

Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council

August 2022

Introduction

Term 3 came to an end on Friday, 26 August. During the week starting 29 August, we hosted four formal graduation celebrations at the Christchurch Arena allowing our graduates who missed their graduation ceremonies in December 2021 and April 2022 to mark this important achievement in their lives. Together with the special Māori and Pasifika celebrations, the final week in August was a busy one. Initial feedback on the graduation ceremonies has been very positive and the graduates especially welcomed the opportunity to have more tickets for families.

I participated in a panel of Vice-Chancellors (VCs) at Times Higher Education (THE) Campus Live ANZ 2022 in Melbourne, together with Paddy Nixon, President and VC of University of Canberra and Brian Schmidt, VC of Australian National University. The panel was moderated by Julie McMahon, THE Regional Director, and focused on how universities in Australia and New Zealand can stay connected internationally in an environmentally sustainable world. The other New Zealand VC to be an invited speaker was Dawn Freshwater of Auckland University, who participated in a VC panel on the state of play in higher education in Australia and New Zealand. The event was hosted by Melbourne's Victoria University (VU), which showcased its block learning model. I took extensive notes in the session on "What Can the Sector Learn from VU's Award-winning Pivot into Alternative Teaching Models?" which I plan to share with the Teaching and Learning Committee.

As part of the same trip to Australia, I visited the University of Melbourne Little Hall and UniLodge Melbourne City to learn from their models of student accommodation and pastoral care.

At the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition on Tuesday, 9 August I made opening remarks and presented the four winners with their awards. The competition challenges master's and PhD students to pitch their leading-edge research in just three minutes or less. The winners were Eloise Gooch, Jane McMecking, Shnece Duncan and Fathiya Al'Amri.

Engagement

We are the Principal Partner alongside Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu of the WORD Christchurch festival this year. The festival of books, storytelling and ideas began in August. Two key engagement events which UC sponsors, included an evening with Liane Moriarty, bestselling author of *Big Little Lies* and *Nine Perfect Strangers*, both of which have been adapted for the screen. The second event was the Secondary Schools Programme where 400 plus secondary school students spent the day at Ilam campus with presentations by six different writers. UC staff member Mark Rickerby welcomed the students and Naomi van den Broek was the MC.

Faculty of Engineering staff attended the Fulton Hogan Girls in Infrastructure event in Whangārei for the first time. This event is for 100 female students aged 16–18 years in the Northland region. It is a chance for the students to explore careers in infrastructure through activities such as a construction site visit, an engineering company site visit, a machinery area and booth displays.

Professor Bronwyn Hayward from Political Science and International Relations, Faculty of Arts gave the prestigious Cawthron Institute Memorial Lecture on “Our Children’s Climate”. Cawthron is New Zealand’s oldest and largest private science research centre, and the lecture was at capacity in Nelson.

Dr Jarrod Gilbert from Sociology, Faculty of Arts gave feedback on the gangs document published by the Parliamentary Library, and further feedback around policy for the Evidence Based Policing Team in Auckland. He gave a presentation to police district commanders and a keynote address to the Wellington Howard League annual general meeting.

Professor Alex Tan from Political Science and International Relations, Faculty of Arts was interviewed for the Asia Insight podcast programme and participated in a Track 1.5 dialogue on Australia and the Indo-Pacific in Wellington. He also co-hosted and co-organised a National Security Strategy hui in collaboration with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Faculty of Health Associate Professor Dr Cathy Andrew and Senior Lecturer above the Bar Dr Isabel Jamieson presented their research at a public talk for the Royal Society Te Apārangi: “Keeping Our Borders Safe: The Social Stigma of Nursing in Managed Isolation and Quarantine Border Facilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic”.

Associate Professor Dr Arindam Basu, Faculty of Health gave a presentation at the Public Health Observatory New Zealand 2022 titled “One Health, Emerging Zoonoses, and Organising Public Health Surveillance”.

Using Omeka S, online exhibition software that the UC Library supports, a new page has been created showcasing paintings by Canterbury College School of Art alumna Margaret Stoddart. Based on a 2021 exhibition in Kate Sheppard House, it includes a brief biography of Margaret Stoddart’s life and digital images of the artworks displayed, along with important contextual information.

