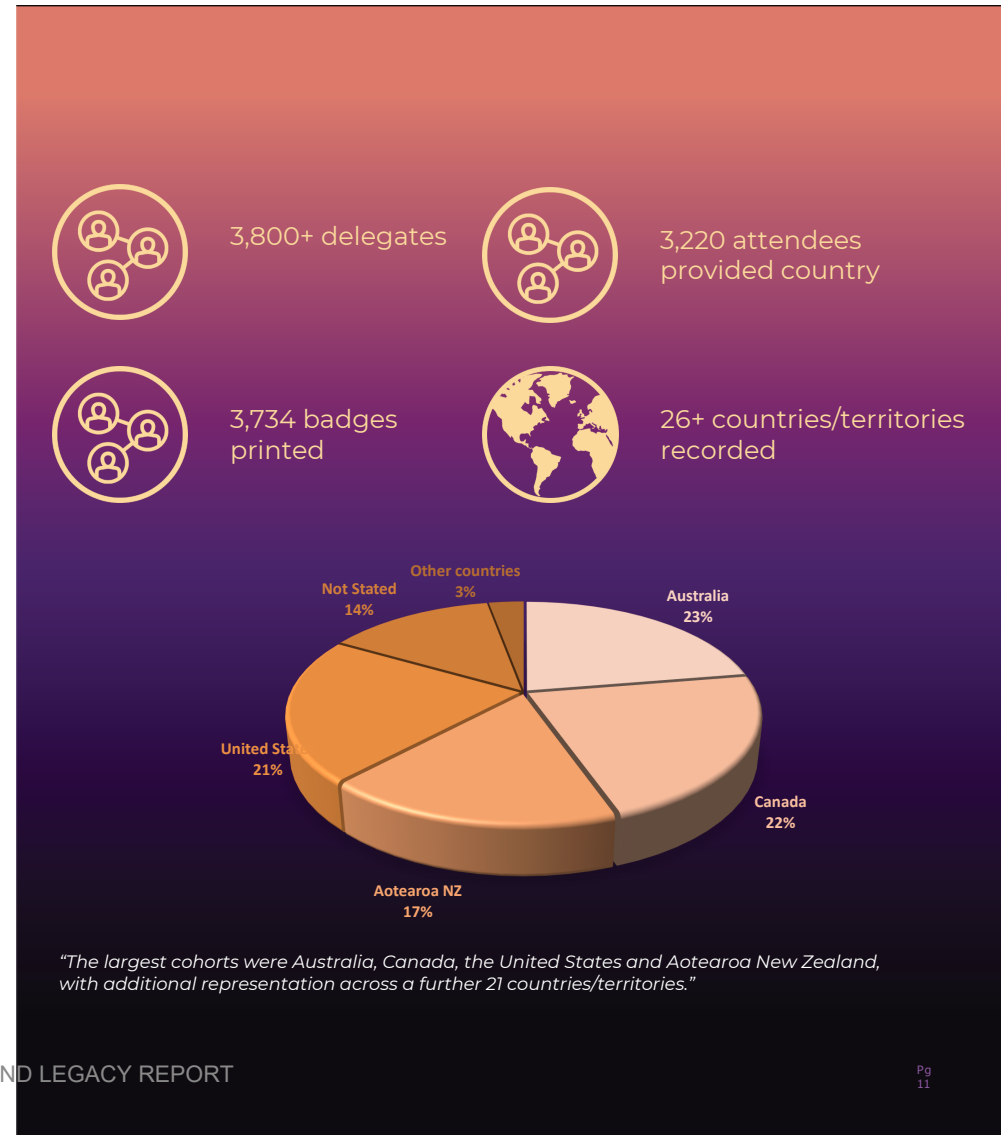
### 1.1.1 Global Indigenous Participation

WIPCE 2025 welcomed more than 3,800 delegates and demonstrated strong international reach. Providing their country of origin was optional for delegates, but 3,220 did so (86%)<sup>1</sup>. This provides a robust, though not 100% complete, evidence base for understanding global participation.

Among those who completed the country field, the largest cohorts were Australia, Canada, United States and Aotearoa New Zealand. These four cohorts account for approximately 96.6% of completed country entries, reflecting particularly strong engagement across the Pacific and North America.

In addition to the largest cohorts, smaller delegate groups were recorded from a further 21 countries/territories, including Taiwan, Norway, Japan, Guam, Fiji, the United Kingdom, France, Finland, Greenland, Botswana, South Africa, and others. This breadth reinforces the conference’s role as an international Indigenous education convening space, with participation extending beyond core regions and into a wider global network.

<sup>1</sup>Data and figures presented in this report are drawn from registration records, operational reporting and participant surveys. Some registration fields were optional; therefore, certain demographic and geographic breakdowns reflect completed entries only.



## GLOBAL & ACADEMIC IMPACT

### 1.1.2 ELEVATING INDIGENOUS EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

The conference achieved strong engagement from Indigenous educators, researchers and academic leaders across regions.

With:

- 550+ speaker presentation
- 13 keynote speakers
- 10 panel discussions
- 160+ poster presentations

the conference delivered one of the most substantial education programmes convened internationally.

This volume and diversity of scholarship created a platform for intellectual exchange. Presentations spanned research findings, community-led case studies, policy innovation, language revitalisation initiatives and teaching practices grounded in Indigenous knowledge systems.

The scale of academic participation enabled:

- Cross-regional comparison of education models
- Sharing of evidence-based practice and applied research
- Strengthened dialogue between community practitioners and university-based researchers
- Intergenerational exchange between established leaders and emerging scholars

The density of research, case studies and pedagogical innovation presented during the week contributes to collective capacity-building across the global Indigenous education network.



550+ Speakers



13 Keynote speakers



160+ Posters



10 Panel Discussions



WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT

## 1.2 CULTURAL & CIVIC IMPACT

### 1.2.1 MANA AND VISIBILITY – INDIGENOUS PRESENCE IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

More than 3,000 participants took part in the opening pōwhiri and Queen Street parade representing a wide range of Indigenous nations, cultures and communities from across the globe.

The parade was not simply ceremonial – it was a visible and powerful demonstration of Indigenous presence, pride and collective strength in the heart of the city. The diversity of regalia, language, song, haka and cultural expression created a vibrant atmosphere that captured public attention and generated excitement throughout central Auckland.

The energy and participation generated by the parade set the tone for the week-long conference. It established WIPCE 2025 as both a scholarly gathering and a cultural movement – one grounded in joy, resilience and confidence.

Importantly, the parade received media coverage across broadcast, digital and social platforms, extending its visibility beyond those physically present. Media exposure amplified imagery of Indigenous celebration and leadership, contributing to wider public awareness and reinforcing the conference's cultural and civic significance.



## CULTURAL & CIVIC IMPACT

### 1.2.2 RANGATAHI LEADERSHIP AND INTERGENERATIONAL IMPACT

WIPCE 2025 intentionally centred rangatahi (youth) participation through:

- A dedicated youth space – Te Ao Rangatahi
- Daily youth-led programming
- Activities supported by Kamehameha Schools and Titahi ki Tua – AUT Māori Student Association
- Youth representation in plenary panel discussions
- Presentation of the Declaration of Indigenous Youth
- Community outreach sessions



This structure ensured youth were not passive attendees but active contributors to conference outcomes.



