

2024 Self-Review

The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary & International Learners) Code of Practice

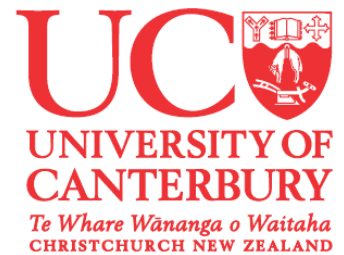


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Document Details

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Executive Summary

Following a self-review of UC systems and processes, and consideration of feedback from students and stakeholders, implementation of the Pastoral Code Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 has been assessed as being well implemented at UC.

Systematic collection of quantitative and qualitative data indicates that students have a high level of satisfaction with UC's culture, safety, and support services. The University provides a comprehensive range of services, activities and initiatives designed to enhance student wellbeing, including pastoral care, counselling, peer support, wellbeing messaging and events. These measures form part of a holistic approach that reflects UC's commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment that promotes student success and wellbeing.

The self-review identified a few areas that will benefit from iterative enhancement. The complaints process is recognised as being complex for students to navigate, and work is currently underway to enhance these systems. The University places strong emphasis on staff training to ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to foster a supportive and inclusive environment for all students, and areas for additional staff training opportunities aligned with Pastoral Code requirements were identified and will be addressed. Despite significant efforts to communicate available support services to students, it remains a perennial challenge to ensure universal awareness of them. UC will continue to explore ways to improve in this regard.

Although the University is currently navigating financial constraints due to the current domestic funding environment, we are firmly committed to achieving positive outcomes for our student community. Within the limitations of available resources, UC will continue to work to ensure that support for student wellbeing and safety is maintained at the highest possible standard.

List of key terms/acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| ACE: | Analytics for Course Engagement |
| ASC: | Academic Skills Centre |
| BCP: | Business Continuity Plan |
| DAP: | Disability Action Plan |
| ESI: | Evaluation and Student Insights |
| GAPA: | Grievance and Academic Processes Advisors |
| IMT: | Incident Management Team |
| PALS: | Peer Assisted Learning Sessions |
| PKAC: | Pacific Knowledge and Culture Hub |
| SCIG: | Student Critical Incident Group |
| SIRP: | Student Incident Response Plan |
| SAR: | Students At Risk (Committee) |
| SAS: | Student Advisory Services |
| RA: | Residential Assistant |
| SAR: | Students At Risk |
| SLT: | Senior Leadership Team |
| UC: | University of Canterbury |
| UCSA: | University of Canterbury Students' Association |
| WIP: | Wellbeing Implementation Plan |

Introduction

The University of Canterbury (UC) was first formed as the Canterbury Collegiate Union in 1872 and became the Canterbury College in 1873. As the first constituent college of the University of New Zealand, it was also the second institution in New Zealand to provide tertiary-level education. From its foundation, admission was open to all, regardless of background. In 1961, the federated University of New Zealand was split, and the University of Canterbury was created as an independent university.

This long tradition continues today. UC offers a comprehensive mix of tertiary-level undergraduate and postgraduate education. In 2023, UC was the third-largest university for domestic students in Aotearoa New Zealand, teaching 22,256 individual domestic students (headcount), or the equivalent of 15,849 EFTS. Year-to-date data in 2024 indicates even higher domestic enrolments, with the headcount above 23,700 students.

Leading a large organisation requires adept management and governance. At UC, the University Council sets policies, approves degree, financial, and capital matters, and monitors their implementation. One of UC's most important strategic documents is the *2020 to 2030 UC Strategic Vision Tangata Tū, Tangata Ora | Engaged, Empowered, Making a Difference* (Strategic Vision). This document lays out UC's key strategic aims and objectives required for success as a tertiary education provider through to 2030.

Within it, the "People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students" chapter identifies student wellbeing as a core strategic objective. UC operationalises this strategy in a three-year plan that is updated annually. Its current iteration, the *UC Triennial Plan 2024 to 2026*, identifies the most important operational activities to be carried out by UC senior leaders over the coming three years in order to achieve the aims, objectives and outcomes identified in the Strategic Vision. The Triennial Plan also further breaks down the priorities for activities associated with student wellbeing. Taken together, these high-level documents provide a clear picture of the strategic importance that UC places on student wellbeing and the requirements of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 (the Code).

The Mahere Oranga | Wellbeing Implementation Plan (WIP) operates within this context to further articulate the vision and mission for wellbeing at UC, as well as UC's wellbeing model, initiatives, and desired outcomes. Developed with input from student representatives, the Mahere Oranga was reviewed in 2023 to ensure its continued relevance and appropriateness in the post-COVID tertiary environment, and some changes were made as a result.

For the purposes of this Pastoral Code self-review, analysis was carried out to map each Code process requirement in Outcomes 1 to 4 against UC systems, supports and processes. The review drew on systematically collected quantitative and qualitative data from a variety of sources, including student representatives and staff from 18 distinct teams and appointments within UC and the UCSA.

Implementation was then evaluated using an adaptation of the "Continuum of implementation for the Code" found in Tool B of NZQA's Self Review Toolkit for Tertiary Education Providers. Although this process was time-consuming, it did highlight a handful of areas where systems or practices could be strengthened.

Overall, the evaluation concluded that Code Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 are 'Well Implemented' at UC.

