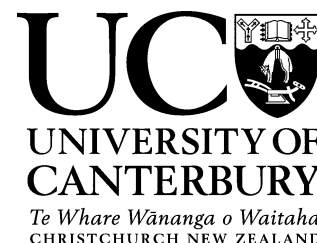


# Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council



## July 2023

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### Introduction

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During the mid-year break a number of events were hosted on campus, such as the celebration of Matariki, plastic free July and campus tours of over 400 prospective students.

UC hosted the panel for the Universities New Zealand Academic Quality Assurance Cycle 6 Audit during 10-12 July. The audit looks across the university at all aspects impacting teaching and learning, from physical and digital facilities to classroom practices. The panel met a total of 102 staff and students to discuss various aspects of the University's Academic programmes and processes. Thank you to all who took the time to talk to the panel and share your experiences. Initial feedback from the panel has been positive, with the panel appreciating the openness, enthusiasm, and authenticity of those they met. We are expecting a draft report from the panel in the latter half of September, when we will have an opportunity to comment on any issues of fact before the report is finalised and available publicly later in the year.

It was with great sadness that we heard about the passing of UC's former Chancellor during 1998-2002, Dame Phyllis Guthardt (1929-2023). In addition to her 21-year involvement with the university, she was an ordained New Zealand Methodist minister, and was conferred an honorary doctorate by UC in 2003. She was the recipient of the 1993 Queen's Birthday Honours and appointed as Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

We were proud to learn that UC alumna, Francesca Eathorne, was appointed as the Executive Director of the Antarctic Heritage Trust. With UC's involvement in Antarctic research and strategic focus on environmental sustainability, we are pleased that Francesca now leads the AHT.

### Engagement

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Events marking the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the university continued in July.

The UC Business School hosted over 100 alumni for a 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Alumni Reception in Auckland on 6 July. UC alumnus and former Air New Zealand CEO Rob Fyfe gave an inspiring talk to our guests.

On 20 July we held a reception to open an exhibition of key artefacts from the university's history. The exhibition is curated by Terri Elder, Emily Rosevera, and Bojana Rimbovska. *Whiria te tāngata: Weaving the People Together – 150 years of College and Community* is open to the public until 9 September at the Arts Centre.

Over 1,000 year 12 and 13 students from 22 schools attended NCEA (National Certificate in Educational Attainment) workshops by the School of Physical and Chemical Sciences.

UC hosted the Australasian Property Law Teachers Conference on campus 3-4 July, and the Australasian Law Academics Association Conference 6-8 July.

The mid-year neighbourhood meeting Hui ā-Hapori on 10 July was well received, with host Margaret Agnew and speakers Paul O'Flaherty, Ken McEwen, UCSA Engagement officer Xavier Moir, Digital Screen representatives Sam Witters and Mike Forrester presenting updates and answering questions about campus matters. Topics included the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, RE ORI events, DSC progress, street security, media coverage of student parties, and upcoming events.

On 17 July Canterbury University Press published *I Don't Believe in Murder: Standing up for peace in World War I Canterbury* by UC alumna Margaret Lovell-Smith, who explores why Christchurch and Canterbury were central to the anti-militarist movement that arose in the shadow of World War 1.

85 guests celebrated the 20th anniversary of EPECentre (Electric Power Engineering Centre) and the Aruhiko Power Engineering Excellence Trust, where industry partners from New Zealand and Australia discussed the future of transdisciplinary energy.

## **Education – Accessible, Flexible Future Focussed**

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It is pleasing that the new qualifications UC put forward to the Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) Round 1 were approved. This includes the Bachelor of Sport, Masters of Organisational Psychology (MORgPsych), and Conjoints in BE(Hons)/BCom, BE(Hons)/BProdDesign, BE(Hons)/BA, and BE(Hons)/BSEnS. The qualifications reflect the ongoing efforts of the University to produce relevant curricula that is accessible, flexible, and future-focused. Of note, the MORgPsych is the first fully online degree for UC and has generated extensive interest already.

With the start of Semester 2 the Erskine Programme welcomed 22 Erskine visitors, with 6 more visitors due during Term 3 and a further 7 due to arrive for Term 4. UC will be hosting a special 60th Erskine Anniversary event early in August, which also acknowledges UC's 150th year.

