

University of Otago Council | 9 June 2026 Part one



Venue - Council Chamber, L01.06, First Floor, Clocktower Building

04 June 2026 10:00 AM - 01:00 PM

Agenda Topic	Presenter	Page
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Council Briefings A Council-only session will take place prior to the public Council meeting, which begins at 10am.		
Part 1 - Open Committee		
Opening karakia		3
The meeting will begin with a karakia tīmatanga led by the Vice-Chancellor		
Apologies To receive and note apologies.		
1. Commemorations Acknowledging the passing of members of the University community.	Information	
1.1 Professor Paul Smith		
1.2 Emeritus Professor David Bell		
1.3 Associate Professor Peter Larsen		
1.4 Dr Jane McCabe		
2. Disclosure of Interests To receive the current Register of Interests for members of the University of Otago Council including the Independent Chair and the Independent Members. Members are referred to Section 10 of the Council's Standing Orders relating to Disclosure of Interests and reminded to advise of any conflicts that might arise in relation to any items on this agenda.	Information	4
3. University Council Minutes To confirm Part 1 of the Minutes of the meetings of the University Council held on 30 April 2026	Confirmation	8
4. Communications from the Senate To receive communications from the University Senate from its meeting on 29 April 2026 and 27 May 2027	Decision	12
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5.1 Council Financial Report To receive the Council Financial Report	Information	14

6.	Vice-Chancellor's Business		16
6.1	Vice-Chancellor's Report Part 1	Information	16
	To receive a report from the Vice-Chancellor.		
7.	Exclusion of the Public	Decision	20
	To approve a motion under Section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, that the public be excluded from the specified parts of the proceedings of this meeting.		

Karakia

This karakia has been composed for use across Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka | the University of Otago as a means of opening and/or closing hui, meetings, and everyday gatherings.

Kupu	Translation
Tau mai te mauri	Let the mauri settle
Te mauri tū	The mauri that stands firm
Te mauri ora	The mauri of wellbeing
Te mauri o tēnei kaupapa	The mauri of this purpose
e whakaū nei i kā uara ki Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka	affirming the values at the University of Otago
Te mana	Mana
Te tapu	Tapu
Te whakapapa	Whakapapa
me te mauri	and mauri
Puritia kia ū, puritia kia mau	Hold fast, hold firmly
Haumi e	Let us be united
Hui e	Let us come together
Tāiki e	It is complete

Purpose:

The primary purpose of this karakia is to whakatau the mauri — to settle, ground, and bring into balance the mauri of those who recite it. It is intended to help people arrive fully, be present with one another, and move forward collectively in a calm way.

Notes:

This karakia is grounded in the context of Ōtākou and acknowledges the importance of place and relationship. It has been composed in the Kāi Tahu dialect¹ to reflect the mana whenua of Ōtākou and the local context of Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka.

This karakia has been carefully shaped for use across a diverse institution, incorporating the values of mana whenua at Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka². It respects a wide range of belief systems within the University community while upholding Māori values, language, and tikaka.

¹ Kāi Tahu dialect uses 'k' in place of the more widely used 'ng' (e.g., kā instead of ngā, manaakitaka instead of manaakitanga).

² [insert link to values here]

**UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO COUNCIL
REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

(As disclosed on appointment to the Council and updated as necessary)

All University of Otago Council members are Trustees of The Hocken Collection

Suri Bartlett (Independent Member)

Entity	Nature of Interest
Tenzing Limited	Director
Save the Children NZ	Director
World Netball	Director
Department of Conservation – Risk and Assurance Committee	Member

Frazer B Barton

Entity	Nature of Interest
Naseby Development Trust	Trustee
Runway Noyers Ltd	Director / Shareholder
Otago Law Practitioners Benevolent Fund	Trustee
S M Barton Family Trust	Trustee
TCP Holdings Limited	Director / Shareholder
University of Otago Foundation Trust	Trustee
Waipuna Trust	Trustee
N/A	Sole Barrister

Brendan J Boyle

Entity	Nature of Interest
Brendan Boyle Limited	Director / Shareholder
Fairway Resolution Holdings Limited	Director
Fairway Resolution Limited	Director

Peter Bramley

Entity	Nature of Interest
PHARMAC	Deputy Chair
Emerge Aotearoa	Director
Health NZ	Independent Chair of HSAAP Programme
Health NZ	Independent Chair of Funding Board
Health NZ	Independent Chair of Regional Investment Committee
Nelson Hospital Build	Senior Responsible Owner