The *Declaration of the Indigenous Youth* presented at WIPCE 2025 builds on the WIPCE International Declaration of Indigenous Youth – a statement affirming Indigenous young peoples’ pride, cultural identity and commitment to self-determination, including priorities around education, language, governance and economic sustainability.

WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT

### 1.2.3 CULTURAL IMMERSION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT SCALE

#### Te Ao Tiroiro Excursion Programme

More than 3,000 attendees participated in Te Ao Tiroiro, extending learning beyond formal conference sessions and into place-based cultural experiences.

This programme deepened understanding of local Indigenous knowledge, strengthened connection to whenua and community, and reinforced the principle that Indigenous education is grounded in lived context.



Photo credit: Tamaira Hook Pg 14

## CULTURAL & CIVIC IMPACT

### 1.2.4 MANAAKITANGA IN ACTION – MARAE ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

WIPCE 2025 provided meaningful marae-based engagement experiences, with more than 1,500 participants welcomed onto marae across the programme and more than 1,000 welcomed onto Ngā Wai o Horotiu Marae.

These experiences were grounded in tikanga and led by marae hosts who welcomed manuhiri into the space through formal pōwhiri and engagement processes. The act of being received onto marae was not symbolic – it was relational. Purposely programmed to create space for connections, reciprocity and shared understanding between mana whenua and manuhiri.

The excursions were not limited to physical presence on marae grounds. They provided opportunities for presentations, dialogue and knowledge exchange to take place within a space that holds deep cultural significance. Holding scholarly and cultural discussions within these environments reinforced that Indigenous knowledge is inseparable from place and whakapapa.

For many international delegates, this experience offered direct engagement with living Indigenous governance structures and community leadership models.

#### Ngā Wai o Horotiu – Host institution connection

Welcoming more than 1,000 delegates onto the host institution's marae enabled participants to physically and culturally step into the heart of the host university.



#### This experience:

- Strengthened the connection between the conference and its host institution.
- Demonstrated AUT's commitment to embedding Te Ao Māori within its campus environment
- Provided a culturally-grounded venue for engagement and exchange

Together these marae experiences extended learning beyond conference rooms and into spaces of cultural hospitality and living knowledge – reinforcing WIPCE 2025 as a gathering grounded in manaakitanga, reciprocity and relationship.



## CULTURAL & CIVIC IMPACT

### 1.2.5 INDIGENOUS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND GLOBAL COLLABORATION

WIPCE 2025 was the site of ratification for the Indigenous Global Chefs Collective, marking a significant milestone in advancing Indigenous food sovereignty.

This development connects culinary practice with land rights, cultural preservation and economic empowerment. The ratification signals growing international co-ordination in protecting traditional food systems and Indigenous knowledge relating to whenua, waters and sustainable practice.



## 1.3 PUBLIC ACTIVATION AND COMMUNITY ACCESS

### 1.3.1 TE AO PŪTAHI FESTIVAL

Te Ao Pūtahi Festival was developed as a public-facing extension of WIPCE 2025, broadening participation beyond registered delegates and ensuring that the impact of the conference extended into the wider community. Designed to increase accessibility and engagement, the festival provided opportunities for thousands of people, members of the public, local Indigenous communities and those unable to attend the full conference programme to participate in cultural celebration, learning and exchange.



WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT

## PUBLIC ACTIVATION AND COMMUNITY ACCESS



### 1.3.2 Indigenous enterprise and economic participation

The festival engaged 40+ Indigenous stall holders, creating space for Indigenous entrepreneurs, artists, makers and food providers to operate and showcase their work.

This activation:

- Supported Indigenous enterprise and local economic participation
- Increased visibility of Indigenous-owned businesses
- Connected global delegates with local producers and creatives

### 1.3.3 Te Ao – “The World of” concept

The festival had different areas all named with our Te Ao concept, a five-day programme of cultural practices and traditions providing opportunities for hands-on engagement and knowledge sharing as well as dedicated space to support kaumātua and whanau participation.

These spaces:

- Highlighted the depth and diversity of Indigenous art forms
- Provided experiential learning beyond academic presentation
- Enabled intergenerational attendance
- Reduced barriers to participation for families
- Reinforced cultural values of collective care and inclusion



## PUBLIC ACTIVATION AND COMMUNITY ACCESS

### 1.3.4 Stage programme – visibility through performance

Across five days, the festival stage featured a curated programme of Indigenous musicians, kapa haka and cultural dance groups.

This public performance programme:

- Amplified Indigenous creative expression in a highly visible setting
- Showcased cultural diversity across nations
- Created a vibrant, welcoming environment that encouraged public engagement

The stage programme strengthened cultural visibility while positioning Indigenous performance as both artistic excellence and cultural leadership.

### 1.3.5 Broader impact

Te Ao Pūtahi Festival strengthened the public presence of WIPCE 2025 while expanding its cultural and economic footprint.

It ensured the conference was not limited to academic exchange within venue walls, but instead became a city-wide celebration of Indigenous identity, creativity and enterprise.

The festival model reflects a scalable approach to inclusive, culturally grounded conference delivery – combining scholarship, public engagement and Indigenous economic participation.

*“Te Ao Pūtahi at Aotea Square was a standout – a vibrant expression of Indigenous culture that welcomed not only delegates but the wider Tāmaki Makaurau community into the WIPCE experience. The way you connected the event with our city and its people has set a new benchmark for what business events in Auckland can be.”*  
*Ken Pereira – Head of Business Events, Tātaki Auckland Unlimited*



## 1.4 ECONOMIC AND SECTOR INFLUENCE

### 1.4.1 ECONOMIC AND REGIONAL IMPACT

Auckland Conventions Bureau (Tātaki Auckland Unlimited) reports that WIPCE 2025 generated:

- 16,600+ visitor nights
- An estimated \$8.275 million in economic impact

Beyond direct expenditure, the conference stimulated hospitality, accommodation, transport and local services, generating measurable regional economic activity.

### 1.4.2 MĀORI PAKIHI AND LOCAL PROCUREMENT

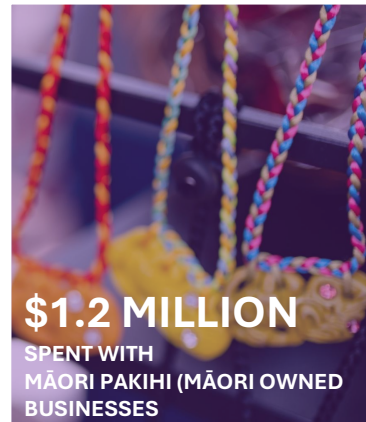
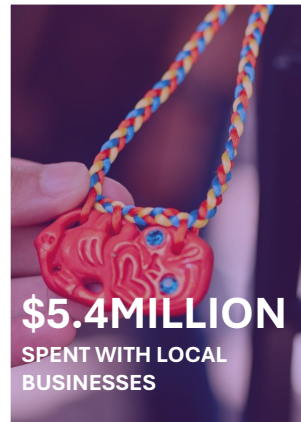
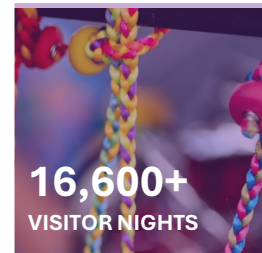
Beyond visitor expenditure, the conference directed operational spending intentionally toward Māori and local businesses.

