



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

## **PACIFIC PLAN**

### **2017 - 2020**

This Plan recognises that Pacific peoples have a long history and tradition of knowledge and learning. Consistent with that history and tradition, this Plan recognises the vast potential of Pacific peoples to excel in education as learners and to contribute as students, researchers and staff to the mana of the University of Waikato.

The University is committed to building and enhancing the Pacific dimensions of our institution, and to the educational aspirations and success of Pacific students.<sup>1</sup> These commitments are consistent with the TEC's new Pasifika Operational Strategy 2017-2020 and the Government's Tertiary Education Strategy 2014 - 2019. The University is committed to providing high-quality education for domestic and international Pacific students and in supporting Government to achieve its ambitions with respect to higher numbers of Pacific students undertaking and successfully completing tertiary education. In New Zealand, Pacific communities are the fastest growing communities and the government has identified these communities as priority groups to achieve better educational, economic and health outcomes.

The Pacific Plan aims to ensure that the University builds on its teaching and research endeavours, to meet the aspirations, needs and priorities of Pacific peoples. The University has a long history of educational provision for, and about, Pacific peoples and their aspirations, and a distinctive feature of the University is that it represents a welcoming environment for Pacific students. The Plan has been developed in collaboration with Pacific and other staff, students, communities and other stakeholders. The cultural and spiritual values of Pacific people, especially in relation to language and culture, collectivity and kinship, service, respect and humility, and love and reciprocity underpin this Pacific Plan.

The University aims to increase the number of Ministry Funded Pacific students who enrol at the University at degree and postgraduate degree levels. The University recognises that many Pacific students have significant cultural and family commitments, meaning they require flexible learning options and support to maximise learning and educational outcomes. The University also recognises the needs of Pacific students enrolled in postgraduate qualifications and aims to support and develop a greater range of learning options for all cohorts and levels of Pacific learners.

While the Pacific Plan focuses on Pacific learners, it also reflects the contributions, and value to the University, of Pacific staff. In particular, Pacific academic staff can have an impact on student success as exemplars and role models of success but also as mentors, postgraduate supervisors and support systems for Pacific learners. As researchers they bring increasingly sought after perspectives and skills to their respective fields of expertise, while expanding the research activities and output for the University.

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<sup>1</sup> The terms 'Pacific peoples' and 'Pacific students' in this Plan refer to those who self-identify as such, whether they are born in New Zealand or overseas.

To this end, the University is committed to achieving the following Objectives:

- **OBJECTIVE 1**  
Create a culture of belonging for all Pacific students, researchers and staff that nurtures success
- **OBJECTIVE 2**  
Increase the number of Pacific peoples participating in, and completing, tertiary study in order to increase course and qualification completion rates for Pacific students
- **OBJECTIVE 3**  
Increase the number of Pacific students progressing to study at higher levels and completing postgraduate study successfully and on time
- **OBJECTIVE 4**  
Provide curricula and pedagogies that meet the needs and expectations of domestic and international Pacific students
- **OBJECTIVE 5**  
Increase the number of Pacific graduates going on to employment, particularly in high growth, high-demand areas
- **OBJECTIVE 6**  
Attract and retain Pacific researchers, academics and general staff across all Faculties and services
- **OBJECTIVE 7**  
Build and enhance partnerships with Pacific communities and other key stakeholders beyond the University

## EXPLANATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

### OBJECTIVE 1

Create a culture of belonging for all Pacific students, researchers and staff that nurtures success

The University aims to create a culture of success for all Pacific students, researchers and staff. Academic success is grounded in academic capability as well as in an overall sense of social, emotional and physical well-being. Building the cultural capability of all staff will build our organisation's capacity to create the culture of belonging and success so the University can be proactively responsive to the needs and aspirations of Pacific students and communities. Physical spaces with a Pacific nature will also create belonging.