The School of Mathematics and Statistics recently hosted around 90 MATH199 students for its annual mid-year workshop. Students attended a series of lectures, workshops and presentations by guest speakers in mid-August. It included an Experience Day (mini–Open Day featuring just Engineering and Science demonstrations and targeted only at MATH199), which saw them tour the residential halls and get hands-on experience in various labs and lecture theatres across the Engineering Core and Ernest Rutherford buildings.

These students are drawn from all over the country to experience life on campus for a few days as a way of encouraging them to consider UC for undergraduate study. They are ably tutored by a collection of MATH199 graduates, who now study in a wide range of areas, from undergraduate Computer Science through to master’s level in Astrophysics and PhD level in Engineering.

The UCMe XL Pasifika holiday programme ran on campus for three days. More than 120 Pasifika secondary school students attended.

Māori outreach included Ngā Manu Kōrero, which attracted thousands of visitors across two days. Feedback from the Māori community has been overwhelmingly positive so far. Te Waka Pākākano

had engagement with the Tūwharetoa Māori and Lake Taupō charitable trust, which involved inviting 20 students on to the campus so that they could experience the campus environment.

Earth and Environment PhD student Jade Humphrey has started up Predator Free Riccarton, a group that is trying to make a difference for our native species in the wider Riccarton-Ilam-Avonhead area. The group is currently distributing rat traps in the community to help form halos around key areas of biodiversity (Riccarton Bush and areas along our streams).

A research team based in Te Rū Rangahau Māori Research Laboratory; Faculty of Education hosted He Awa Whiria Symposium. Often referred to as a ‘braided rivers’ approach, He Awa Whiria is anchoring the work of researchers and practitioners in both national and international spheres. The aim of the colloquium was to establish the potential of He Awa Whiria as a framework, and showcase how it could assist government organisations, researchers, and private entities to incorporate knowledge from both knowledge paradigms into their respective environments. Speakers included Professor Angus Macfarlane, Emeritus Professor Richard Bedford, Professor Sonja Macfarlane, and Lecturer Nathan Riki. Participants joined from across Aotearoa, including postgraduate scholars, representatives from local and national government, and researchers involved in advancing stimulating and rational conversations to achieve best outcomes.

The School of Physical and Chemical Sciences partnered with the Lyttelton Fire Brigade to present the Lyttelton Fire Festival on Sunday 14 August. The inaugural community event included a range of attractions such as kitchen chemistry demonstrations, backyard physics demonstrations, nitrogen ice cream, slime making and the hovercraft.

The School of Earth and Environment hosted the Maatangi Whenua year 11 geography quiz, which had 19 participating teams from 15 different schools in Christchurch and beyond (Rolleston and Amuri Area school). Cashmere High School won the competition.

The second seminar “Improving Health for Māori and Pasifika” for Te Papa Hauora Winter Research Series was held at Manawa. This seminar, led by Faculty of Health Senior Lecturer Dr Annabel Ahuriri-Driscoll, drew high attendance from UC staff. Other topics to be covered by the series will be “Sustainable Research in Healthcare”, “Learning from the Pandemic” and “Co-producing Research”.

Faculty of Health Lecturer Dr Rachael Dixon presented at a workshop titled “Conversations about Consent”, which was run for secondary schools in conjunction with the Ministry of Education.

In one of the Tauhere UC Connect public lectures in August, “Hard to Swallow: Retraining the Brain”, Distinguished Professor Maggie-Lee Huckabee discussed her rehabilitation research on training the brain to re-learn how to swallow. In the same series, Professor Jack Heinemann presented “What’s Your Poison: How Do We Resist Antibiotic Resistance?”, explaining how we created antibiotic-resistant bacteria and how we can help stop them.

Senior Lecturer Kay-Lee Jones, School of Teacher Education gave a UC Connect public lecture on the topic of “Whakamanahia Ngā Tamariki: Empowering Our Children through Language, Culture and Identity”. An award-winning teacher, Kay-Lee is completing her doctoral study at UC on the pūrākau | stories and experiences of kaiako that have taught in kaupapa Māori settings. In the School of Teacher Education, she has helped nurture a love for te reo Māori in over 2,000 student teachers. These graduates now share their skills in schools across Aotearoa New Zealand, normalising Māori language and culture in education every day. Nearly 80 attendees were present at the lecture (either

online or in person), while many others continue to have the opportunity to view the lecture via the recording.