- \$1.2 million spent with Māori pakihi (Māori-owned businesses)
- \$5.4 million spent with local suppliers
- 90% of total procurement directed toward Māori and/or locally based providers

This procurement approach ensured that economic benefit extended beyond the tourism sector and into Indigenous enterprise and community-based suppliers.

Engagement with Māori pakihi supported:

- Indigenous entrepreneurship and economic sovereignty
- Visibility and market access for Māori-owned enterprises
- Investment in local suppliers contributed to:
- Regional business activation
- Strengthened relationship with Auckland-based providers



### 1.4.3 INFLUENCE ON THE BUSINESS EVENTS SECTOR

WIPCE 2025 demonstrates that Indigenous-led conferences deliver multi-layered economic return – not only through visitor expenditure and procurement, but through influence on the wider business events sector.

In addition to generating visitor nights and contributing to economic impact, feedback from Tātaki Auckland Unlimited highlighted the conference as a benchmark example of how major business events in Auckland can be delivered differently. Tātaki Auckland Unlimited also reported WIPCE 2025 as the largest recorded education conference held in New Zealand, underscoring both its scale and national significance within the business events landscape.

WIPCE 2025 challenged traditional business event models through:

- Deep cultural integration across programme design
- Visible public activation throughout the city
- A distinctive look, feel and atmosphere grounded in identity and community.

WIPCE 2025 generated an energy that extended beyond venue walls and contributed to a reimagining of what large-scale conferences can look and feel like.

This influence represents an indirect but significant legacy outcome – shaping how future business events in Auckland may be planned, positioned and experienced.

## 2. OPERATIONAL DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE

### 2.1 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND DELIVERY PERFORMANCE

WIPCE 2025 was delivered within the approved budget framework, with funding sourced through a combination of registrations, sponsorship, institutional support and event revenue.

The total operating budget was approximately \$6 million supporting programme delivery, venue operations, cultural engagement and community activation.

Financial management processes were overseen through established governance and reporting structures, ensuring transparency and accountability.

### 2.2 MANAAKITANGA THROUGH KAI

Kai was one of the most significant and carefully considered workstreams within WIPCE 2025. As one of the largest contracts of the conference, substantial time and attention were dedicated to the tender process to ensure that cultural expectations, quality standards and manaakitanga obligations were fully understood and upheld.

Within te ao Māori and Indigenous cultures, kai is not simply provisional – it is a relationship, care and hospitality expressed in action. It signals the intent of the host and the value placed on manuhiri. Recognising this, the project team worked to ensure that menus, presentation and service delivery reflected the dignity and scale of the gathering.

The final menus and offerings were designed to honour this responsibility, incorporating quality ingredients, thoughtful presentation and the capacity required to serve thousands of delegates with consistency.

Participant feedback reflected this intent, with many delegates acknowledging the quality of food and the role it played in the overall experience of being welcomed and hosted.

While operational considerations such as peak service flow required careful management at scale, the broader objective – to uphold manaakitanga through kai – was achieved. The investment in this workstream reinforced the cultural integrity of the event and strengthened the host institution's role as kaitiaki of the gathering.



### 2.3 VENUE SECURING AND PROGRAMME RELOCATION

Securing the Aotea precinct – including Aotea Centre, Aotea Square and Event Cinemas – represented one of the most significant and complex operational workstreams of the project.

Following the late withdrawal of the originally contracted venue due to construction delays, the conference required rapid relocation at scale. This necessitated urgent renegotiation of the venue access, reconfiguration of programme streams and reallocation of operational infrastructure within a compressed timeframe.

Securing exclusive access to multiple central city venues required sustained negotiation and coordination, including the rescheduling and relocation of pre-existing bookings to create sufficient capacity for WIPCE 2025.

Despite these pressures, the relocation ultimately strengthened the event footprint. Hosting WIPCE 2025 across Aotea precinct positioned the conference in the heart of the CBD, increasing visibility, accessibility and public presence. Feedback indicates that the scale and atmosphere of the venues exceeded expectations and contributed positively to the overall experience.

## OPERATIONAL DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE

### 2.4 DIGITAL PLATFORM AND APP DELIVERY

The conference programme app and registration platform represented one of the more complex digital workstreams within WIPCE 2025.

While the intent was to provide a seamless and intuitive digital interface for navigating 550+ presentations and multiple concurrent streams, the final user experience did not consistently align with expectations. This required additional on-site troubleshooting and manual support to ensure delegates could access programme information effectively.

Despite these challenges, backend data provided by the platform supplier indicates strong levels of technical engagement:

- 87.1% of all attendees logged into the event app
- 2,524 attendees participated in session selection (72.3% of checked-in attendees using the app)
- 46,708 sessions were pre-selected by attendees
- 103,044 device updates were synced across mobile devices
- 4,361 access control scans were recorded across 113 scanned sessions

These statistics demonstrate that delegates actively engaged with the platform's core functionality.

However, qualitative feedback indicates that usability, navigation clarity and programme flow presentation could have been strengthened to better support the density and complexity of the conference schedule. In practice, additional reliance on printed materials and in-person support mitigated these limitations during the event.

#### 2.4.1 Key learning

A central learning from this workstream is the importance of:

- Earlier technical scoping and functional stress-testing
- Clearer performance benchmarks and deliverable definitions
- Structured user acceptance testing prior to launch
- Earlier integration of internal expertise and oversight
- Ensuring that digital design aligns closely with programme architecture

## CONFERENCE APP ENGAGEMENT



87.1%  
Attendees logged



2,524  
Session selections



46,708  
Pre-selected sessions



72.3%  
Checked in  
attendees



103,044  
Device updates



4,361  
Access controlled  
sessions

## OPERATIONAL DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE

### 2.5 SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

Sustainability was intentionally embedded into the planning and delivery of the event, with a strong focus on reducing environmental impact while maintaining a high-quality delegate experience.