UC Student Demographic Profile

UC enrolled 22,256 domestic students in 2023, which equated to 15,849 EFTS. A summary of key demographic statistics relating to this group is shown in Table 1 below. Notably, UC now enrolls more school leavers from outside the Canterbury region than from within it, and 80% of our domestic students are aged under 25. The ethnic composition of the UC student body reflects the demographic make-up of Canterbury, including for young people. In 2023, 17% of domestic students identified as having a disability or long-term medical condition.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>All domestic students</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 52% were female, 47% were male, and 1% identified as another gender. • 10.2% were Māori. The largest affiliations are to Ngāi Tahu (32%), Ngā Puhī (14%), Ngāti Porou (10%) and Tainui (5%). • 3.4% were Pasifika. The largest groups in order being Samoan, Fijian, Tongan, and Cook Island Māori. • 17% self-identify as having some form of disability or long-term medical condition (up from 13% in 2020). |
| <p>Students aged under 25</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students aged under 25 made up 80% of all domestic students. • 47% attended a secondary school in the Canterbury region, while 53% did not. • 6% attended a Decile 1-4 secondary school, 31% attended a Decile 5-7 secondary school, and 63% attended a Decile 8-10 Secondary school.¹ • 24% are the first in their whānau to go to university. • Of those students aged under 25 who attended a Canterbury secondary school, 9.3% were Māori, and 4.0% were Pasifika. • The average annualised course load for young students was 0.88 EFTS per calendar year (1.0 EFTS being a full-time course load). |
| <p>Students aged over 25</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students aged over 25 are more likely to be female (61%) and Māori (12.7%) than the overall student population. • A third of older students (2,449 headcount) finished secondary school in 1996 or earlier; a third (2,416 headcount) finished between 1997 and 2008, and a third (2,696 headcount) finished after that. • The average annualised course load for older students was 0.40 EFTS per calendar year. • 40% have dependents at home, and 66% are working while studying. |
| <p>All international students</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,746 full-fee international students (headcount), equating to 1,317 EFTS. • 7.7% of all UC EFTS were full-fee students. • On a full-fee student headcount basis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 16% were enrolled in short-term Study Abroad programmes. ○ 37% were enrolled in programmes of two years or less in length. ○ 48% were enrolled in programmes of three or more years in length. • 480 doctoral students were from overseas.² • The largest full-fee cohort was from China (43% of total full-fee enrolments), followed by Malaysia (11%) and India (11%). |

Table 1: UC student demographic breakdown for 2023.

¹ This data relates to 2023; the decile system for classifying schools has since been replaced by an equity index.

² Deemed to be doctoral students without New Zealand Citizenship or Permanent Residency.

In 2024, the University has continued to experience sustained growth, particularly in relation to domestic enrolments. Data indicates that, as of October 2024, the student population has exceeded 23,800 students (headcount).

Four Cornerstones

The NZQA document *Guidance for Tertiary Providers, The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021* gives advice on how providers should understand, interpret and apply the Code. Importantly, it defines the four cornerstones of the Code that providers should consider when reviewing their performance under the Code. These cornerstones are wellbeing and safety, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, learner voice and a 'whole-of-provider' approach. The following section contains an overview of information that is relevant to assessing UC's performance in each of the four cornerstone areas.

Wellbeing and Safety

The University of Canterbury has an extensive network of support services dedicated to student wellbeing and safety, including ones with focuses on pastoral care, counselling, health, wellbeing, security, and emergency preparedness and response.

- **Atawhai Ākonga | Student Care** provides practical guidance, advice and support to domestic and international students who are dealing with issues or concerns.
- **Kā Waimaero | UC Māori** provides support for Māori students, including cultural support, personal and professional development opportunities, tutoring, pastoral care and guidance.
- **Pacific Development Team** provides multifaceted support for Pacific students, both pastorally and academically.
- **Rainbow Student Support** provides dedicated support for Rainbow students to help them succeed and keep well through holistic assessment of their needs and help in navigating the University system.
- **Student Wellbeing** is responsible for messaging, events and projects designed to help students maintain and boost their wellbeing. They also oversee the Kaiwhakatere Oranga | Wellbeing Navigator peer support programme.
- **Te Whare Hauora | Health Centre** provides full general practice medical services, counselling and related services, and serves as the primary referral point for all cases of emotional or psychological distress in students.
- **Kaitoko | First Year Advisors** help with the transition first year students into university study by providing wrap-around support including pastoral care.
- **Kāhui Wairua | Chaplaincy** provides pastoral and practical support such as listening to, advising and praying with students, regardless of their beliefs.
- **Te Ratonga Hākinakina | UC Rec & Sport** offer cardio, weights, classes, courts and sport to promote physical wellbeing. The Recreation Centre is the hub for fitness at UC, and in recognition of its importance, the University recently approved significant funding to build a brand-new facility. Its opening is planned in time for the 2027 academic year.
- **Tari Oranga | UCSA Advocacy and Welfare** provides a range of advocacy and welfare-related services, including a food bank and access to financial assistance. They also oversee the Pathseekers Programme, a peer support initiative where students are paired up with others who are wanting support from a peer.
- **UC Security** provides 24/7 campus security services. Student and staff ID cards have the number for UC Security printed on the back, and students and staff are encouraged through messaging to keep the number saved in their phones as well.

Other services and programmes support student wellbeing more indirectly, but no less importantly from a holistic perspective. For example,

- **Te Pokapū Pūkenga Ako | Academic Skills Centre (ASC)** provides academic skills support for students at all levels, from undergraduate through to PhD, through workshops, consultations and resources.
- **Te Ratonga Whaikaha | Student Accessibility Services (SAS)** works to provide academic accommodations to students with disabilities, long-term medical conditions, and temporary impairments. Accommodations can include notetaking, exam special arrangements, and sign language interpretation.
- **Te Rōpū Rapuara | UC Careers** helps both students and graduates get ready for their future careers by helping them identify strengths, explore career options and make plans to reach their goals.
- **Te Kura Tāura | UC Graduate School** assists graduate research students with wraparound support at every stage of their academic journey, from initial enquiry through to graduation.
- **Peer Assisted Learning Support (PALS)** is a peer-to-peer learning and mentoring programme administered as part of the Kia Angitu initiative focused on catapult courses. Almost 90% of first-year undergraduate students are eligible for access to this service.

Analytics for Course Engagement (ACE)

The Analytics for Course Engagement (ACE) programme is a key mechanism for proactive monitoring and responsive practices at UC. This university-wide initiative aims to identify students showing signs of disengaging from their studies, which can sometimes be related to wellbeing challenges. Students are encouraged to respond to the University's outreach so that they can be directed to appropriate support. As a pan-organisational response mechanism, over 50 staff members are involved. Within the Faculties, the 'ACE Teach' tool provides engagement and analytics which enables teaching staff to identify students who may be struggling or disengaged.