The School of Product Design held its Dragon's Den event where teams of second-year students presented their designs and prototypes created from waste. The judges – Brian McMath, New Zealand Product Accelerator, Dr Joya Kemper, a UC senior lecturer, Marketing and Sustainability and Dr Michael Edmonds, Manager of the Biomolecular Interaction Centre – were impressed with the diversity of ideas and implementation. Presentations included bioplastic children's shoes made from banana skin and avocado skin/seed, and jewellery and surfboard fins made from recycled plastics. The Biomolecular Interaction Centre and the New Zealand Product Accelerator provided \$5,000 in funding to six of the teams to support them to develop their projects further.

Author–artist Gavin Bishop has won his fifth Margaret Mahy Book of the Year award. In 2016 UC bestowed him with an Honorary Doctorate of Education from UC for his contributions to literature.

UC's School of Product Design was proud to partner with HTK Charitable Trust for the Regenerative Game Jam (RGJ). With a strong focus on Matariki, the RGJ challenged rangatahi to make a game that featured organic or regenerative farming practices, all within 48 hours. UC provided use of the Len Lye computer labs and applied immersive game design staff and students were available, both in person and online, to provide mentorship on game design, development, art and more.

UC is a sponsor of the New Zealand Game Developers Association's Kiwi Game Starter competition. The winner was Rare Parrot Games, an Auckland-based team. Professor Andy Phelps, who sat on the judging panel, said the winning game had a great combination of a unique idea and an artistic style that invited players on the journey, as well as having the potential to become a larger, more polished product in future. This event has been a good exposure for the Digital Screen Campus.

The Future of Health Challenge is a weekend event run by UC Centre for Entrepreneurship in partnership with Te Papa Hauora and supported by Pegasus Health. The Challenge ran over the last weekend in July, with six teams of students participating. The teams were challenged to “envision tomorrow's healthcare provision” and tackle problems facing the health sector. The three areas of focus for the 2022 challenge were health workforce, health equity, and health and wellbeing. The standard of work was excellent with lots of innovative and future-focused thinking. Two teams from Te Kaupeka Oranga | Faculty of Health were placed first equal.

Education – Accessible, Flexible Future Focussed

At the beginning of September, UC will be hosting Tūwhitia! Transforming Tertiary. This student success symposium will be an opportunity for UC to host Tertiary institutions from across New Zealand and will feature panel discussions, informative presentations and interactive workshops that explore ways to enhance student success. The programme is designed to encourage active participation and help the sector to embrace new and innovative ways to improve outcomes for our most underserved student groups.

As has been the case, the way we are doing things has been changing and the GEOG312 students had their first experience of a new ‘virtual’ version of a lab that focuses on learning how to determine the snow water equivalent of a snow pit and using interpolation techniques to calculate glacier mass balance. Associate Professor Heather Purdie, Remote Distance Lab Designer Jonathan Davidson and Technician, Giles Ostermeijer developed this new resource. It allows students to explore the

environments in which field data were collected, including through ‘fly-by’ journeys to the glaciers, 360 videos, an interactive snow-sampling tool, a 3-D glacier model, and instructions with links to other software. They can undertake their analysis using a combination of Arc GIS and Excel, with links to an integrated Learn quiz where students answer questions to demonstrate their understanding of the virtual lab. The lab is an excellent example how we can use technology, underpinned by innovative teaching to create authentic activities for students.

In other student experiences, the Faculty of Education’s Hoaka Pounamu: Bilingual and Immersion Teaching post graduate endorsement students and academic staff went on a rangahau – research - and study trip to Rarotonga. The purpose of the Education Outside of The Classroom (EOTC) trip was to provide more historical context to the learning outcomes for two of the programme courses, EDEM658 (EDHP601): Mātauranga Māori hei Marautanga and EDEM657 (EDHP603) Whakaora Reo-Language Revitalisation, in an authentic place-based learning environment. Education Partnership Development Manager, Maraea Garisau Rangī Turketo, also joined the study group to develop and foster a partnership and relationship with the University of the South Pacific.