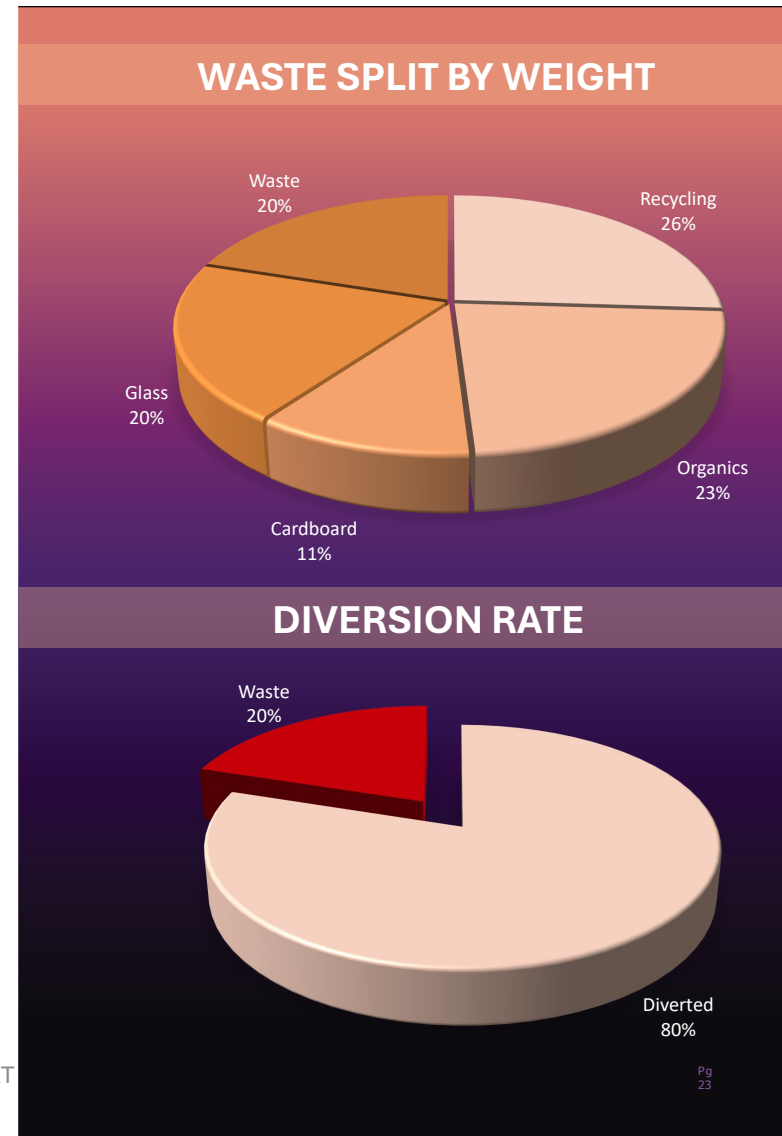
A key shift from traditional academic conferences was the deliberate move away from printed materials. All event information — including programmes, schedules and resources — was delivered digitally. While this represented a change from standard practice within academic environments, it was well received by delegates and significantly reduced paper consumption.

Sustainable procurement and operational practices were also prioritised. All stallholders, activators and catering providers were required to use recyclable, compostable or biodegradable serveware and packaging. This created a consistent, event-wide approach to waste minimisation and reinforced shared responsibility across all participants.

The event set an ambitious waste diversion target of 70%, reflecting a commitment to strong environmental performance. This target was exceeded, with the event achieving an estimated 80% diversion rate, equating to 2,381kg of material diverted from landfill through recycling, organics, glass and cardboard streams. Only 20% (598kg) of total waste was sent to landfill, demonstrating a highly effective waste management approach for an event of this scale.

Beyond the immediate environmental benefits, these practices demonstrate that large-scale academic and cultural events can successfully adopt more sustainable delivery models. The shift to digital-first engagement and enforced sustainable procurement standards has set a new benchmark for future events, both within the institution and across the sector.

Importantly, this approach establishes a clear legacy — normalising low-waste event delivery, influencing supplier expectations, and reinforcing sustainability as a core consideration in event planning rather than an add-on. It provides a practical blueprint for future programmes to build on, ensuring that environmental responsibility continues to evolve alongside event delivery excellence.



## 3. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC REACH

### 3.1 CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

WIPCE 2025 delivered a culturally grounded communications campaign designed to build sustained momentum, drive registrations, elevate WIPCE's profile as a global Indigenous movement, increase Pacific engagement and amplify the voice of Indigenous youth.

Guided by *Te Paringa Tai* – where the tides of te Waitematā symbolised connection and the drawing together of Indigenous peoples to Aotearoa – the campaign framed communications as waves of activity lifting awareness and visibility. This strategy, developed and largely delivered by communications agency Māia, shaped messaging, content creation, media outreach and stakeholder engagement throughout the year.

Communications activity included:

- Dedicated conference website
- eDM campaigns
- Social media engagement across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Tik Tok
- Media engagement and press outreach
- Te Ao Pūtahi Festival social media and radio advertising campaign

A conscious decision was made to encourage public sharing from within the conference. Policies and protocols were developed to balance openness and visibility with the protection of Indigenous knowledge, relationships and expectations of privacy. Dozens of communication professionals and media representatives were welcome onsite.

WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT



### 'Wonderful experience': Global indigenous groups gather in Auckland

By iNews Reporters | November 17, 2025



PACIFIC / CULTURE

### 'My mana reignited': Attendees leave world's largest indigenous education conference feeling inspired

1:50 pm on 21 November 2025

Share this     

## COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC REACH

### 3.2 MEDIA REACH AND COVERAGE

The campaign achieved significant reach and national visibility.

- 14 million audience reach from traditional media
- \$2.9 million equivalent advertising value
- 253 media pieces generated
- Coverage across domestic mainstream, Māori and Pacific media
- International reporting from Australia, Canada, Hawai'i and the United States

The tone of the coverage was overwhelmingly positive, positioning WIPCE 2025 as a celebration of Indigenous leadership, culture and scholarship.

### 3.3 DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT AND YOUTH REACH

Over the course of the year:

- 3.9 million views of WIPCE 2025 content across Instagram and Facebook
- 143,000 interactions across platforms
- Tik Tok engagement during the conference generated hundreds of thousands of views, particularly among youth audiences

Social media engagement during the conference was delivered by the WIPCE 2025 Social Media Team, creating real-time amplification of programme moments and cultural celebration.

Audience responses reflected the emotional resonance of the event, with comments such as:

“Amazing!! Blessed to witness WIPCE 2025”.

“One of the best experiences in my life.”

#### Broader impact

Collectively, the communications campaign strengthened visibility, built anticipation and amplified Indigenous voices and culture at national and international levels.

WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT

**14 MILLION**

AUDIENCE REACH

**\$2.9 MILLION**

EAV (EQUIVALENT ADVERTISING VALUE)

**253**

MEDIA PIECES GENERATED

**3.9 MILLION**

INSTAGRAM AND FACEBOOK VIEWS

**143,000**

INTERACTIONS ACROSS PLATFORMS

**‘ONE OF THE BEST  
EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE’**

## 4. PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE AND EVALUATION OUTCOMES

*“Kia ora  
I just needed to reach out and thank you for what was an amazing WIPCE experience over the last 4 days. Today has been a bit difficult coming down from the clouds and the WIPCE euphoria. The conference left me feeling healed, inspired, and affirmed. A huge congratulations also to AUT on hosting what was the BEST conference I’ve ever attended.  
Ngā mihi Donna Tupaea-Petero, Deputy Principal, Pukekohe High School.”*



WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT

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## PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE AND EVALUATION OUTCOMES

### 4.1 QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

WIPCE 2025 received 734 completed survey responses, providing a robust evidence base for evaluating experience and overall impact.

#### 4.1.1 Overall satisfaction

The conference achieved a weighted average satisfaction score of 4.59 out of 5, with 90% of respondents rating the event 4 or 5 stars. Less than 1% of respondents rated the event 1 or 2 stars.

At this scale of participation – more than 3,800 delegates – these results reflect a consistently high-quality experience across programme delivery, cultural engagement and operational management.

#### 4.1.2 Experience beyond expectation

Survey feedback indicates that delegates valued not only the academic strength of the programme, but the distinctive cultural integration that shaped the conference environment.