Mark A Brunton

Entity	Nature of Interest
University of Otago	Employee
Edgar Diabetes and Obesity Research Centre	Board Member

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO COUNCIL
REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Suzanne L Ellison

Entity	Nature of Interest
Kati Huirapa Runaka ki Puketeraki	Runaka Manager
Karitane Māori Tours Limited	Director
Te Pae Māori - DCC Mana Whenua: Mana to Mana	KHRkP Representative
City Table	KHRkP Representative

Allan H Dawson (Independent Chair)

Entity	Nature of Interest
University of Otago Holdings Limited	Chair
Arlo Software Limited	Chair
Connexionz Limited	Chair and Shareholder
Winnow Software Limited	Director and Shareholder
Onfarm Solution Limited	Advisory Board Chair
Image Analyser Limited (UK)	Board Observer
SC Oscar Fund Management Pte Ltd (Singapore)	Advisory Board Member
Ranui Generation Limited	Advisory Board Member
Tarbotton Lan & Civil	Advisory Board Member

Professor David M Eyers

Entity	Nature of Interest
University of Otago	Employee
Research and Education Advanced Network New Zealand (REANNZ) – Strategy Advisory Group	Member
Roundtable of University-Elected Academic Councillors	Member

Chris C Hopkins

Entity	Nature of Interest
Port Otago Ltd	Director
Chalmers Properties Ltd	Director
Te Papa Gateway Ltd	Director
Fiordland Pilot Services Ltd	Director
Port Chalmers Container Terminal Ltd	Director
inMR Measure Ltd	Director/Shareholder
Mimeo Industries Ltd	Director/Shareholder
Spade Work Ltd	Director/Shareholder
Our Planit Ltd	Director/Shareholder
CompanyHQ Ltd and CompanyHQ NZ Ltd	Director/Shareholder
SouthMED Ltd	Director
Veritide Ltd	Director
Bletsoe Securities Ltd	Director
GW Batts Terrace Ltd	Director
Dunedin International Airport Ltd	Director
Farra Engineering Ltd	Director
Oakwood Group Ltd (excluding Group companies Oakwood Properties Ltd, Oakwood Securities Ltd, Oakwood Motor Group including Cooke Howlison Ltd)	Director

**UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO COUNCIL
REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

and Blackwell Motors Ltd and Condell Retirement Village Ltd	
Silveracres Trust	Trustee

Ross D Jackson

Entity	Nature of Interest
McCulloch and Partners	Consultant
Ross Jackson Family Trust	Trustee and Beneficiary
Great Southern Property Holdings Limited	Director/Shareholder
Invercargill City Council Risk and Assurance Committee	Independent Chair
Mackersy Five Mile GP Limited	Director and Shareholder
Invest South Limited	Director
Blue Hole Trustee Company	Director and Corporate Trustee
Pacific Tristar Limited	Director
Villas 1-36 Management Limited	Director and Chairman
University of Otago Holdings Limited	Director

Daniel M Leamy

Entity	Nature of Interest
University of Otago	Student
Otago University Students' Association	President
Aotearoa Tertiary Students' Association (ATSA)	Member of National Conference

Patricia (Trish) A Oakley

Entity	Nature of Interest
Forsyth Barr Limited	Shareholder
Institute of Directors NZ - Board	Observer
Institute of Directors NZ – National Council	President
Institute of Directors NZ – Otago Southland Branch	Committee Member
New Zealand Lotteries Commission - Board	Member
Global Women	Member and Regional Lead
The Food Club Limited	Shareholder
University of Otago Holdings Limited	Director
University of Otago Foundation Trust	Board of Trustees (as Chancellor)
Pomegranate Trust	Trustee and Beneficiary
New Zealand Chancellors' Group	Chair
City Table	Member

Nicola E Riordan

Entity	Nature of Interest
Riordan Family Trust	Trustee
Kordia Limited	Director
Real Estate Institute of New Zealand (REINZ)	Director
Realestate.co.nz	Director
Loan Market Group (Australia)	Director
New Zealand Financial Services Group (NZFSG)	Director
Nua Limited	Shareholder
NZQA Information Systems Committee	Independent member

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO COUNCIL
REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Hon Grant M Robertson

Entity	Nature of Interest
University of Otago	Employee
University of Otago Foundation Trust	Ex officio Trustee
University of Otago Holdings Limited	Ex officio Director
NZ Vice-Chancellors' Committee (Universities NZ)	Committee Member
Alexander McMillan Trust	Trustee
AAW Jones Charitable Trust	Trustee
KMKT Trust (Family Trust)	Non-beneficial Trustee
Otago Cricket Association	Director