Professor Jayne White in the School of Teacher Education was honoured with the award of Association for Visual Pedagogies Fellow. It comes in recognition of her foundational leadership role in establishing the association and providing the leadership to enable its development as a global, inter-disciplinary community of scholars, professional bodies, and other stakeholders.

Research – Impact on a Changing World

Over the past month, UC researchers have been at the forefront of a number of international collaborative research projects. Professor Philip Schluter from the Faculty of Health has led a project across eight countries to assess the psychosocial effects of induced quarantine and/or isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research, published in *Scientific Reports*, presents an interesting insight into how populations impacted by COVID-19 public health responses experienced generalised anxiety disorders and/or major depressive episodes. Professor Simon Brown has recently published papers in *Nature Communications* and *Neural Networks* on research that continues to advance nanotechnology development of potential neuromorphic computing. This work is associated with UC’s partnership, involving four other universities, GNS Science and Callaghan Innovation in the MacDiarmid Institute, for advanced materials and nanotechnology.

A recent paper receiving good media coverage is “On the Rise: Climate Change in New Zealand Will Cause Sperm and Blue Whales to Seek Higher Latitudes” by Dr Katharina Peters and researchers from Massey University, Flinders University and the University of Zurich. The research, published in *Ecological Indicators*, shows that future climate change will make many waters surrounding New Zealand less suitable for sperm and blue whales, which brings potential implications for the marine ecosystem as well as for whale-watching tourism.

The Faculty of Education has developed a new research group called Pedagogies of Possibility. This cross-disciplinary group seeks to re-imagine, transform and expand understanding of pedagogical possibilities. Inaugural research includes a focus on de-streaming in mathematics, possibilities for early childhood education practice across the globe, and sustainability and social justice.

In an article in *The Conversation*, School of Earth and Environment Professor Andy Nicol and UC Engineering Senior Lecturer David Dempsey, along with Kēpa Morgan and Ludmila Adam from the

University of Auckland, discussed Aotearoa New Zealand's green hydrogen future, raising cultural and technical issues of switching to greener fuel. The authors argue:

“Technical feasibility is not enough: Any solution must make economic sense and be acceptable to the wider public, particularly tāngata whenua. Proving the feasibility of any new idea takes time. We need to develop, sometimes fail, refine and then find success. But with each new extreme weather event, it is clear we do not have a lot of time. In this new era of adaptation, governments, industry, communities, and scientists will need to work more closely than ever”.

The second of the 2022 Doctoral Orientations was held in July, attended in-person by over 30 newly enrolled doctoral and research master's students. In July, the programme has been updated to include a workshop on “Academic Integrity in a Research Context”, facilitated by Professor Deirdre Hart, supplemented with related resources shared by Anton Angelo, UC Library.

UC has recently secured significant government funding to lead a high-profile international programme to develop green hydrogen energy, which is expected to play a significant role in worldwide moves towards affordable clean energy and contribute directly to Goal 7 of the Sustainable Development Goals. In the drive for Aotearoa New Zealand to be carbon neutral by 2050, green hydrogen energy is a potential solution for some sectors of the economy. However, generation production, storage, distribution and economic use of green hydrogen are not without challenges. In two out of three competitively awarded projects in which New Zealand and German researchers are working together, UC is the lead partner, highlighting our position as a lead research entity in renewable energy. Matching funding for these projects comes from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and Germany, in a strategic alliance designed to create a globally sustainable energy future, build world-leading teams and create enduring research partnerships. Professor Aaron Marshall from Chemical and Process Engineering will lead a project to develop a new type of electrolyser – a tool that splits water into hydrogen and oxygen, so as to produce hydrogen energy in a more cost-effective way. Similarly, Dr Rebecca Peer and Dr Jannik Haas from Civil and Natural Resources Engineering are leading a project to develop the most advanced integrated energy system model for New Zealand, which will include electricity, heat and transport demands at the urban, suburban and national scales, where potentially green hydrogen can play different roles across all those different sectors.

Dr Angus Lindsay has been successful with his application for the Neurological Foundation Senior Research Fellowship. These fellowships provide support for outstanding postdoctoral fellows as they establish themselves as independent researchers. His application, entitled “Oestrogen and Progesterone Therapy to Prevent Stress-induced Mortality in Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy”, has been approved by the Council of the Neurological Foundation.