Participants frequently referenced:

- The depth and diversity of Indigenous scholarship
- The power of the opening pōwhiri and public parade
- The authenticity of marae-based experiences
- The visibility of youth leadership
- The sense of collective pride and solidarity

The findings confirm that WIPCE 2025 delivered a programme that upheld academic excellence while remaining firmly grounded in cultural integrity – an achievement of significance at international scale.

#### 4.1.3 Cultural safety and belonging

Qualitative feedback highlighted a strong sense of cultural affirmation and belonging. Delegates described the event as welcoming, energising and empowering.

This is particularly significant in the context of Indigenous education and leadership spaces, where cultural safety is not assumed but intentionally created. The survey responses indicate that participants experienced WIPCE 2025 as a space where Indigenous knowledge, language and identity were centred and celebrated.

#### 4.1.4 Professional and network impact

Beyond satisfaction, participant feedback reinforces the conference's role as a catalyst for professional and collaborative outcomes.

Delegates reported:

- Building new international connections
- Strengthening existing partnerships
- Gaining new insights to inform practice and policy
- Increased motivation to advance Indigenous education and sovereignty in their own contexts

These outcomes extend the impact of WIPCE 2025 beyond the conference week, contributing to ongoing global Indigenous collaboration.

WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT

#### 4.1.5 Validation of the conference delivery model

The survey results provide independent validation of the WIPCE 2025 delivery model – one that integrates:

- Academic excellence
- Public visibility
- Marae-based engagement
- Youth leadership
- Cultural celebration
- Indigenous enterprise activation

High satisfaction at this scale demonstrates that culturally grounded, community-centred design can coexist with operational excellence and international reach.

**91.8%**  
4/5 STAR RATING

**734**  
SURVEYS COMPLETED

**87%**  
WILL RETURN TO WIPCE AGAIN

## PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE AND EVALUATION OUTCOMES

### 4.2 QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

Beyond quantitative satisfaction measures, qualitative feedback from delegates provides deeper insight into the lived experience and perceived impact of WIPCE 2025.

#### 4.2.1 Emotional and cultural impact

Delegates described the conference as:

- “Exciting”
- “Empowering”
- “One of the best experiences in my life”
- “A beautiful gathering of cultures”

Many comments referenced the strength of cultural integration, global Indigenous representation and the emotional resonance of the pōwhiri, parade and marae experiences.

Feedback indicates that WIPCE 2025 was experienced not simply as a professional conference, but as a transformative and affirming gathering grounded in pride and collective identity.

#### 4.2.2 Academic and programme feedback

Participants valued the depth and diversity of presentations and international perspectives. Several comments noted appreciation for:

- The breadth of Indigenous scholarship
- Access to global voices
- Youth participation and leadership

Constructive feedback included:

- A desire for longer presentation sessions
- Improved scheduling to reduce session overlap
- Clearer vetting or thematic grouping of presentations

This programme stream was overseen by a dedicated academic committee comprising host institute academics and national academic leaders from across Aotearoa. The breadth of representation and independence of this group contributed to the richness of the programme, while also adding layers of coordination and complexity inherent in collaborative academic governance.

#### 4.2.3 Accessibility and value considerations

A small number of comments referenced pricing and accessibility, noting that cost may have limited participation for some potential attendees.

This feedback reinforces the importance of initiatives such as Te Ao Pūtahi Festival and youth engagement pathways, which broadened access beyond full conference registration.

It also provides insight for future planning regarding tiered pricing, sponsorship allocation or scholarship opportunities.

WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT

*“We were all very inspired by our experience and would love to attend every WIPCE from now on.”*





## PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE AND EVALUATION OUTCOMES

### 4.3 OPERATIONAL FEEDBACK AND KEY LEARNINGS

Participant feedback indicates that operational delivery was strong overall, with suggestions focused on refinement rather than fundamental concerns.

Comments most commonly referenced:

- Registration process efficiency and on-site support
- Catering quality and service delivery
- Venue navigation and wayfinding
- Programme density and concurrent session experience
- Programme app usability and digital access to session information

#### 4.3.1 Registration and delegate services

Feedback indicates that the majority of participants experienced the registration process positively, noting efficient check-in procedures and the visibility of volunteers and support staff throughout the venue.

Suggestions focused primarily on enhancing digital navigation and improving programme accessibility via desktop or printable formats – refinements consistent with the scale of a multi-stream international conference.



WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT

#### 4.3.2 Kai service

Catering received predominantly positive feedback, with many delegates describing the food as high quality and well aligned with the tone of the conference. Suggestions for improvement centred on managing peak service times and anticipating demand at scale. Overall, the kai experience contributed positively to the delegate experience.

#### 4.3.3 Venue navigation and delegate flow

Given the delivery of 550+ presentations across multiple concurrent streams, some participants noted the intensity of the programme scheduling and the pace of movement between sessions. Feedback in this area reflects the inherent complexity of delivering a dense, content-rich international conference, where breadth of content creates natural competition for attendance.

Opportunities identified include:

- Exploring extended session formats to support deeper engagement
- Considering increased transition time between programme elements
- Enhancing wayfinding signing and digital mapping tools
- Refining programme app functionality



## 5. GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

WIPCE 2025 was delivered through a structured governance model designed to balance operational accountability, cultural integrity, academic independence and international advisory oversight. The framework provided clear decision-making authority, executive sponsorship and escalation pathways, enabling stability at international scale.

### 5.1 MANA WHENUA PARTNERSHIP

WIPCE 2025 was hosted within the rohe of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, mana whenua of Tāmaki Makaurau and longstanding partners of AUT. Their leadership was integral to the cultural integrity of the conference.

Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei led the pōwhiri, formally welcoming delegates from around the globe onto their whenua and setting the tone for the week-long gathering. They also led the closing ceremony and the formal handover to the 2028 host, Hawai'i, anchoring both the opening and closing of WIPCE 2025 within mana whenua authority.

The partnership extended beyond ceremony, Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei were actively engaged throughout the conference, including participation through complimentary delegate access and collaboration with Te Ao Pūtahi Festival programming.

Indigenous Chef Global Collective excursion. This strengthened relational ties and ensured the conference remained grounded in the lived presence of tangata whenua.

### 5.2 EXECUTIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP

WIPCE 2025 was co-chaired by Toeolesulusulu Professor Damon Salesa, AUT Vice Chancellor and Professor Meihana Durie, AUT Te Toi Aronui, operating at the highest advisory and executive hosting level within the governance structure. Their joint leadership ensured strategic alignment between institutional priorities, global Indigenous engagement and kaupapa guardianship.

The Vice Chancellors role held particular significance. As the first Pacific Vice Chancellor in Aotearoa, his visible hosting of WIPCE 2025 represented a power affirmation of Pacific and Indigenous leadership within tertiary governance. Damon's support reinforced institutional commitment to Indigenous education, sovereignty and global collaboration at the highest level. Professor Meihana Durie served as the key spokesperson through the lead-up and during the event, providing authoritative leadership grounded in te ao Māori. This role was instrumental in articulating the kaupapa, guiding tikanga alignment, strengthening stakeholder confidence and ensuring that the public

narrative of WIPCE 2025 remained culturally anchored. Through visible advocacy and cultural stewardship, Professor Meihana Durie upheld Māori leadership presence within the conference framework.