Transition Support

Entering university-level study represents a significant transitional moment for students, and UC has programmes in place to support them through this process. For example, Takere is an academic and cultural live-in programme designed to support first-year ākonga Māori and Pacific students and increase their likelihood of remaining in their degree during and after their first year. They experience staying in a hall of residence over the summer break with other Māori and Pacific ākonga, take a course together designed to support and give credit toward most degree pathways, and have opportunities to make friends, gain academic skills, learn about culture and generally have fun. Following this, Takere students can participate in a range of additional initiatives and activities that are spread across the academic year to enhance their pastoral, cultural and academic success and continue to build connections.

UC Thrive lectures are part of the first-year student enrichment programmes and are another example of transition support. The lectures are delivered to first-year students during the week prior to the start of the first semester and focus on key aspects of the transition from high school to university, including academic expectations, university processes, and strategies for a successful start at UC.

Mentoring

A variety of mentoring programmes are available at UC. For example, Unilife is a social mentoring programme run by students for other students to help them meet others, make friends, and get involved. Faculty-based programmes like EngMe and LawMe exist as well, as do cohort-based programmes like the Pacific Mentoring Programme and Māori Leadership Programme.

Messaging and Events

The Student Wellbeing team primarily focus on proactive interventions designed to support student wellbeing. In the area of student communications, for example, the team uses social media, posters, blogs and other channels to promote messaging on a range of health and wellbeing topics, including help-seeking behaviour, fear of failure, procrastination, perfectionism, anxiety, gratitude, budgeting, and healthy homes.

A calendar of events complements these efforts, including Pink Shirt Day, Mental Health Awareness Week, Study Weeks, and more. The team has recently been working with Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora to coordinate pop-up vaccination clinics on campus at specific points in the year for Meningococcal, HPV and MMR vaccines. Alongside the Kaiwhakatere Oranga | Wellbeing Navigators, activities such as coordinating the free period products distributed across campus and helping establish campus-based drug checking clinics help fill out the remainder of the team's mahi.

Peer Support

The Kaiwhakatere Oranga | Wellbeing Navigators provide an additional layer of support and connection. Enabled through funding received from Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora, the programme functions as a peer support and referral initiative targeting improved outcomes for students experiencing mild to moderate mental health challenges. The primary activities of the group relate to events, projects and peer support.

Operating during term time and study weeks, the Navigators host regular 'Connect Zone' events which involve kai (e.g. fruit smoothies that students blend up on smoothie bikes), music, and games. While food is key to many successful events in a tertiary environment, in this case it serves as a drawcard that provides context for a short conversation with students to see how they are feeling. Based on what the students say, the Navigators may promote particular support services or, where appropriate, offer referrals to Student Care.

The Wellbeing Navigators also run coffee catchups for students experiencing social disconnection, as well as bespoke wellbeing-focused events, workshops, and other initiatives supporting positive outcomes for our community. The medium-term goal for this group is to establish it as a mechanism for additional student voice, particularly through the lens of lived experience, with a focus on UC's support services and how these can be enhanced for students.

Accommodation Services

Te Ratonga Nohonga | Accommodation Services oversees the relationship between the University and the Halls of Residence. Within the team, the Accommodation Wellbeing Adviser works closely with the Halls to support Residential Advisor (RA) wellbeing and help them balance both being a student and the complex demands of their peer leadership responsibilities. Upon arrival, residents receive information designed to promote both physical and mental health, while encouraging them to access available support services. RAs are trained to engage in regular, intentional conversations with residents—fortnightly during the first year, and then monthly afterward—to build trust and conduct wellbeing checks.

The UC Accommodation webpage contains detailed information for students about the different accommodation options available at UC, including Halls of Residence, Homestay, Campus Housing and private renting. This includes 360° panoramas and videos of accommodation facilities, comparison charts, details on the application process and a comprehensive online accommodation guide. Additional information on student rights and obligations as a tenant can be found in the 'Renting and You' booklet in the Private Renting section, the Contract and Orientation book for Homestay, and the Contract and handbooks for Halls of Residence and Campus Housing. There are also various links to other useful resources and helpful information throughout the Accommodation website.

Staff training

One of the new developments at UC since the introduction of the Pastoral Code is the implementation of a learning management system for online staff training. Core topics on the platform include the Pastoral Code, the Privacy Act, Conflicts of Interest, Cybersecurity, and an Introduction to Health and Safety. These are provided to all new staff as part of their induction process.

Additional training that is of relevance to the Code includes a course on Te Reo, Tangata Tū Tangata Ora, Pasifika Talanoa, Physical First Aid, Mental Health First Aid, Planning Your Career Advancement for Early

Career Academics (Pastoral Care is discussed within this), Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Pedagogy, and Taking an Intercultural Approach to Supervision.

Residential Advisors working in Halls of Residence receive training each February, including understanding the needs of diverse students, including Rainbow students, students with disabilities, international students, Māori and Pacific students, and students with mental health challenges. Other training covered includes sexual harm prevention, being an upstander not a bystander, appropriate handling of disclosures, maintaining professional boundaries, and ensuring prompt referral to appropriate support services. Senior leaders within residential halls also complete suicide prevention training.

Upon request, Student Care provides training to departments covering mental health and referral to support services, and UC Rainbow can provide Rainbow training upon request. Draft UC-wide referral pathway documentation for disclosures relating to harmful sexual behaviour has been developed and is currently awaiting associated policy implementation. Once formalised, this will lead to additional staff training in this area.

Emergency Management

The UC Emergency Management Policy and associated Emergency Management Plan provide the framework for responding to emergency situations. Everyday disruptions, or the lowest level of response coordination, are managed through business continuity plans (BCPs). These plans have been developed across the University for teaching and service units. At a higher level, the Incident Management Team (IMT) coordinates university-wide emergency responses. There are 13 “help point towers” which act as broadcast systems to disseminate emergency warnings and enable people to communicate directly with UC Security 24/7. A Student Incident Response Plan (SIRP) also exists for the management of critical incidents and is maintained by the Student Care team.