The Science for Technological Innovation National Science Challenge has awarded three UC academics funding for their *ending with impact* workstream. Distinguished Professor Geoff Chase has been awarded funding for “Translating Disruptive MedTech across the Innovation Chasm”. Professor Richard Green has been awarded funding for a project on “A Cost-effective Autonomous Underwater Vehicle for Ocean Surveying”. Professor Rob Lindeman will be part of a Massey-led project on virtual immersive wānanga.

Professor Toby Greany from the University of Nottingham and Associate Professor Annelies Kamp from UC's School of Educational Studies and Leadership held a seminar at the University of Nottingham. It was followed by the formal launch of their co-authored book *Leading Educational*

Networks: Theory, Policy and Practice (Bloomsbury 2022), which theorises educational collaboration in England, Aotearoa New Zealand, Chile and Singapore. Attended by academics, practitioners and research students, the seminar included a number of high-profile attendees including Dr Kate Chatwal OBE, CEO of Challenge Partners and Marie-Clare Bretherton, Director of School Improvement and Education Director for the Anthem Trust. These organisations work with large networks of schools across England and intend using the book to inform their practice in guiding those schools.

The work of Professor Mark Jermy and Dr Joe Chen from Mechanical Engineering on “Infection Risk Model of Airborne Transmission to Facilitate Decisions about Personal Protective Equipment, Ventilation and Isolation in Shared Indoor Spaces” was mentioned in the report *New Zealand’s COVID-19 Research Response*.

UC has been ranked 29th globally for Hospitality and Tourism Management in the latest Shanghai Ranking global subject ranking. In UC Business School research, Professor Girish Prayag explored dark tourism and dived into the key drivers of visitors who explore these places.

One of our Computer Science and Software Engineering graduate students, who was supervised by Professor Andy Cockburn, has just been selected for the prestigious 2022 Google PhD Fellowship. This named fellowship includes a monetary award and matches each recipient with a Google research mentor. Google PhD Fellowship students are a select group recognised by Google researchers and their institutions as some of the most promising young academics in the world.

Mathematics and Statistics PhD student Aditya Jha has been accepted for a prestigious postdoctoral research fellowship with the Institute Vienna Circle. The Institute Vienna Circle supports the integration of different disciplines focused on relevant sciences and is dedicated to the documentation, reconstruction and further development of logical empiricism.

UC has a new scholarship to recognise the significant contributions by Frank Tay during his 40-year tenure at UC. The scholarship will offer financial support to a UC student studying Economics in a research-based degree at the postgraduate level. Frank’s former students and colleagues contributed to this fund.

People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students

At the time of writing this report, 35 students are in self-isolation due to COVID-19. We continue using Assura as our recording system, making welfare calls, organising groceries, providing the Winter Warmth Power Fund and referring students to support services if needed.

We are still seeing demand for the COVID-19 Hardship Fund from Māori, Pacific and Rainbow students, and we are considering a number of options to respond to this need.

The Student Wellbeing team coordinated a measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) and COVID-19 booster vaccination stand-up at Haere-roa on Tuesday 26 July and Wednesday 27 July. This event was supported by the UC Medical Centre, University of Canterbury Students’ Association (UCSA), Health New Zealand and our local Community and Public Health unit. With the second wave of COVID-19 and concerns about MMR, this stand-up was a further attempt to reach out to our student population. It took the form of drop-in clinics, while UCSA provided music, free kai and a welcoming environment. Volunteers from UCSA oversaw the smooth running of the event with support from our UC Communications team. The UC Medical Centre ran a flu vaccination clinic at the same time,

which was organised separately due to cold chain accreditation issues for the vaccines and the lack of a subsidy for flu vaccination for some of our student cohort. We were able to provide our international students with MMR and COVID-19 booster vaccinations free of charge, which is in addition to current government policy.

UC staff also continue to be affected by COVID-19, influenza and other winter illnesses, with the result that staff absences are ongoing. I am grateful to staff for their flexibility and understanding in enabling our teaching, research and other aspects of our busy agenda to continue despite colleagues' absences.