Minutes of a meeting of the University Council

30 April 2026

Present	The Chancellor (in the Chair), the Pro-Chancellor (video-conference), Vice-Chancellor, Mr M A Brunton, Professor D M Eysers, Ms S L Ellison, Mr R D Jackson, Mr D M Leamy, Mr C Hopkins, Dr P Bramley, Mr F B Barton
Apologies	Ms N E Riordan
In attendance	The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Pacific), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Māori), the Chief Financial Officer, the Chief Operating Officer, the Director, Strategy and Analytics Reporting, the Registrar and Secretary to the Council, and the Deputy Secretary to Council.
Apologies	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

Part 1: Open Committee

Karakia timatanga led by Ms S L Ellison.

1. Acknowledgements

The Chancellor acknowledged the passing of Emeritus Professor Eric Espiner, and Mr Andy Walne. The Chancellor extended a further acknowledgement and condolences to members of our senior community who have recently experienced significant loss.

The Chancellor welcomed the new Deputy Secretary of the Council.

2. Disclosure of Interests and Register of Interests

The Council received the current Register of Interests for members of the University of Otago Council including the Independent Chair and the Independent Member. Members were referred to Section 10 of the Council's Standing Orders relating to Disclosure of Interests and reminded to advise of any conflicts that might arise in relation to any items on this agenda.

3. University Council Minutes

The Council

APPROVED Part 1 of the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 10 March 2026.

4. Communications from the Senate

The Council received communications from the University Senate from its meeting of 25 March 2026.

The Council

APPROVED The Limitation of Enrolment for BSNS 351 Special Topic: Learning Through Experience in the Second Semester 2026

5. Finance and Budget

The Council

RECEIVED and noted the following document:

- *Preliminary Financial Review at 31st March 2026*

7. Vice-Chancellor's Business

The Council

RECEIVED the report from the Vice-Chancellor dated 22 April 2026, and noted highlights in the report, including –

QS World University Rankings.

Four University of Otago subjects have been ranked in the top 50 globally.

University of Otago's Chief People Officer

The Council noted the appointment of Katie McEwan as the University of Otago's first Chief People Officer, who is commencing in June. The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged the work of Carolyn King who has been the Acting Director of Human Resources since early 2025.

Fuel Costs and Global Instability

A Working Group, including cross-University stakeholder representatives has been established. Currently, the geopolitical climate is not impacting the University's ability to operate. The situation is being monitored closely, and there is regular communication with staff and students.

Annie Stevenson Building

The Council noted the renaming the ‘CapSc building’ to the ‘Annie Stevenson Building’. This is in acknowledgement of Annie Stevenson, a generous benefactor to the University, and one of the first two graduates of the Home Science School.

Te Pou Whirinaki – Student Wellbeing Hub

The Te Pou Whirinaki – Student Wellbeing Hub recently had an official opening attended by the Minister of Mental Health.

8. Exclusion of the Public

The Council

APPROVED a motion, under Section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, that the public be excluded from the remaining parts of the proceedings of the meeting as appended to the Minutes.

The Chancellor moved that the public be excluded from the whole of the proceeding of this meeting/the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely, —

- Item 8 Pt 2 of the Minutes of the previous meeting of the University Council
- Item 9 University Council Work Plan and Action Follow-up Register
- Item 10 Vice-Chancellor’s Business
- Item 11 Audit and Risk
- Item 12 Finance and Budget
- Item 13 Campus Development
- Item 14 Digital Technologies
- Item 15 Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Item 16 Kāhui Kāwanataka
- Item 17 Council Information Pack
- Item 18 Meeting Reflections
- Item 19 Council-Only Business

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows: -

General Subject	Reason for passing this resolution	Ground under Section 48(1)(a) for the passing of this resolution
Items (as listed) Confidential Minutes and Reports	Good reason for withholding information under the Official Information Act	Section 48(1)(a)(ii)

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a)(ii) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Sections 6,7 and/or 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 (except Section 9(2)(g)(i)) as the case may require. The interests which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows (all references are to Section 9 of the Official Information Act):