To achieve this, we will:

- Research, develop and establish permanent administrative bodies with specific responsibility for Pacific, including a permanent committee and a senior administrator who is a member of the VC's Executive Leadership Committee
- Establish and launch a Pacific space on campus which will serve as a central hub for Pacific support staff, students and their communities
- Establish a further physical space that provides a culturally appropriate environment where Pacific students can engage with each other, and which provides the University with a place to host dignitaries and guests
- Celebrate and acknowledge Pacific student, researcher and staff achievement and success through various University events and communications
- Increase engagement between the Pacific student associations on campus and student services
- Work in partnership with the Pacific Students' Association to recognise and celebrate the diversity of Pacific student communities on campus
- Develop a Pacific cultural capability-building component of the University's staff induction programme

**OBJECTIVE 2**

Increase the number of Pacific peoples participating in, and completing, tertiary study in order to increase course and qualification completion rates for Pacific students

The University will work to establish Waikato as a viable tertiary option for Pacific students and their families. A particular focus of these efforts will be on our main catchment areas of Waikato, Bay of Plenty and South Auckland. Most Pacific students enrolled at the University of Waikato are not from Hamilton, many are first in family to attend university, and a large proportion of first year Pacific students are aged 20 and over. The University is focused on ensuring the transition to University for all Pacific students is successful and Pacific students have a strong sense of belonging and experience success at the University of Waikato.

To achieve this, we will:

- Undertake research to determine the underlying issues and challenges facing the participation and achievement of Pacific students enrolled at the University of Waikato through analysis of enrolment, school leaver and attrition data along with student cohort characteristics, paying attention to the diverse experiences of domestic and international Pacific students
- Develop and implement a Pacific recruitment strategy that is responsive to current and future demographics of Pacific students at Waikato
- Plan, undertake and evaluate recruitment activities at key Pacific events in the priority catchment areas
- Work in partnership with local and regional Pacific communities and other stakeholders to provide information evenings and workshops for families of current and future students
- Promote alternative pathways for students who do not meet admission requirements into University and into specific programmes with other education providers
- Provide effective and inclusive Pacific student induction prior to and during Orientation Week
- Improve peer support services within and across Faculties, investigating the development of a centrally co-ordinated Pacific mentor scheme, and improving communication between faculties about programming and priorities
- Implement engagement strategies for targeted cohorts, including early identification and referral of 'at-risk' students
- Implement the University's Pacific scholarship framework to identify, support and promote academically capable future Pacific leaders

**OBJECTIVE 3**

Increase the number of Pacific students progressing to study at higher levels and completing postgraduate study successfully and on time

The University strives to establish a culture of success for all Pacific students where academic success is normal and celebrated, and the option of further study is part of any student's thinking. We seek to increase the number of Pacific students undertaking and completing postgraduate degrees, by bringing Waikato graduates through to these levels of study as well as by recruiting Pacific graduates whose interests connect with Waikato's research strengths.

To achieve this, we will:

- Develop and implement a Pacific postgraduate recruitment strategy that is responsive to current and future demographics of Pacific postgraduate students at Waikato
- Implement the University's Pacific scholarship framework to promote retention and progression from undergraduate to post graduate study
- Establish a process for tracking, supporting and evaluating the progress of Pacific postgraduate students
- Provide funding and institutional support to ensure Pacific postgraduate students have opportunities to connect with the wider Pacific postgraduate and research communities beyond Waikato.

- Provide specific training about working with Pacific postgraduate students for all Waikato staff involved in supervision, and professional development opportunities for Pacific staff involved in research supervision

#### **OBJECTIVE 4**

Provide curricula and pedagogies that meet the needs and expectations of domestic and international Pacific students

The University is committed to providing a relevant, future-focused curriculum that produces career-ready graduates. Responding to the increasing proportion of MF EFTs identified as Pacific and a high number of students who are from the Pacific region, and the University's own commitments to internationalisation, this curriculum will increasingly be infused with Pacific content, perspectives and pedagogies. The provision of integrated services and pedagogy is integral to the development of a culture where Pacific success is the norm.