Students At Risk

A variety of systems exist at UC to identify, receive or manage concerns relating to students identified as being at risk. Key among these are the ACE programme, the Students at Risk (SAR) committee, and the Student Critical Incident Group (SCIG). SAR’s primary function is to facilitate discussion and evaluation of student cases or incidents that have raised concern. In doing so, it works to promote the management of risks and coordinate interventions aimed at positive outcomes. SCIG serves as a mechanism for UC-wide information exchange relevant to staff and student safety and security, risk assessment and escalation, and to advise relevant persons or agencies as appropriate. Additionally, UC and Halls staff meet regularly to liaise around any emerging concerns about students. A SAR electronic notification system is used by the Student Care team to receive and triage risk and allocate an appropriate support service on campus. Student Care also has warm handover protocols with triage Counsellors at the UC Health Centre and a process for sending notes through in relation to students identified as at risk.

Complaints

UC manages formal complaints and misconduct in accordance with a range of regulations, the full details of which are available on the UC website. The Student Complaints Procedures Guide outlines the steps in the complaints process, while the Student Misconduct Procedures Guide details the decision-making framework for cases involving academic or behavioural misconduct, as well as complaints about the conduct of another student.

Grievance and Academic Processes Advisors (GAPA) oversee the management of student complaints, serving as a single point of contact between the University and the complainant. Students are encouraged to seek confidential, independent advice and advocacy through the UCSA Advocacy team. In addition, students may be referred to UC Student Care, UC Māori, or the Pacific Development Team for wellbeing support throughout and following the complaints process. Students also have the option to engage legal counsel,

family members, or friends as support persons or advocates. The GAPA ensures that students are regularly updated on the status of their complaint.

In accordance with the Student Complaint Procedures Guide, the University endeavours to conclude all investigations within 30 working days. If this timeframe cannot be met, the GAPA will inform the student of the reasons for the delay and provide a revised estimate for the completion of the investigation. The GAPA also updates the student every 10 working days. By design, the complaints process allows for the possibility of straightforward, low-level complaints to be resolved at the lowest possible level, however, this may not always be feasible.

The University adheres to the Privacy Act, and staff receive training around this. When complaints of a sensitive nature are received, the GAPA seek guidance from UC Senior Legal Counsel to ensure that as few people as necessary are involved. The principles of the complaints procedures specifically require that we consider issues from a cultural perspective and that UC provides culturally responsive approaches to resolving complaints, while also adhering to principles of natural justice.

Student Clubs

UC has a strong club culture, with over 150 clubs and societies available for students to join. The UCSA provides financial support to help sustain this integral aspect of student life.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Central to UC's engagement with our local community are our relations with Ngāi Tūāhuriri and Ngāi Tahu as our Te Tiriti partners. These are strategically important relationships that are explicitly discussed in both the Strategic Vision and the Triennial Plan.

Operationally this takes form in three main service units at UC. The Office of Treaty Partnership provides direction to the University relationship and sets expectations for Māori achievement. Kā Waimaero | UC Māori helps UC realise a learning environment that recognises and promotes Aotearoa New Zealand's unique bicultural society, including providing support to Māori students, embedding bicultural strategies and initiatives, connecting with UC Ngā Uara | Values and helping to implement the Triennial Plan. Finally, the Ngāi Tahu Research Centre operates as a joint initiative between UC and Ngāi Tahu. It aims to create intellectual capital and leadership to foster tribal development, and be the foremost indigenous Research Centre in New Zealand and the Pacific with strong links to the principal institutions that lead indigenous scholarship and development.

All parties have put tremendous effort and resources into making this relationship as successful as possible, and this is having an impact. 2023 saw record numbers of Māori as academic staff, professional staff and students at UC. In early 2023 UC was presented with a patu parāoa, a carved whale bone, by Ngāi Tahu. The patu parāoa hangs in UC's Council Chambers and symbolises the relationship between UC and Ngāi Tūāhuriri, the University's commitment to upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the on-going commitment to partnership between the Ngāi Tahu and UC. It is within this context of partnership between UC, Ngāi Tūāhuriri and Ngāi Tahu that student wellbeing is implemented at UC.

The University values of whanaungatanga, tiakitanga and manaakitanga are central to the backbone of pastoral care practices and guide the University's actions. Understanding the diverse backgrounds and needs of ākonga Māori is fundamental, with kaiurungi prioritising knowing ākonga Māori on an individual level to recognise their dreams, challenges, and aspirations. Manaakitanga fills every interaction, ensuring ākonga feel respected, supported, and empowered to thrive. UC Māori kaimahi act as guides, offering mentorship, guidance, and advocacy, while also facilitating access to culturally relevant resources and support networks. By fostering connections, the UC Māori team endeavours to create a sense of whanaungatanga, weaving a supportive community where ākonga feel valued and understood. This extends beyond academics by encompassing cultural, social, and personal aspects of their lives. Through embodying tiakitanga, UC Māori prioritise the holistic wellbeing of ākonga, nurturing their academic, cultural, and emotional growth. In doing

so, UC Māori uphold their commitment to providing holistic pastoral care that honours and uplifts the mana of ākongā Māori.

On a staff training front, UC provides a range of professional development opportunities, including (of relevance to Te Tiriti) “Tangata Tū, Tangata Ora”, “Te Reo for the Workplace”, “Te Ao Māori for Professionals”, a 12-month online Te Reo language training package, and Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Pedagogy workshops for academic/teaching staff. Uptake in these courses from staff is very high, with most courses being fully subscribed for 2024.

Learner Voice

The University of Canterbury Students’ Association (UCSA) serves as the primary representative body for students at UC, providing student voice to help inform the University's direction, resource allocation, and decision-making. Operating as a large independent organisation, UCSA employed approximately 240 staff and generated total revenues of \$20 million in 2023. It also maintains a good level of student democratic engagement, with 25% of students participating in the 2023 student executive elections.

In 2021, UC signed a new partnership agreement with the UCSA outlining the principles, obligations and responsibilities of both parties, and the intention to ground their engagement in a bicultural context. Within this framework of partnership, UC maintains student representation on key standing committees, including the University Council and Academic Board. In doing so, it provides student input into the governance and management of UC’s policy, academic and financial matters. UC also engages with the UCSA Executive on an ad-hoc basis when feedback is needed on a range of student-related issues. In addition to formal structures, less formal mechanisms for engagement exist, including meetings between UCSA and senior leadership, as well as interactions between class representatives and academic staff.