Item 8	Pt 2 of the Minutes of the previous meeting of the University Council	ss 9(2)(a), (i), and (k)
Item 9	University Council Work Plan and Action Follow-Register	ss 9(2)(i), and (k)
Item 10	Vice-Chancellor's Business	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 11	Audit and Risk	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 12	Finance and Budget	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 13	Campus Development	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 14	Digital Technologies	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 15	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	ss 9(2)(a), (ba) and (c)
Item 16	Kāhui Kāwanataka	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 17	Council Information Pack	ss 9(2)(a), (i), and (k)
Item 18	Meeting Reflections	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 19	Council-Only Business	ss 9(2)(a), (i), (j) and (k)

AND THAT for Items 8-16 Emeritus Professor J Maclauren, Professors G Cook, J Palmer, J Ruru, D Sika-Paotonu, Mr S Willis, Mr D Thomson, Mr B Trott – along with, for particular items, Ms H Harris (Financial Controller), Ms L Dick (Publications Editor), Ms D Peach (Head, Risk, Assurance and Compliance), Mr K Maley and Mr C Hale (Strategy Analytics and Reporting Office) – be permitted to remain at this meeting after the public has been excluded because of their knowledge of the matters to be discussed. This knowledge, which will be of assistance in relation to the matters to be discussed, is relevant to those matters because it relates to aspects of the administration and/or knowledge of specific capital projects of the University of Otago for which these people are responsible. Mr R Tomlinson and Ms M (Audit New Zealand) will be permitted to join for items relating to the 2025 Audit exercise. The Registrar and Secretary to the Council and Deputy Secretary to the Council are also permitted to remain at the meeting to provide secretarial support and advice.



COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE SENATE
29 April 2026

The Senate recommends for approval:

Academic Proposals

Proposals for the following new, amended, and deleted programmes to be submitted to the Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP):

New programmes

- Bachelor of Sustainability (BSust)
- Master of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (MTESOL), including new papers LING 501, LING 502, and LING 503
- Master of Clinical Exercise Physiology (MCEP)

Amended programmes

- Wildlife Management programmes, to be renamed Wildlife Conservation, with WILM paper codes also amended to WILD
- Foundation Studies Certificate (FSC), including amending FOUN paper codes to FNCS
- Graduate category admission criteria for Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science (BMLSc)

Deleted programmes

- Graduate Diploma in Bioethics and Health Law (GDipBHL)
- Family and Systems Therapies endorsement for the Postgraduate Certificate in Health Sciences (PGCertHealSc)

Matters approved by Senate under delegation through University Statute, for noting:

Academic Proposals

In addition to minor and consequential changes to papers and programmes, the Senate approved the following, as recommended by the University's Academic Committee:

Commerce

- BSNS 351 Special Topic: Learning Through Experience (approved special topic)

Humanities

- CLAS 250/350 Heroes, Tyrants, Democracy: Ancient Athens' Myth and Reality (new paper)
- CLAS 349/449 Life and Laughter in Roman Literature (new paper)
- ENGL 132 World Literature, Global Challenges (new paper)
- HIST 220/320 Unsettling National Myths in Settler States (new paper)
- PHIL 241/341 Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence (new paper)
- POLS 399 Political Actors in Action (new paper)
- ENGL 121 English Literature: The Remix (deleted paper)
- POLS 375 Human Rights: From the Cradle to the Grave (deleted paper)
- LAWS 486 Special Topic: Youth Justice (approved special topic)

Sciences

- SCOM 435 Science Communication in the Era of Science Denialism (new paper)
- SCOM 433 Science and Creative Nonfiction Writing (deleted paper)

Internationalisation Committee

To revise the Terms of Reference for the Internationalisation Committee.



University
of Otago
ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA

Council Financial Report

30 APRIL 2026

Financial Summary

Profit & Loss FULL YEAR FORECAST

<p>SURPLUS / DEFICIT</p> <p>-\$6.7m</p> <p>Budget: -\$9.0m $\nearrow 25.2\%$</p>	<p>SURPLUS %</p> <p>-0.73%</p> <p>Budget Target: -0.97% $\nearrow 0.24\%$ FMF Target: 3.0% $\searrow 3.73\%$</p>	<p>STUDENT RELATED INCOME</p> <p>\$542.1m</p> <p>Budget: \$539.6m $\nearrow 0.46\%$</p>	<p>EFTS</p> <p>20.1k</p> <p>Budget: 19.8k $\nearrow 1.5\%$</p>
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The **forecast deficit** was \$6.7m which was \$2.3m favourable to budget largely due to higher student related and college income, lower software maintenance and computing costs, net gains on sales of assets, lower interest on borrowings, and higher research surpluses received, offset in part by lower-than-expected salary and overhead recoveries, lower than budgeted salaries capitalised to projects, higher energy costs, lower Uniflats income and higher scholarships.