To achieve this, we will:

- Develop high-quality targeted student learning support for Pacific students
- Provide professional development opportunities for staff that promote knowledge, culture and pedagogies that research demonstrates are known to be valued and highly effective for Pacific learners
- Incorporate Pacific perspectives and content into existing curriculum delivery across all papers.
- Promote and enhance Waikato's offerings of Pacific-focused curriculum, including and beyond the discipline of Pacific Studies

#### **OBJECTIVE 5**

Increase the number of Pacific graduates going on to employment, particularly in high growth, high-demand areas

The University strives to produce highly employable graduates in all fields. We are eager to produce Pacific graduates who will be successful after they leave us. Pacific people are still disproportionately represented in many fields and professions. The TEC has specifically identified other skill areas in which Pacific graduates are in demand, for instance, Science and Education. The University is committed to preparing Pacific graduates who are ready to succeed and contribute after they leave Waikato.

To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure that Pacific students are provided with appropriate career advice to fulfil their potential
- Foster relationships between Pacific learners and the Careers Office from the outset of and throughout their University experience
- Develop relationships with employers with a view to fostering internships and applied learning opportunities relevant for Pacific students
- Continue to provide scholarships in skill areas in which Pacific graduates are in demand

#### **OBJECTIVE 6**

Attract and retain Pacific researchers, academics and general staff across all Faculties and services

The Pacific staff profile of the University is small. The University does not have a well-established Pacific leadership structure for the University or individuals. Pacific staff members are over-represented in junior and non-permanent positions. Having highly capable Pacific staff in leadership or senior positions within the organisation will contribute to the University's overall capability and capacity to develop a culture of success and deliver culturally appropriate services and education for Pacific students. We

would like to see a stronger base of Pacific academic staff across all faculties and divisions, and to grow Pacific researchers and academics.

To achieve this, we will:

- Recruit and retain more Pacific staff
- Support Pacific academic staff to improve both the quantity and quality of their own research outputs
- Encourage professional relationships with other TEO Pacific academics and communities in New Zealand, the Pacific region and internationally to improve standing and credibility
- Provide active support for Pacific staff recruitment, retention, professional development and promotion
- Provide active support for Pacific staff engagement in teaching, research, publication and supervision

#### **OBJECTIVE 7**

Build and enhance partnerships with Pacific communities and other key stakeholders beyond the University

Developing a presence within and across Pacific communities as a value-adding partner will ensure the University is supporting communities to meet their aspirations and achieve our own goals for community engagement. Connecting with Pacific communities across the Waikato, Bay of Plenty and South Auckland regions is important to establish our presence within and across those communities. Identifying where our expertise can contribute to the aspirations of Pacific communities in New Zealand and across the Pacific region will provide opportunities for the University to develop further its profile as a strong contributor to Pacific peoples and communities. In addition, the University will build on existing relationships with its Pacific alumni across New Zealand, the Pacific, and the world.

To achieve this, we will:

- Engage recent and re-engage past Pacific alumni
- Build meaningful relationships with Pacific communities, including churches and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples
- Encourage the attendance of University of Waikato staff, including senior staff and Pacific staff, at key Pacific community events
- Provide a mechanism to ensure the voice of the Pacific community is heard in order to enable meaningful participation in University matters
- Work in partnership with local Pacific community entities (churches, groups) to staircase and provide pathways for Pacific learners, engaging in early initiation of interaction with Pacific families to encourage conversations around undertaking tertiary study at the University of Waikato.
- Enhance University relationships and partnerships with a wide range of Pacific communities in and beyond New Zealand
- Develop relationships with other tertiary and education providers so that the University is part of an education pathway

#### **OPERATIONALISATION**

The Plan has been drafted in its current form with the understanding that it will be operationalised as soon as it receives Council approval. For the purposes of the current Plan, 'operationalised' means, but is not limited to, the following:

- An organisational framework, including a Pacific Plan Advisory Group, will be established to provide regular general feedback and reporting on progress at various levels of the University and create a network of support for initiatives
- Adequate funding will be available and accessible