The compulsory student services levy is set with input from the UCSA. In 2023, \$13.8m was collected and allocated as shown in Table 2.

| Service | 2023 Actual Expenditure |
|---|-------------------------|
| Sports, recreation and cultural activities, and clubs and societies | \$5.0m |
| Counselling services and pastoral care | \$1.6m |
| Health services | \$1.6m |
| Advocacy, legal and financial advice | \$1.2m |
| Careers and employment information | \$0.8m |
| Media | \$0.6m |
| Allocation to the student space capital fund to support the development of student buildings and facilities | \$2.9m |
| Total | \$13.8m |

Table 2: Allocation of 2023 Student Services Levy by Service

Ako Marake | Evaluation & Student Insights (ESI) gathers further student voice through a suite of surveys conducted at various stages of the student lifecycle. The result is a comprehensive programme of institutional research that is used to identify trends and potential issues in the student experience. ESI aims to maintain consistency in survey instruments from year to year, so that important metrics can be tracked and analysed longitudinally. ESI also undertakes qualitative research in the form of focus groups, workshops, or interviews to further understand the student experience. Data is made available for staff via the intranet and can be used to guide strategic decision making, planning and activities across the University, including within wellbeing-related work streams. A visual representation of regular student surveys is included as Figure 1 below.

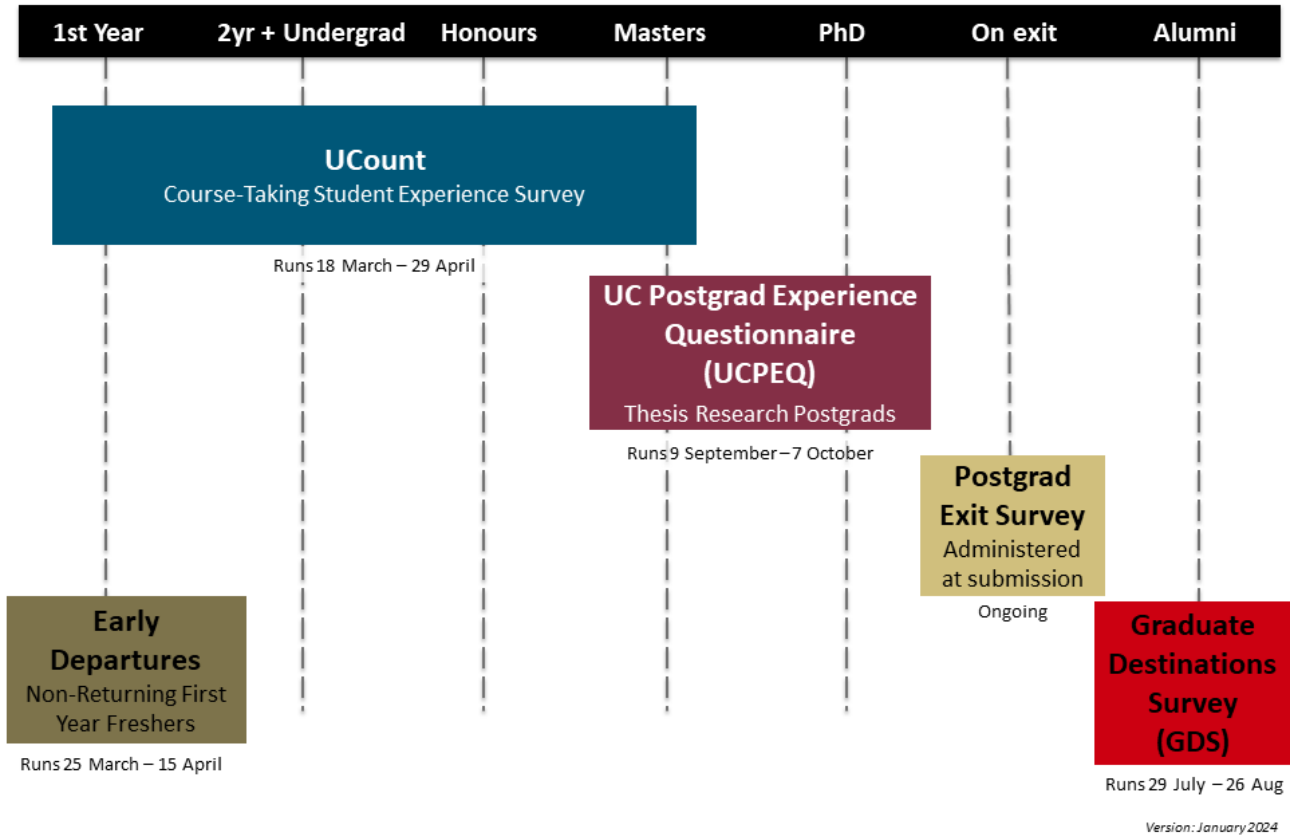


Figure 1: UC students are surveyed in a systematic manner to a regular schedule.

UC is building a new recreation centre. For the design, stakeholders and peer-review groups across UC were consulted throughout different project stages for input and feedback. This included voices from staff and students from within the UCSA, UC Wellbeing and Equity, Rainbow Community and Student Accessibility communities. When the UC website was updated from Terminal 4 to AEM at the end of 2023, there were three rounds of user testing with students as part of the development process. The team overseeing the update presented to the UCSA and ran a five-hour drop-in session for students prior to it going live to help with any questions. A feedback form was linked in the footer of the website to collect feedback and for users to log any issues.

Whole-of-Provider Approach

The [Strategic Vision](#) is UC’s core strategic document outlining the key aims, objectives, and outcomes necessary for institutional success. Within this, the chapter “People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students” sets this overarching goal:

“UC will provide a sustaining environment where the holistic wellbeing of staff, students and our community enables our people to be successful, engaged, empowered and making a difference.”

Student wellbeing is identified as a key priority under the "Thriving Students" section. This adopts an outcome-based approach to academic and pastoral support that considers the whole student experience, including belonging, self-efficacy, personal meaning, active involvement, personal reflection, social integration, self-awareness and personal validation. The Strategic Vision emphasises that UC must support and care for students in need of advice, offer guidance, and provide wellbeing support through outreach, education, pastoral care, crisis intervention and referral support.