While the **surplus %** of (0.73%) remains a concern, it is favourable to the budget target of (0.97%) and still within the staged progress towards the surplus FMF target of 3.0%. Work is ongoing to find opportunities for improvement.

Student Related Income is forecast to be \$2.5m favourable. For further detail, refer to University Forecast Analysis.

EFTS are well ahead of 2025 and comfortably ahead of 2026 budget. However, we have softened our expectations regarding the extent to which the Government will support the domestic component of that growth with additional funding.

Balance Sheet YTD ACTUALS

<p>CAPITAL SPEND</p> <p>-\$38.8m</p> <p>Budget: \$75.3m $\searrow 48.5\%$</p>	<p>BORROWINGS</p> <p>-\$131.0m</p> <p>Budget: -\$190.8m $\searrow 31.3\%$</p>	<p>WORKING CAPITAL</p> <p>-\$130.4m</p> <p>Budget: -\$129.2m Ratio: $\nearrow 0.01\%$</p>	<p>DEFERRED REVENUE</p> <p>-\$200.8m</p> <p>Budget: -\$194.8m $\nearrow 3.1\%$</p>
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Capital spend is \$36.6m less than budget largely in buildings, equipment and computers.

Borrowings are \$59.8m favourable which is 31.3% less than budgeted largely due to lower than budgeted spend on asset purchases in 2026, and lower closing bank borrowings in 2025.

Working capital is (\$130.4m) which is (\$1.1m) unfavourable to the budget of (\$129.2m), largely due to higher deferred revenue and trade payables, offset in part by higher trade receivables. The overall working capital ratio is (0.60%) which is (0.01%) higher budget.

Deferred Revenue is \$6.0m higher than budgeted due to the timing of income; \$4.7m increase in research funding in advance, \$2.3m increase in student fees in advance, \$0.4m increase in accommodation income in advance, offset in part by \$1.3m decrease in other deferred revenue.

Cash Flows YTD ACTUALS

<p>OPERATING CASH FLOWS</p> <p>\$143.4m</p> <p>Budget: \$155.0m $\searrow 7.5\%$</p>	<p>INVESTING CASH FLOWS</p> <p>-\$37.1m</p> <p>Budget: -\$84.3m $\nearrow 56.0\%$</p>	<p>FINANCING CASH FLOWS</p> <p>-\$106.2m</p> <p>Budget: -\$70.7m $\searrow 50.1\%$</p>	<p>CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS</p> <p>\$3.0m</p> <p>Budget: \$2.8m $\nearrow 6.3\%$</p>
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Operating cash flows were (\$11.6m) lower than budget, largely due to timing on lower student fee income, lower DQ funding which reflects our current assumption that the University may not be fully funded for its domestic enrolments in 2026, and lower receipts from research and University trusts, offset in part by lower than budgeted payments to suppliers, and lower finance costs.

Investing cash flows were \$37.1m or 56.0% favourable to budget due to lower than budgeted spend on asset purchases.

Financing cash inflows are (\$35.4m or 50.1%) unfavourable to budget due to lower spend on asset purchases enabling more than budgeted repayments of borrowing.

Cash & cash equivalents are close to budget.

Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council Part 1

For the Council meeting on : 9 June 2026



Date: 2 June 2026
Submitted by: Hon Grant Robertson, Vice-Chancellor

Recommendation

That Council note the Vice-Chancellor's Report.

Key Recent Developments

Government Budget 2026

The Government's Budget announced in late May was a lean one for universities. There was some welcome news with funding to meet 99% of Treasury's forecast demand in the tertiary sector over 2026 and 2027, and with continuation of the equity funding for Māori, Pacific and students with disabilities. This was somewhat offset by no funding rate increase, which because of inflation, will mean a real-terms funding cut. The capping of funding for international PhDs at 2024 levels while the Government considers future options for this programme also has the potential to impact overall finances. The Government has announced a review of the overall funding system, with a particular focus on the split between public and student funding. Along with the proposed fee maxima of 6%, this signals the Government's move towards students bearing a greater proportion of the cost of their education. We will be working through the impact of the Budget on us, and will be factoring it into our own budgetary considerations later in the year.

Statement of Intent with SIT

In late May I travelled to Invercargill to sign a Statement of Intent with the Southern Institute of Technology (SIT) and meet with our Southland-based Teacher Education staff who will be relocating to SIT's main campus at the end of the year, ahead of our teacher education delivery commencing from the new location at the start of 2027.