The People and Culture team have appointed a second staff wellbeing specialist. Julie Stafford will join Tracey Robinson to lead the staff wellbeing implementation plan, systems and reporting. They will collaborate closely with Gilbert Taurua and the Student Wellbeing team to provide a holistic UC approach to the wellbeing of our people.

Emeritus Professor Paula Jameson is also working within the People and Culture team to complete the Academic Promotions review project. A dedicated resource for this important UC process, Paula brings a wealth of academic and leadership mana. She will compile the development work done to date and will continue to collaborate with a range of working groups and consult across the academy with a view to finalising an Academic Promotions criteria document and process by late November 2022.

Staff from the People and Culture team have been facilitating a people capability programme for Sport Canterbury. This has been very well received by Sport Canterbury and has been an opportunity for UC to connect with our Canterbury community.

Representatives from our Student Care, Accommodation and Security teams met on campus recently with Julia Moore, the new Manager for the Pastoral Care Code from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. This introductory meeting was an opportunity to outline UC's progress towards code compliance and to discuss the range of ways in which we provide pastoral care.

The UCSA Winter Wellness Expo was held in Haere-roa.

The Department of Mechanical Engineering farewells Professor Keith Alexander, who retired after 25 years at UC. Keith, a former recipient of the UC Innovation Medal, is well known to the UC community for being the inventor of the Springfree Trampoline, now a company that manufactures recreational trampoline products and accessories.

UC Communications and Political Science student Luke Jones is standing as a council candidate for the Riccarton Ward. He is driven to improve Ōtautahi Christchurch by working on community safety, climate action, sensible and strong public transport investment, greater council accountability and better spending, specifically in community initiatives.

Honouring women around the board table, the New Zealand Women in Governance Awards is an annual celebration of women and organisations that are making a positive impact on gender equality in governance. This year, UC Kaiarataki Ākonga | Innovation Manager Jeanine Tamati-Elliffe was a finalist.

UC's Director of Digital Security and Risk, Rudo Tagwireyi, has been nominated for New Zealand's Most Outstanding Woman in IT Security, in the New Zealand Women in Security Awards 2022. Winners will be announced at the awards presentation ceremony on 3 November.

Internationalisation – Locally Engaged, Globally Networked

UC celebrated with the rest of the New Zealand international education community this month after New Zealand's borders fully reopened to the world on 31 July. Immigration New Zealand has resumed student visa application processing, and the International team is supporting current and prospective students to consider their transition to on-campus learning.

The vast majority of UC's allocated fourth (and final) cohort of border exemption students are now on campus. They will enjoy a formal welcome to Ōtautahi with the city's Mayor and key stakeholders at the end of this month.

With ongoing uncertainty around student visa processing times, UC continues to support offshore, online learning. Preparations are under way for another intake at UC's offshore study centres, whose semester begins in late August. UC students basing themselves at these centres have been moving into student accommodation over recent weeks and UC will run virtual orientations for them.

Assistant Vice-Chancellor Engagement Brett Berquist attended an event in Wellington to mark the renewed signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between all eight New Zealand universities and Peking University to continue hosting the New Zealand Centre at Peking University (China's leading university) – marking 15 years of the relationship. The event also highlighted the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and New Zealand.

Meanwhile, a small cohort of our domestic students prepares to fly out to commence their overseas exchanges in the northern hemisphere this month. They are UC's first in-person outbound exchange students in 2.5 years.

Recruitment from key source markets has begun with international recruiters visiting Malaysia and Singapore for the first time since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Organisational Efficacy – of a sustainable scale by 2030

Audit NZ is soon to release a report titled *Procurement and Contract Management: Lessons Learned from the Tertiary Sector*. It references UC as an example of best practice: "This is one example of a TEI [tertiary education institution] thinking creatively to ensure it has the right level of expertise dedicated to procurement and contract management."

In August, UC's new intranet platform was launched. This is a significant milestone in modernising how to find information, collaborate and improve UC's communications capabilities. The old intranet, launched in 2000, lacks many of the modern features expected from an intranet. Further, this new channel enables UC's Digital Services team to work across UC in optimising what content should feature on our external UC website, allowing the web team to deliver an improved web experience for students and external stakeholders when the new UC website launches next year.