Students continuing in Semester 2, and those joining UC at this time, made good use of the services in Te Pātaka. Face-to-face assistance with time-tabling queries, on-hand Kaitoko, and easy access to admissions and financial services were all greatly appreciated by the students. A high-level analysis of Semester 1 use of Te Pātaka showed that first-year advising is showing greater utilisation with approximately 40% of the first-year cohort seeking specific advice. Proactive advising is also in place for underserved students, with 60% of those students having active engagement with Kaitoko. Kia Angitu initiatives such as PALS (Peer Assisted Learning Sessions) and Te Kakau a Māui will be expanded for Semester 2 as students have shown strong favourable outcomes. Extra PALS courses and alumni mentors are two of the newest additions to the programmes.

Building aspirations for higher education is a core focus of Te Mātāpuna Mātātahi | Children's University. Four Campus Experiences were successfully delivered in June, with approximately 480 members from 17 schools visiting Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury (and a similar number visiting Te Whare Wānanga o Aoraki Lincoln University). The event was designed to broaden tamariki's interests, demystify the university environment, and spark an interest in future tertiary education. Over 20 academics and staff across both Universities provided engaging hands-on activities, supported by 30 student volunteers. Feedback received has been overwhelmingly positive from teachers, tamariki, and student volunteers. A post-event online survey was completed by 244 tamariki with 93% reporting high levels of enjoyment from their experience on campus.

## **Research – Impact on a Changing World**

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The University of Canterbury was delighted to welcome over 150 attendees to the national launch of Horizon Europe, the European Union's (EU) largest-ever research and innovation programme, with a budget of €95.5 billion. Pillar 2 of this fund, with funding of €53.5 billion, targets major global challenges such as climate change, energy, and health, is now open to applications from New Zealand researchers and organisations who can receive funding on equal terms with their European counterparts. The launch was attended by the European Commission's Deputy Director General, senior members of Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, the Deputy CEO of Universities New Zealand, and the New Zealand research community. The event included a panel discussion covering the future of research policy between New Zealand and the EU, understanding how New Zealand will benefit from the agreement, and the application process.

This month the University of Canterbury secured \$270k of Kiwinet Pre-Seed Accelerator Funding to support the commercialisation of a low-cost solution to affordable diabetes management. The research underpinning this technology was led by Professors Geoff Chase and Chris Pretty.

Associate Professor Laura Revell is leading the world-first research into how microplastics could affect 21st-century climate change. Laura has received a three-year grant worth \$928,000 from Te Pūtea Rangahau a Marsden (Marsden Fund) for the work.

Professor David Wiltshire received the 2023 Dan Walls Medal for his significant contributions to gravitational physics and cosmology at the New Zealand Institute of Physics (NZIP) Awards. The Dan Walls Medal is presented biennially to a physicist who has made the greatest impact both nationally and internationally in their research field, primarily with research conducted in New Zealand.

## **People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students**

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During July, Student Care has been running a series of workshops with a number of teams focusing on Supporting Students in Distress, assisting UC staff with identifying symptoms of distress, managing the immediate situation, and referring to support services. This has been well received, and it builds a collaborative approach to student support and enhances accessibility of pastoral care for students.

On 12 July a group of some 50 Faculty-based Lab and Workshop Technical Staff from across campus met for the morning to consider how a Community of Practice focussed on their role could support kotahitanga, innovation, whanaungatanga, and wellbeing.

UC Accommodation Services launched a Student Ambassador Programme across halls of residence for semester 2, in conjunction with ISANA New Zealand. This pilot initiative aims to deliver intercultural leadership training and projects that will further enhance our manaakitanga and whanaungatanga within the campus residential community. A group of 16 domestic and international students from 6 halls of residence have been selected as the first cohort.

Core training modules designed to align with Ngā Uara | Our Values, particularly tiakitanga - taking care of resources and each other, are being developed and released to UC staff. This new, improved form of learning about UC Policy, legislation and regulation helps ensure all kaimahi have the information they need. The first module (Privacy Training) has been completed by over one thousand staff and the next core training module focuses on conflicts of interest and will be released later this month. New kaimahi will receive these core training modules as part of the onboarding process.