This approach contributes to a campus environment that is responsive to evolving trends and the needs of a diverse student community. A core component of wellbeing is fostering a community where everyone feels a sense of belonging, and UC is committed to upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi. In this area, UC takes pride in fostering a meaningful relationship and partnership with Ngāi Tūāhuriri in Christchurch, and Ngāi Tahu more broadly as Treaty partners.

The UC Triennial Plan translates the Strategic Vision into action by outlining the most important operational activities to be carried out by UC's Senior Leaders over the coming three years. In relation to student wellbeing, the Triennial Plan 2024-2026 identifies initiatives such as measuring students' sense of belonging and inclusiveness, using social media to boost mental health literacy and resilience, and strengthening the relationship between the Student Wellbeing team and Student Accommodation providers. The aims, objectives, activities and outcomes articulated in these two top level documents clearly demonstrate the importance that UC places on student wellbeing.

Direction from the Strategic Vision, Triennial Plan and other relevant strategies was used to inform the update of the Mahere Oranga | Wellbeing Implementation Plan 2023-2024 (WIP). This plan functions within the context of the Code to articulate the vision and mission for wellbeing at UC, along with our wellbeing model, initiatives, desired outcomes and methods of measurement. As the plan notes:

“UC is committed to achieving positive wellbeing outcomes for our diverse community. Through collaboration, innovation, and insight, we will take practical strides to support people to feel good and function well. Mindful of disparities in outcomes, we will work with our community to understand our needs, hold ourselves to account, and enact research-informed programmes of action to support a deeper culture of wellbeing for all who work, study, or visit here.”

The WIP was developed with input from student representatives and includes a foreword from the UCSA President. A review of the plan was undertaken in 2023 to ensure that it remained relevant and appropriate in the post-covid tertiary setting, and changes were made as a result.

Alongside this, the Strategic Vision, Te Rautaki Māori Strategy for Māori Development, and UC Pacific Strategy are all published and available for download on UC's website.

Student Partnership model

Student feedback is crucial for UC to gauge its success in meeting the Code's outcomes and inform future decisions. In addition to the formal relationship that UC has with the UCSA, UC conducts systematic surveys to capture student opinions throughout the year. Relevant annual surveys include the Early Experience Survey which is administered to first-year students (“freshers”), the UCount survey for 100-level students through to taught Master's students, the UC Postgraduate Experience Questionnaire targeting all thesis-taking Master's and PhD students, and the Non-Returning First Years survey that is sent to all “freshers” who did not return to study in the year following completion of their first year.

Topics covered in these surveys include wellbeing, belonging, social connectedness, and experiences and usage of services. Questions on discriminatory experiences and opinions on equity are asked every second year. Results are available to all staff via the UC intranet to enable more informed decision-making, and are also shared with students via different channels such as Tūpono | The Insider's Guide to UC.

Student Wellbeing Navigators are also utilised as an avenue for student voice across a range of topics, including helping inform the design of the upgraded wellbeing space on campus (The Living Room), participating in a focus group with Kaitiaki o Ara | Students Against Dangerous Driving, and identifying key student challenges to help inform the Student Voice Partnership Group.

Within the context of our partnership, UC holds a monthly Student Voice Partnership Group meeting with the UCSA. The goals of these meetings are to:

- Align priorities agreed upon at the Student Levy Advisory Board.

- Act as the primary body managing the partnership between UC and UCSA concerning student wellbeing, accommodation, support services, and events.
- Provide a formal forum for UCSA representatives to present the views of the student body to UC management constructively.

Where appropriate, review work related to the Code, including self-review, is passed through this forum as part of formal requests for student feedback.

Aside from this, the Disability Action Plan (DAP) Lead oversees the Lived Experience Advisory of Disability (LEAD), a group of students that provides input and feedback to the DAP Lead through a disability lens. The student rep system also functions as a conduit for UC to receive feedback relating to course delivery and any issues that might be arising in that domain.

In a less formal capacity, staff across UC meet with UCSA representatives as part of regular or ad-hoc meetings. For example, the Student Wellbeing Team and Accommodation Services have monthly catchups with the UCSA Vice President of Engagement and UCSA Equity Representative. The Student Wellbeing team also meets informally with Te Akatoki Wellbeing representative.

Evaluating the effectiveness of our support services

Since 2023 UC has conducted five formal reviews and audits on implementation of the Code, including this self-review. Of specific relevance to Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 are the following:

Report of the 2023 Academic Audit of Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury

In 2023, Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) conducted a cycle 6 academic audit³ of UC. The audit included a three-day site visit and meetings with 102 staff and students to evaluate UC's performance. The final report was published in December 2023 and is available on the [AQA website](#).

The overall conclusion was that UC meets – and in several instances exceeds – the outcomes and standards that a university of good international standing would be expected to demonstrate. Indeed, UC received more commendations of excellent practice than any other university since 2011.

The audit covered a substantial number of areas falling within the Code, including an assessment of compliance against the Code itself through analysis of student access and transitions, academic advice academic appeals and complaints, learning support, and safety and wellbeing.

The audit commended UC for Kia Angitu and its interconnected approach to removing barriers and closing equity gaps for underserved students. Accessibility of education is a key component of the University's education goal in its Strategic Vision 2020-2030. In the audit, the University is recognised for its strategic focus on access and the range of mechanisms in place to support this. UC's support for successful management of undergraduate students' transitions into study is also noteworthy, as is UC's intention to embed Career Development Learning in curricula and develop a coordinated and comprehensive advising framework.

The University's partnership with the UCSA was noted as providing a good framework for student voice to enable improved outcomes for students, and that these voices are supported and valued by the University. The ongoing monitoring of the peer-assisted learning support component of Kia Angitu was affirmed for working to optimally support all students, including priority student groups. The University has undertaken considerable work in reviewing its safety and wellbeing services, and it is acknowledged that wellbeing support is considered for staff as well as students.

³ Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities. 2023, December. *Report of the 2023 Academic Audit of Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury*. https://aqa.ac.nz/UniversityCanterbury_AuditReportCycle6

Of particular note is the overall AQA Cycle 6 Audit assessment of UC's implementation of the Code contained in commendation C12:

“The Panel commends the University for its comprehensive approach to safety and wellbeing that extends beyond the compliance requirements of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice, from both Te Tiriti o Waitangi and equity perspectives.” (AQA, 2023, p.25).

Within this overall context, the Audit made several recommendations for future work that are relevant to this self-review. Among these, it recommended that the University work to ensure consistent responses to student feedback. While the Audit noted that the Code introduced requirements for public reporting of statistics on complaints and student satisfaction with the process, and that it assesses UC reporting to be comprehensive and reflects good practice, it recommended that UC assess the effectiveness of its communication regarding complaints, appeals, and grievances with differentiation by student cohorts, including postgraduates. It recommended that UC work to ensure confidentiality in processes for postgraduate research students when raising concerns, and provide culturally affirming professional development opportunities for all staff, including those who train others. It also recommended that UC continue to work with Te Akatoki and UCSA to strengthen opportunities and support for the voices of Māori students and students from other priority student groups to be heard. UC has either addressed or is in the process of addressing all these recommendations at the time of writing.

2023 Self-Attestation Report

UC completed its 2023 Self-Attestation Report in July 2024 to report on progress with implementation of the Pastoral Code at the University. In particular, the report covered in detail the management structure at UC in relation to implementing the Code, an overview of progress against the Code, a summary of the complaints procedure and critical incidents including related reviews, and summary highlights of work including best practices. These include Mental Health First Aid training for staff and student leaders, the Kaiwhakarete Oranga | Wellbeing Navigator Programme, Te Kakau a Māui Scholarship programme, the Takere Programme, PALS, regular drug checking clinics and the website redesign.

UC Student Voice

Multiple regular and systematic student surveys provide quantitative data on student wellbeing and experiences with student services (as detailed in the Student Voice sub-paragraph above). For example, in 2024 students responding to the UCount survey rated support services very well for solving their issues, providing support and meeting their needs. This was scored on a 5-point scale from "Not well at all" to "Extremely well". The average rating score across all services was 4.03. The highest rated service was International Student Support at 4.21, while the lowest rated service was Accommodation at 3.67. These results replicated those of 2023. Satisfaction with student services was equally well received (see Figure 2).

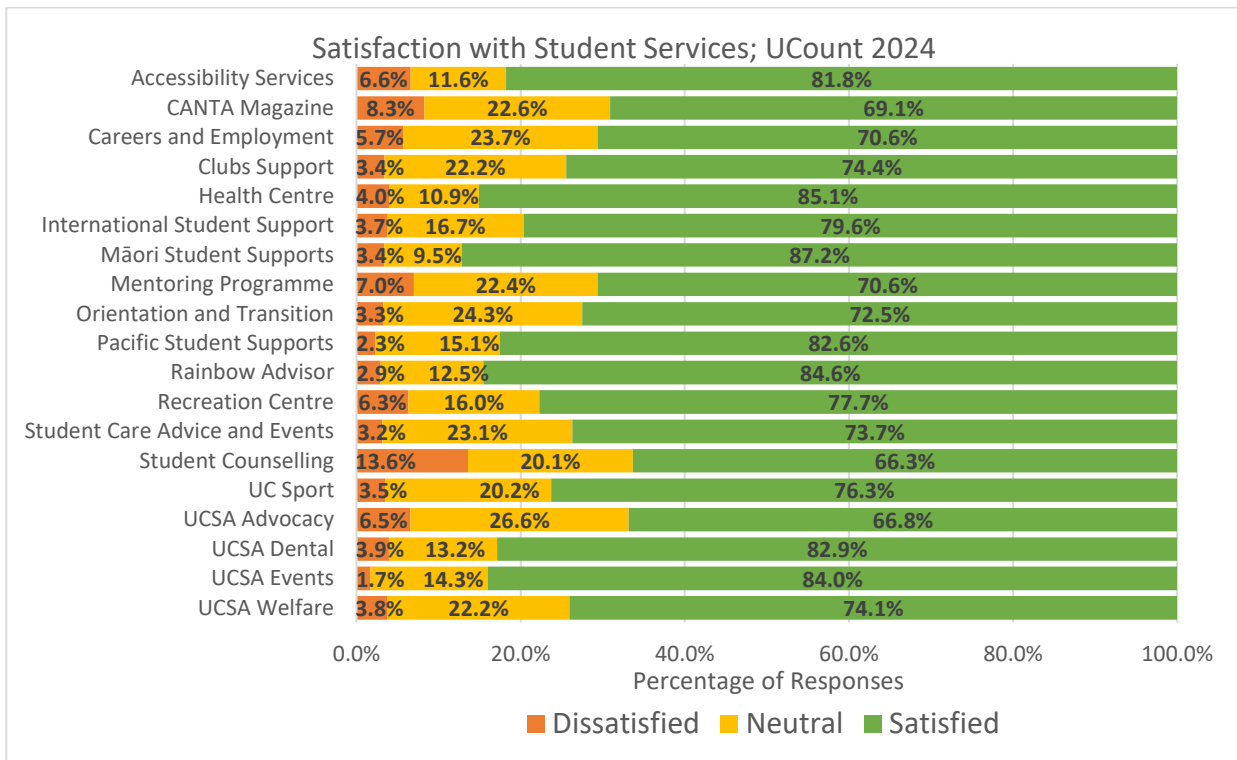


Figure 2: UCount 2024 Student Satisfaction Rates with Support Services.

As can be seen, when asked about whether they were satisfied or dissatisfied with specific student wellbeing services, on average 95 percent of students reported being either satisfied or neutral. When asked whether they agree or disagree with the statement “UC does a good job supporting my wellbeing”, majorities across the board felt that this was the case. This data is further supported by qualitative insights gathered through regular and ad-hoc meetings with student representatives. Feedback from the UCSA is particularly important due to their substantial involvement in welfare service provision and student representation.