- Specific measures and targets will be established, monitored and reported
- Sufficient timeframes for operationalisation process will be established and transparent

### **The Pacific Plan Advisory Group (PPAG)**

Within two months of the Plan's final approval, the University will establish a Pacific Plan Advisory Group, initially to be chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic (DVCA). The PPAG will be primarily tasked with operationalising the Plan as described above and then monitoring the Plan. It will be charged with making the Pacific Plan more specific and prioritising objectives. This will include evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives, and identifying entities and roles across the University with relevant responsibilities and interests. The Group will advise the DVCA and other members of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Leadership Committee on the best way to achieve the objectives.

The Pacific Plan Advisory Group will be composed of:

- The DVCA as initial chairperson
- The Pro Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning
- At least one Dean
- Director Student Services
- Pacific Faculty Advisors
- Pacific Student Success Coordinator
- Pacific students representative
- Pacific academic staff and post-doctorate researchers
- A representative for the discipline of Pacific Studies
- A representative for Pacific general staff
- A representative from the International Office
- A representative from the School of Graduate Research

### **Organisational Framework**

Operationalisation will also require further oversight and monitoring at various levels of governance, and a team-like effort from support mechanisms and relevant staff, throughout the University. To this end, the PPAG will evaluate the role that each of the following might play in this organisational framework during the initial operationalisation phase:

- DVCs and other members of the VC's Executive Leadership Committee
- Pacific student organisations on campus with an academic focus including the Pacific Law Students Association and the Pacific Islands Management Students Association
- Pacific student organisations on campus with a cultural focus including the Samoan Students' Association, Solomon Islands Students' Association, Papua New Guinea Students' Association, Niuean Students' Association, Fijian Students' Association, Tuvalu Students' Association, Kiribati Students' Association, Tokelauan Students' Association, Cook Island Students' Association and the Waikato Uni-Tech Tongan Students' Association
- Pacific Faculty Advisors and Pacific-centred faculty committees
- Mentors and tutors
- The Pacific Support Forum
- The Pacific Student Success Coordinator
- Pacific recruitment including that by Marketing
- Careers Office
- Pathways College
- Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning

The PPAG will also be charged with determining which stakeholders beyond the University should be involved in the Plan's operationalisation, monitoring and other activities.

### **Reporting**

Current benchmarks against which the University aims to improve (e.g. paper completion rates, student retention rates, qualification rates for Pacific students) are not included in this Plan, but they are available in Section B of the [University of Waikato Investment Plan](#). Further measures and specific targets will be developed on an annual basis. Faculties will report twice a year to the DVCA on progress

made against the objectives listed to help ensure the University remains on track to meet its goals. Progress will be monitored by the Pacific Plan Advisory Group.

Six-monthly reports on the activities associated with delivering the objectives listed in this Plan will be prepared by the DVCA with the advice of the PPAG and provided to the Academic Quality Committee, which will report to Education Committee. The report will be prepared in collaboration with those who have individual and collective responsibilities for activities and initiatives undertaken to meet the objectives, including the newly formed Pacific Plan Advisory Group.

As part of the operationalisation of the Plan, the PPAG will advise the DVCA on further reporting guidelines and requirements for faculties and other relevant bodies and staff within the university. This will include the establishment of timeframes for reporting.

### **Funding**

The large majority of the University's students who self-report as Pacific students are Ministry-Funded (MF). The remaining EFTS are generated by Full-Cost International (FCI) Pacific students. The University is committed to the participation and performance of all Pacific students, whether MF or FCI and the goals and activities outlined in this Plan apply equally to all Pacific students whether they are categorised as MF or FCI. It is recognised, however, that in some regards domestic and international students are separate cohorts of learners that have unique characteristics.

Equity funding, allocated by the Vice-Chancellor's Office, will be available to support various initiatives.

*This Plan was approved by the Academic Board at its meeting on 13 June 2017.*