Participation rates at the RecCentre are steadily growing, returning to approximately 85% of our pre-covid levels, with some 120 000 recorded visits for the year as at 30 June 2023.

UC sports teams continue to excel, with our Women's Premiere Rugby winning the Bascik Transport Premiere league. Our Women's Rugby 10's team came 2nd in Canterbury, and the UC Men's Premiere Rugby will be in the playoffs for 5-8th place after regrettably losing the quarter final match. The Netball, Hockey and Basketball teams are still playing out their seasons, but we are pleased that five of our netball players were selected for Christchurch Open Women's Whero and Pango Teams.

## **Internationalisation – Locally Engaged, Globally Networked**

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Our international enrolments continue to recover. On 12 July UC hosted its Semester 2 International Student Welcome event for a cohort of 279 new students. In addition, we welcomed the first cohort of 10 government sponsored study abroad students from Indonesia.

Her Excellency Indonesian Ambassador Fientje Maritje Suebu visited UC and during my meeting with her, she thanked UC for our support of the Indonesian community in Christchurch. The visit was timely as we have recently expanded our participation in Indonesian government scholarship programmes administered through LPDP. The delegation enjoyed a morning tea with Indonesian students and a visit to the UC Gamelan.

For the first time since my appointment, I travelled to the USA to meet with key strategic partners and alumni. Alumni events were hosted in New York, Seattle, and San Francisco. The trip included a meeting with the President and members of the Senior Leadership team at the University of Washington, during which we identified areas of strategic collaboration. I also visited Kamloops, BC Canada, and along with Pou Whakarara Professor Te Maire Tau, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding between UC and the Thomson River University Tulo Centre of Indigenous Economics. This three-way agreement creates a formal pathway for the institutions to cooperate and collaborate to research, support, and build capacity for indigenous public administration, governance, leadership, and economic development.

## **Organisational Efficacy – of a sustainable scale by 2030**

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UC has been selected as finalists in three awards at this year's CIO Magazine awards. The Kia Angitu: ACE project has been selected as a finalist in the Community Tech Champions competition. The prior Identity and Access Product Manager, Tom Counce, has been selected as a finalist in the emerging ICT leader category. Finally, our Chief Digital Officer has been selected as a finalist in the CIO of the year award.

After an extensive international search, we are delighted to appoint Mr Keith Lilley to the position of Director of Facilities Management. Keith is currently the Director of Estates and Facilities Management at the University of Sheffield, where he has led a wide range of strategic and operational projects and developments. He will be arriving in September.

We have also appointed Karen Reyland as our new Process Improvement Manager to lead a new team dedicated to improving prioritised UC processes that have the most impact for staff and students. Karen was formerly the Process improvement Manager for IBM Global in the talent management area.

There are various organisational efficiency projects underway. The DIP (Digital Information Project) and Web projects are well underway now with the Backup, Cloud enablement and Enterprise Business Capability (Finance and HR) projects at business case stages. These projects will move UC substantially forward in its Digital strategy, providing a strong platform for leading edge student and staff experiences in the future.

## **Environmentally Sustainable**

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The Sustainability Hub launched a new internet search tool titled Study Sustainability, aimed at prospective and current students as well as other stakeholders. The new tool can be found in the Sustainability Hub site on UC's homepage in the About section. It provides a complete list of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), that can be matched to UC courses with teaching material relevant to that SDG. Course coordinators provided details of 211 courses that match one or more SDGs and we have been able to create over 600 links, spread evenly across all 17 SDGs.

The Sustainability Hub also launched Green Impact, a United Nations award-winning programme designed to support environmentally and socially sustainable practice in organisations. Teams of staff can sign up to help make UC, Christchurch, and New Zealand a healthier and more sustainable place to work and study. We already have several large teams signed up across campus to join this world-wide initiative.

The site for the first "Locky Dock" was confirmed for Ilam campus. Locky Docks are e-bike charging and locking facilities, with capacity for up to 10 bikes. A detailed campus bike parking audit was carried out to inform a replacement programme of bicycle stands which are no longer fit for purpose.