Following a meeting in September 2024 to gather views on UC’s performance in implementing the Code, student representatives from the UCSA shared that they believe UC has good support services overall and is strong in the area of Student Voice. They were complimentary about UC responses during emergencies and critical incidents, and see the ACE programme as a great initiative and indication that the University cares. There was also positive feedback given about the first year Kaitoko, Faculty Advisors, and staff in the Māori and Indigenous Studies Programme, and the opportunity to voice feedback as part of the Pastoral Code review.

The student representatives also raised areas that they believe UC could improve in. One of the main ones was UC’s complaints procedures, and in particular the complexity of the system and the amount of information provided. Some raised that there can be a lack of feedback to students on the outcome of a complaint, and concerns were shared that anonymous reports may not be taken forward or remain fully anonymous in small cohorts or departments. Information given back to students is not always provided in a timely fashion after they have applied for special consideration. While student wellbeing services were rated as good, it was also conveyed that there are a lot of services available to students, and it can be challenging to know where to start with them. As such, more thought about student communications and how information about support services is provided to students was welcomed. UC was noted as expressing itself clearly when voicing support for inclusion and being against discrimination and harassment, however it’s not always obvious to students what is being actively done in a practical sense to increase a culture of inclusion or reduce incidents of inappropriate behaviours. Encouragement was also expressed for UC to push forward with its work in relation to Te Tiriti Partnership.

UC Internal Assessment

To complete this self-review, UC embarked on a comprehensive mapping exercise to understand and document how different work streams support the requirements of the first four Code Outcomes. This extensive endeavour involved broad-spectrum data collection and analysis with input from 18 teams or appointments.⁴ This provided UC with a detailed and nuanced understanding of its current efforts and initiatives. UC's implementation of the Code was then assessed using an adaptation of the "Continuum of implementation for the Code" found in Tool B of NZQA's Self Review Toolkit for Tertiary Education Providers. This exercise highlighted significant work undertaken across numerous areas to ensure a supportive, safe and responsive University environment, and also a few areas for enhancement to ensure that we meet all Code expectations.

For example, while UC meets its obligations for a comprehensive complaints process, an issue highlighted previously concerns the complexity of the processes. The UC Process Improvement team recently finished a formal discovery phase to further understand current processes relating to complaints, critical incidents, appeals and grievances. This included interviews with staff to understand our complaint processes and identify opportunities to enhance current practice. The analysis showed that there are multiple support options available for students, and recommendations for improvements were made as part of this.

The picture formed through both the mapping exercise and student feedback will be instrumental in guiding future action, including reviewing and updating the Wellbeing Implementation Plan for 2025 and beyond, completing the suite of staff training opportunities, and developing work in the inclusion space.

Overall reflective summary and future enhancements

Overall, implementation of Code Outcomes 1-4 has been assessed as being broadly 'Well Implemented' at UC. A large percentage of students express satisfaction with the culture at UC, and many report that they have made at least two close friends during their studies. This sense of community is complemented by a high degree of student safety, which is a crucial aspect of wellbeing.

It is clear that UC is implementing a wide range of services, activities and initiatives aimed at supporting the wellbeing, positive experience and engagement of students, including peer support, pastoral care, counselling, targeted messaging, events, and systems like the ACE programme. UC has significant strengths in the area of institutional research and analysis, and leverages insights from this to drive innovation and change. Data from student survey work, for example, is made available to UC staff through a dashboard that enables them to drill down and understand the reported experiences and perspectives of our diverse student population, and track changes in this over time. All of this work is underpinned by a strong University-wide strategic and planning focus that identifies strategically desired outcomes and works towards them.

Naturally, there are areas that have also been identified as benefitting from further attention and iterative enhancement. Current complaints processes and information about them have been noted as complex for students to navigate. This complexity can lead to confusion and may cause delays in addressing issues effectively. UC places strong emphasis on staff training across various areas to ensure that staff have the

⁴ The teams and appointments consulted were Accommodation Services, ACE, Complaints, Emergency Management, Equity and Inclusion, ESI, Office of Treaty Partnership, Pacific Development Team, People and Culture, Rec and Sport, Space Management Team, Strategy and Planning, Student Care, Student Operations, Student Wellbeing, UC Rainbow Student Support, UC Proctor, UCSA Advocacy and Welfare, UCSA Chief Executive, UCSA Executive.

right knowledge and skills to provide a supportive and inclusive environment for all students. However, there are areas of training where UC will need to continue to develop its offerings to align with the Code.

UC has a wide range of events and opportunities that celebrate diversity and inclusion. Pink Shirt Day, for example, is a major student and staff event at UC, and helps to highlight the importance of standing against bullying and promoting kindness and respect in all interactions with others. Outside of events, though, information provided across the year to students concerning inclusion and connection to others needs to be reviewed and developed.

Despite significant work aimed at making support services easily accessible, and high ratings from students about the support services themselves, a perennial challenge remains in ensuring that all students are aware of the extensive resources available to them and confident in how to access them. This remains a key priority for UC, and we intend to continue working towards improvements in this area.

Work is already underway on several of these fronts. A detailed review of the complaints system was recently completed by UC's Process Improvement Manager within the Strategy and Planning team, with a range of subprojects and solutions now scoped. Feedback from the UCSA Advocacy & Welfare team on topics such as complaints and special considerations has been compiled and will be circulated to appropriate areas of the University. The question of how best to promote support services and ensure smooth access comes up as part of business-as-usual activities of several teams, and it will remain a continuing area of attention into the future. Several new staff roles in the Equity and Inclusion team are set to be recruited in 2025, which will build out workstreams focused on advancing equitable outcomes, fostering inclusion and preventing harmful behaviour through an intersectional lens. UC is continuing to provide professional development training for staff around Te Reo and culturally responsive pedagogy, but is also planning on rolling out an additional follow up workshop that builds on Tangata Tū, Tangata Ora. Finally, the newly formed Capability & Wellbeing Team will be looking at further staff training options aligned with the Pastoral Code.

Like many other tertiary institutions, UC is working to navigate financial constraints in the current domestic environment. Nevertheless, the University remains strongly committed to ensuring support for student wellbeing and safety by prioritising initiatives that yield the greatest impact, ensuring effective allocation of funds, and exploring innovative approaches to enhance its efforts. Through careful planning and resource management, we will continue to foster a supportive environment for all students.