The AUT Board was kept informed of progress through executive reporting channels and members invited to attend and observe the conference. Board presence reflected institutional oversight and support at the highest governance level.

Together, this executive housing model signalled that WIPCE 2025 was championed at the highest institutional level, reinforcing both its cultural integrity and international standing.



Photo credit: Tamaira Hook

## GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

### 5.3 OPERATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The WIPCE 2025 Event Director held full operational accountability for project planning and delivery, overseeing the Events Team, contractors, suppliers and programme leads. The Director also led the broader project team, including Pou Tikanga (cultural advisory), marketing, communications, media and risk.

In addition to delivery oversight, the Event Director assumed the responsibility for sponsorship strategy and revenue performance, ensuring alignment between commercial commitments and programme integrity.

The Event Director reported to the Head of the Vice Chancellor's Office, with final budget sign-off authority resting with the Vice Chancellor. Delegated financial authority thresholds were in place and adhered to through the project life cycle.

The event was co-chaired by the Vice Chancellor and the Te Toi Aronui Lead of AUT, ensuring alignment between institutional leadership and kaupapa guardianship.

#### 5.3.1 Delivery leadership

The successful delivery of WIPCE 2025 reflects the capability and resilience of the WIPCE 2025 Events Team. Managing a week-long international conference of 3,800+ delegates across multiple venues, alongside marae-based experiences and a public festival, required disciplined planning and adaptive leadership.

Throughout the delivery phase, the team operated within a heightened external environment that required careful stakeholder management and sustained focus to protect programme integrity. Maintaining alignment and continuity under these conditions demanded composure, professionalism and steady leadership.

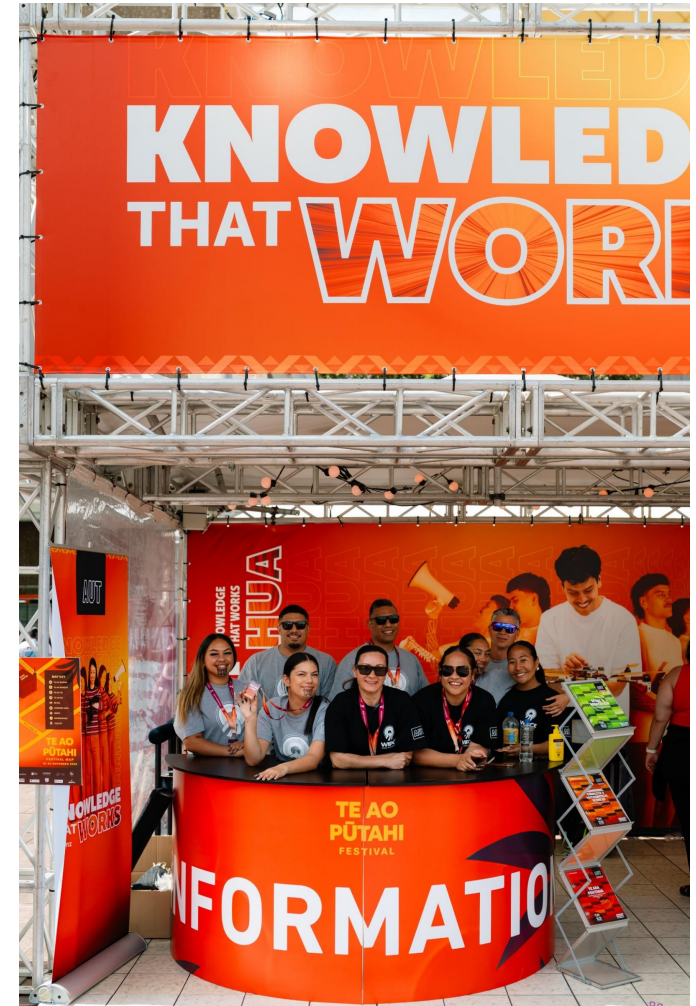
High participant satisfaction and strong regional impact outcomes reflect not only operational capability, but the team's ability to remain focused on delivery excellence despite significant external pressures.

### 5.4 CULTURAL GOVERNANCE

Cultural integrity across the conference was guided by our Pou Tikanga, who provided guidance on tikanga Māori in planning, delivery and execution. Our Pou Tikanga played a critical role in safeguarding kaupapa integrity, advising on ceremonial practice, protocol, partnerships and programme alignment to ensure that WIPCE 2025 remained grounded in te ao Māori values.

Partnerships and key cultural relationships were led by AUT Manager, Special Projects of Māori Advancement, whose role was instrumental in cultivating and stewarding strategic partnerships. This workstream secured some funding and strengthened Māori and Indigenous stakeholders, ensuring that relational and cultural objectives were upheld through the project lifecycle.

WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT



## GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

### 5.5 ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE

Academic programme design and scholarly integrity were overseen by a dedicated Academic Committee, led by Academic Committee Chair, Professor Ella Henry. The committee was responsible for academic content, peer review process and session structures.

The Academic Chair worked in co-ordination with the project team to align academic programming with operational delivery requirements. This model preserved academic integrity while ensuring practical integration with event logistics.

### 5.6 INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE

WIPCE 2025 operated with the broader international governance framework of the independently led WIPCE International Council. The Council serves as the global custodian of WIPCE's kaupapa, purpose and long-term continuity.

While operational authority for delivery rested with the host institution, monthly progress reports were provided to the International Council Chair to ensure transparency and alignment with international expectations. The Council's role was advisory, focused on safeguarding intent and global positioning rather than directing operational decisions.

During the 2025 conference period, the Council also led and administered the 2028 host selection process, reinforcing continuity of the international movement and WIPCE's rotating global leadership model.

### 5.7 FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND RISKS CONTROLS

Financial governance was maintained through delegated authority thresholds, structured budget tracking and leadership forecast reviews. All major contracts underwent legal review prior to execution, ensuring compliance with procurement requirements and institutional protection.

Risk was formally reviewed on a monthly basis, with high-impact items escalated to leadership team where required. A structured risk register and communications plan was maintained throughout the project life cycle, enabling adaptive decision-making during periods requiring rapid change.



*"We give each other the kaha, the mana, and the wairua to survive whatever's going on politically".*

*Professor Ella Henry - WIPCE 2025 Academic Committee Chair*

## GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

### 5.8 GOVERNANCE LEARNING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The scale and complexity of WIPCE 2025 provided valuable insights into strengthening governance interfaces for future international gatherings.

A key learning relates to the importance of establishing earlier and more structured alignment across governance layers – particularly between academic oversight, cultural leadership, international advisory bodies and operational delivery. While strong working relationships were ultimately formed, earlier coordination would have supported clearer role definition, expectation management and smoother integration of deliverables.

The transition in project leadership approximately one year prior to delivery required organisational focus and adjustment during a critical planning period. While continuity was maintained and delivery stability preserved, this period of transition impacted the timing of certain relationship-building and structural alignment processes.

The experience also highlighted the benefit of embedding dedicated coordination functions across key governance workstreams – particularly between the academic committee and the core project team – to ensure timely communication, tracking of deliverables and early identification of operational implications.