To complement the launch of the intranet, Digital Services has also enabled the capability to use the organisational tree and people-finding features within all Microsoft 365 applications used at UC, such as MS Teams, Outlook and SharePoint Online. It is now simple to search for people and explore who their manager is, who else is in their team and who their reports are. In addition, it enables one-click communications as an easy way for staff to start an email, chat or call.

Since the launch of the new services portal in July, the Digital Services team has been bedding in the new service management platform, listening to feedback on the first release and preparing for the

next release, which will feature a number of improvements and fixes. Alongside this continuous improvement of the platform, Digital Services is progressing the next major phase to include People and Culture services on the platform. This is expected to go live by the end of this year.

The Digital Services team is currently enabling multiple significant modernisation and transformational projects across the University. Platforms it is implementing are for the management of hazardous substances, timetabling, work integrated learning, and higher degree and ethics management. All of these projects are now well under way, with deliveries due across quarter 4 and early 2023.

Environmentally Sustainable

UC, together with Lincoln University, has reached the finals of the Australasian Green Gown Awards <https://ggaa.acts.asn.au/2022awards/>. If we win our category, we will be automatically entered into the International Green Gown Awards, which are supported by United Nations Environment Programme and are open to any university or college across the world. Recognising exceptional sustainability initiatives being undertaken by the world's universities and colleges, the International Green Gown Awards set the bar and put every learning institution at the heart of delivering the United Nations Global Goals.

Professor Jim Briskie of Biological Sciences has agreed to Chair the reconvened Biodiversity Advisory Group. Together with other academic experts and members of Facilities Management, the group will guide the Sustainability Office in its biodiversity work on campus, which is currently led by Emily Arthur. Jim is an eminent behavioural ecologist, and we are very grateful for his leadership in this space.

AECOM has been awarded the contract to lead the University's Infrastructure Climate Change Risk Assessment project. At the kick-off meeting on 19 August, AECOM and members of Facilities Management confirmed the scope and timelines for stage 1 of a four-stage project. Stage 1 involves conducting a high-level assessment of the level of exposure of our infrastructure.

At the end of August, the May 2022 Carbon Neutral Government Programme Dashboard was publicly released after review by Ministers. Universities are not required to join this programme but are "strongly encouraged" to do so by the Ministry for the Environment. The dashboard shows that UC is among the three leading universities in terms of strategies and reporting requirements and has strong evidence in every category of required activity. In general, universities in New Zealand are performing better in this programme than many other government public bodies.

The Boiler and Ground Source Heat Pumps project has reached a milestone as the drilling for the heat pumps is about to start in the area between West, Rutherford and Matariki buildings. As this stage will continue for several months, the project has a communication plan to provide students and staff with information about the environmental benefits of the work, and also the timing and impact of noisy activities.

The Sustainable Is Attainable project explores new opportunities to reduce or find new uses for waste materials currently produced by South Canterbury food manufacturers. Researchers in the Biomolecular Interaction Centre have been involved in ongoing research exploring alternative uses for different waste materials including using spent brewery yeast to create nutrient broths for bacterial cell growth, the production of bioplastics, extraction of bioactive natural products and converting

organic dairy waste into bio-hydrogen. As the project continues, it will have opportunities for student scholarships over the coming summer of 2022/23.

VC Activities

9 August	Speaker and presenter of awards at the Three Minute Thesis event.
10 August	Met with Peter Bramley at the District Health Board
12 August	Attended the Rochester and Rutherford Gold Duke of Edinburg Awards
16 – 17 August	Participated as invited speaker and panel at the Times Higher Education Campus Live Series in Melbourne, Australia
18 August	Visited Little Hall, University of Melbourne and UniLodge Melbourne
25 August	Attended a New Zealand Qualifications Authority meeting via Zoom
25 August	Attended a New Zealand Vice-Chancellor's meeting via Zoom
26 August	Met with Martin Bean, CEO of The Bean Centre
29 August	Attended the Faculty of Science, Bachelor of Product Design, Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) Chemical and Process Engineering and Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) graduation celebration
30 August	Attended the School of Business, Faculty of Law and UC Pasifika graduation celebrations.
31 August	Attended the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education and Faculty of health graduation celebration in the morning and the Bachelor of Forestry Science and Faculty of Engineering graduation celebration in the afternoon.
01 September	Speaker at the Eke Tangaroa 2022- Māori graduation celebration.