Future editions of WIPCE would benefit from:

- Earlier formalisation of governance interfaces
- Clear terms of reference for all committees
- Dedicated co-ordination roles embedded within governance streams
- Early cultural and mana whenua alignment discussions
- Structured cross-governance planning workshops in the first phase of delivery.

These learnings reinforce the importance of clarity, continuity and early alignment in complex, multi-layered international events.



*“It gives a space for native peoples to come together, to talk to each other, to share in our successes and our challenges,”*  
**Dr Noe Noe Wong-Wilson – WIPCE International Council**



## 6. SPONSORSHIP AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS



WIPCE 2025 was supported through a dual sponsorship of financial sponsorship and strategic partnership ensuring both revenue sustainability and kaupapa integrity.

### 6.1 FINANCIAL SPONSORSHIP AND PROGRAMME ACTIVATION

Financial sponsorship was led and secured by the Event Director, with sponsors engaged through tiered contribution levels aligned to specific programme elements.

Rather than operating as a branding-led model, WIPCE 2025 embedded sponsors within intellectual, cultural and community workstreams. This approach ensured that financial investment translated into tangible impact across youth leadership, language revitalisation, knowledge exchange and cultural activation.

Silver sponsors supported key programme streams included Te Ao Kōrero Knowledge Café, youth leadership spaces, language revitalisation discussions, keynote sessions and hosting environments.

Bronze sponsors contributed to major programme components included Te Ao Tiroiro cultural excursions and keynote presentations addressing self-determination.

Supporter partners strengthened delivery infrastructure including MC facilitation, accommodation support and digital presence.

This integrated model ensured that sponsorship strengthened Indigenous visibility, scholarship and community activation, rather than functioning as passive commercial endorsement.

### 6.2 STRATEGIC AND CULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS

Alongside financial sponsors, WIPCE 2025 was strengthened by strategic and cultural partnerships led by the Manager, Special Project Māori Advancement.

These partnerships extended beyond funding to include endorsement, relational stewardship and active participation. They ensured credibility within Māori and Indigenous networks, strengthened stakeholder confidence and contributed to funding streams and programme depth.

This dual approach enabled WIPCE 2025 to secure necessary financial sustainability while maintaining cultural authority and relational integrity.

WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT





## LEGACY AND FUTURE PATHWAYS



WIPCE 2025 was not delivered as a standalone event, but as a contribution to a global Indigenous movement advancing education, sovereignty and intergenerational leadership.

Its legacy can be understood across five outcomes:

### **7.1 Strengthened Global Indigenous Education Network**

By convening 3,800 delegates from across regions, WIPCE 2025 deepened international relationships between Indigenous educators, researchers, leaders and institutions. New collaborations and conversations initiated during the conference continue beyond the event itself, extending its influence globally.

### **7.2 A model for culturally ground international conferences**

WIPCE 2025 demonstrated that large-scale business events can be delivered differently – embedding tikanga, youth leadership, public activation and Indigenous enterprise within core programme design rather than as peripheral elements.

Feedback from Tātaki Auckland Unlimited reinforced the conference as a benchmark for culturally grounded event delivery in Aotearoa, influencing how future major events may be conceived and experienced.

### **7.3 Institutional legacy for the Host**

Hosting WIPCE 2025 strengthened AUT's global profile as an institution committed to Indigenous education leadership and cultural integrity. The visible executive

leadership and sustained cultural governance reinforced AUT's identity as a university grounded in Te Ao Māori while internationally connected.

The experience has also strengthened internal capability for delivering complex, culturally anchored global gatherings.

### **7.4 Intergenerational continuity**

The presentation of the Declaration of the Indigenous Youth ensures that rangatahi voices formally shape ongoing WIPCE discourse. By embedding youth leadership within programme and governance spaces, WIPCE 2025 reinforced intergenerational continuity as a defining principle of the global Indigenous education movement.

### **7.5 Continuity to 2028 and beyond**

The formal handover to Hawai'i ensures sustained momentum and international continuity. WIPCE 2025 contributes not only programme depth, but governance insights, partnership models and delivery learnings that inform future hosts.

WIPCE 2025 demonstrated that Indigenous-led conferences can deliver academic excellence, cultural integrity, public visibility and measurable economic return – while strengthening global relationships and shaping sector practice.

Its legacy extends beyond the week of delivery. It resides in the networks strengthened, the youth affirmed, the partnerships formed and the model established for future gatherings.



# WIPCE

2025 AOTEAROA

WIPCE 2025 IMPACT AND LEGACY REPORT



<b>PART A</b>	<b>13.1</b>
<b>OPEN AGENDA ITEM</b>	

## Council Agenda Paper

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

**Date:** 17 April 2026

**RECOMMENDATION:**

*THAT COUNCIL RECEIVE THE UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF AUTSA*

**AUTSA Report**

Over the past few months, student engagement and advocacy activity has continued to reflect the significant pressures students are experiencing across both their academic and personal lives. From the perspective of student representation, there is a clear and consistent message emerging around affordability, well-being, and the cumulative impact of cost-of-living pressures on students’ ability to fully engage in their studies.

**Student Voice and Sector Context**

A key development during this period was participation in a **national Student Voice Conference**, bringing together representatives from tertiary institutions across Aotearoa. This provided an opportunity to compare experiences across the sector and identify shared challenges. The dominant theme arising from these discussions was **financial pressure on students**, particularly in relation to food security, housing costs, and balancing paid work with academic commitments. These sector-level insights closely mirror the trends being observed at AUT.

**Cost of Living and Student Wellbeing**

Food insecurity remains a significant and ongoing issue for students. At AUT, this is evident through sustained demand for hardship support services facilitated by AUTSA’s **Tautoko** programme. At a high level, Tautoko data shows a substantial increase in the number of students accessing food and essential support over recent years. What was previously a small-scale service now supports well over a thousand students annually across multiple forms of assistance, including food vouchers, pantry access, food parcels, breakfasts, and essential wellbeing products. In the current period, demand has remained consistently high, including strong uptake early in the academic year. Notably, students are making frequent use of **low-barrier, on-campus support options**, such as daily breakfast provision and essential wellbeing supplies. This suggests a strong preference for support models that are accessible, predictable, and minimise administrative barriers. Recent national media attention on student food insecurity has also increased visibility of these issues and reinforced that the challenges faced by AUT students are part of a wider national pattern.

**National Representation Landscape**

The national student representation environment continues to evolve following the closure of the New Zealand Union of Students’ Associations. While formal national coordination structures have

changed, student associations remain connected through informal collaboration and relationship-based networks.

From a student representative perspective, this shift has placed greater emphasis on **direct engagement between institutions** while longer-term national advocacy structures continue to develop.

### **Key Issues Impacting Students**

Across AUT and nationally, the key issues affecting students remain consistent:

- Cost-of-living pressures, particularly relating to food and housing
- Access to affordable essentials
- The challenge of balancing academic commitments with financial necessity

High-level Tautoko data also indicate that international and postgraduate students increasingly feature among those accessing hardship support, highlighting ongoing equity considerations given differential access to external financial assistance.

### **Looking Ahead**

There is an opportunity to continue strengthening how **student feedback and lived experience inform institutional discussions around wellbeing and support provision**. Aggregated hardship data provides a useful indicator of broader pressures affecting student engagement and success.

From a governance perspective, ongoing visibility of these trends supports informed discussion around student support systems, equity, and the wider student experience.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, student engagement remains strong but is taking place against a backdrop of sustained financial pressure. The consistent use of hardship support services reflects both the resilience of the student community and the ongoing need for accessible, responsive support mechanisms.

As AUTSA's representative on Council, I will continue to convey these themes to ensure student perspectives are appropriately reflected in relevant discussions.



<b>PART A</b>	<b>13.2</b>
<b>OPEN AGENDA ITEM</b>	

## Council Agenda Paper

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

**Date:** 18 April 2026

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

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

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### CONTEXT

Recently AUT's position in the QS world rankings has resulted in considerable discussion amongst the wider academic community in the university. Although rankings are problematic and open to manipulation, many academics associate them with decisions that non-academics (students, parents, potential research collaborators) make about the university's national and international significance. For many potential staff, the standing of a university impacts considerably on whether their mana, association and the chances of attracting funding for research will be enhanced if they apply for positions. Students and parents who have invested (or are investing in) degrees want to see the standing of their qualification maintained or rising in the public mind.

### HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS

The components used to in the QS system rank universities include:

- a survey of academics from other universities;
- a survey of employers;
- the average number of citations per publication (excluding self-citations);
- the calculation of an H-index;<sup>1</sup>
- and an International Research Network (IRN) metric.

### RECENT RESULTS

#### **THE GOOD NEWS:**

- The recently released statistics (QS World University Rankings 2026) position **AUT #410** internationally.<sup>2 3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The H-index is based on the set of a university department's most cited journal papers and the number of citations that they have received in other publications. The index attempts to measure both the impact and productivity of published journal articles.

<sup>2</sup> The ranking system covers over 1,500 institutions across 100 locations.

<sup>3</sup> The MOE has recently [updated their fact sheet](#) on the Rankings, noting that New Zealand's rankings were mostly up on 2025 (although the total number of subjects ranked was slightly down). (AUT saw a rise in the total number of their subjects ranked).

- AUT is ranked in the World's top 25 universities for sports-related subjects and has placed equal first among all New Zealand universities for hospitality and leisure management.
- 12 of AUT's 18 ranked subjects have improved their positions.
- Architecture and Built Environment was ranked for the first time, while Art and Design, Communications & Media Studies, and Anatomy & Physiology returned to the rankings in 2026.
- AUT was noted for its high international student diversity and academic reputation.

#### THE CHALLENGE

Since 2020 AUTs overall QS ranking has fluctuated

2020 **#442**  
2021 **#437**  
2022 **#451**  
2023 **#486**  
2024 **#407**  
2025/6 **#410**

Unlike the other New Zealand universities (with the exception of Lincoln), the QS still does not rank AUT in the top 300 internationally. Staff, when discussing these results note that AUT is still positioned at the bottom of the New Zealand universities (behind Lincoln). There is then a long climb up to the University of Waikato #281. [Waikato, Victoria and Massey are in the top 300] Otago is ranked in the top 200 and Auckland retains the highest position of a New Zealand university at 65<sup>th</sup>.<sup>4</sup>

Staff have worked attentively with the university to increase the rankings of their disciplines and attention is now being paid to specific strategies that they can help with to lift the university into the top 300 internationally.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> University of Auckland (**65th**)  
University of Otago (**=197th**): The only other NZ university in the global top 200.  
Massey University (**=230th**):  
Victoria University of Wellington (**=240th**):  
University of Canterbury (**261st**):  
University of Waikato (**=281st**):  
Lincoln University (**407th**):  
Auckland University of Technology (AUT) (**=410th**).

<sup>5</sup> AUT's high-ranking reputation (top 300) stems primarily from the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Ranking (251–300 band). This position occurred in 2020, 2021, and 2022. The university is currently ranked in the **501–600th** band in the [Times Higher Education \(THE\) World University Rankings 2026](#). While QS often ranks New Zealand universities higher, the Times Higher Education (THE) rankings tend to place most New Zealand universities between 200–500.



PART A

OPEN AGENDA ITEM

13.3

## Council Agenda Paper

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

**Date:** 28 April 2026

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

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

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This report provides Council with an update on sector-wide and AUT specific issues as observed through the professional staff lens, highlighting matters of strategic risk and future opportunity that are relevant to Council.

Secondary - tertiary pipeline risk: NCEA reform, Vocational Pathways, and teacher shortage

Professional staff in future student recruitment, admissions, enrolment, and equity-focused functions are increasingly observing the combined impacts of recent NCEA curriculum change, the ongoing Vocational Pathways initiative and its recent developments, and persistent secondary teacher workforce pressures.

While NCEA reform and Vocational Pathways were intended to strengthen applied learning and employment readiness, emerging empirical evidence and recurring feedback from secondary schools indicate that some students are being directed into either academic or vocational streams earlier in their schooling, in some cases as early as Year 10. At the same time, the [Teacher Demand and Supply 2025 report](#) identifies a continued national shortage of secondary teachers, with a projected shortfall of approximately 710 secondary teachers in 2026, including variable and uneven shortages across the Auckland region.

In practice, secondary teacher shortages, particularly in University Entrance (UE) approved and senior subjects, can limit the range of subjects schools are able to offer, especially at NCEA Level 2 and 3. For students placed on vocational pathways, this can further reduce their access to UE subjects, constraining their ability to achieve UE and pursue university study later. Professional staff are increasingly seeing students at the end of Year 13 who wish to undertake university study but no longer meet entry requirements, limiting student choice and increasing reliance on alternative university entry routes.

Taken together, these factors present a secondary–tertiary pipeline risk for AUT as a university of opportunity. The risk is heightened for Māori, Pacific and equity-group learners, and has implications for service demand, equity outcomes, and the sustainability of existing entry and transition pathways.

Potential impacts for AUT to consider

- An increase in school leavers seeking university study without UE, placing greater reliance on discretionary entry, special admission, and pathway programmes.
- Pathway programmes increasingly functioning as primary entry routes rather than transitional supports, requiring scaled delivery, enhanced academic support, and close progress monitoring to maintain achievement and retention.
- Heightened equity risk, as early streaming and constrained subject availability disproportionately affect Māori, Pacific and equity-group learners and increase demand on equity-focused services (e.g. OPA, OMA).
- Greater domestic pipeline volatility, with fewer UE-ready school leavers and more non-linear entry journeys complicating domestic enrolment forecasting.

There are initiatives already proactively addressing this risk, including Iti Kōpara, a schools partnership programme that engages small cohorts of Year 11–13 students from selected Auckland secondary schools to build academic readiness and informed study and career preparedness earlier in the pipeline. In addition, AUT's pathway programmes embed a common foundational transition paper (Uni101) that explicitly teaches students how to be successful university learners, supported by integrated academic and pastoral support to strengthen transition and retention.

While these initiatives provide important early mitigation, the persistence of NCEA reform impacts, Vocational Pathways, and ongoing secondary teacher workforce shortages indicates that this is not a short-term issue. Continued monitoring, service planning, and sector-level engagement will be important to ensure AUT can sustainably uphold its role as a university of opportunity as secondary school and workforce settings continue to evolve.