The Statement of Intent is the framework under which our new delivery arrangement for teacher education will operate, but also provides a basis for collaboration in other areas. An example of this could include our activities in Queenstown Lakes and progression pathways from SIT qualifications to higher-level study at Otago. As with our existing relationship with Otago Polytechnic in Dunedin, we have good opportunities to work across our region to deliver educational opportunities.

Centre for Creation Care

A new Centre for Creation Care, within the Theology Programme has been launched. The Centre will extend our teaching and research in Christian approaches to care of the environment and contribute to the proposed Bachelor of Sustainability currently being developed within the Division of Humanities. The Centre has been made possible due to the generosity of a number of donors, including Les and Lyn Dick, the Longview Trust, Grant and Elle Ludeman, the RH Tripp Family Charitable Trust, the Waidale Missionary Trust and the Wilberforce Foundation.

Te Tautari Nui – Division of Health Sciences

The Division of Health Sciences has been given a new te reo Māori ikoa (name) – Te Tautari Nui. The name is an abridged version of ‘Te Tautari-nui-o-Matariki’, which is the name of the place where stars are divided. Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor Māori of the Division, Associate Professor Justine Camp, says the name inspires the Division to continue moving forward with purpose, becoming increasingly Te Tiriti-led in its teaching, research and mahi. Read more [here](#).

Staff Use of AI Systems Policy and Procedures

The new [Staff Use of AI Systems Policy and Procedures](#) has been published and staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the policy, which outlines expectations for the appropriate and responsible use of AI tools. Given the rapid pace of developments in the AI space, the policy will be reviewed later in the year.

Operational Performance Highlights

- The May 2026 graduands were the first recipients of an elegant new graduation certificate design, incorporating our tohu and ikoa Māori name while also retaining our English name and the traditional Coat of Arms. Transcripts, graduation booklet, tickets, and ticket wallet were all rebranded to align.
- The DVC External Engagement and international recruitment staff participated in NAFSA: Association of International Educators Conference in US in May. NAFSA is the world’s largest association dedicated to international education and exchange and a key gathering place for meetings with our US college partners from where our Study Abroad cohort come.
- As part of the Digital Learning Programme run by the Transformation and Improvement team, the new Aonui Student Portal app was made available on 5 May, making it faster and easier than ever for students to stay connected to their studies and University life. Since its release over 5,000 users have downloaded the app with a further spike in users expected at the start of Semester 2.
- In April a delegation led by Health Sciences Pro-Vice-Chancellor Associate Professor Megan Gibbons, Director International Jason Cushen, Professor Richard Cannon, Professor Peter Mei, and Hui Zhang from the Dunedin City Council visited the West China School of Stomatology (WCSS) and Sichuan University in Chengdu. During the visit, an articulation agreement was signed by Otago and WCSS to support dental undergraduate education. The visit included institutional presentations, a tour of the dental hospital, and hands-on experience of virtual reality dental procedures using state-of-the-art machines that are used at WCSS to train dental students.
- The *Pathways* sculpture, located in the centre of campus at the junction of Union and Castle Walks, has been successfully restored following a coordinated effort from our Trades Services Team, reaffirming our commitment to care for the sculpture (by renowned New Zealand sculptor Dr Paul Dibble), gifted to the University by the Stuart Residence Halls Council.
- As part of the annual Inter-College Competition, the Cultural Performance Evening was successfully held on the 24th of May with the Regent Theatre packed out with students, whānau and community members showcasing the talent of our Taura.

Volunteering

- Residents from Arana and Studholme colleges were among many staff and students who participated in this year’s Ōtepoti Relay for Life. They raised \$6,700 for the Cancer Society, earning both a top five fundraising ranking and the event’s ‘Spirit of Relay’

award. 40 Taurira from the two colleges joined forces to walk or run over 12 consecutive hours in support of cancer research and support services.

Social Impact Studio

- 291 students engaged in Social Impact Studio community programmes, contributing approximately 1,988 hours of service, with a wage-replacement-value of \$59, 441 (at Living Wage)
- **Reading Oasis**, a literacy programme with Carisbrook School, entering its 10th year: 720 individual reading sessions delivered by student volunteers to children at Carisbrook School across 8 weeks. Funded by the Catalytic Foundation.
- **Minds Together**, a semesterly intergenerational programme between student volunteers and participants in early stages of dementia. The sixth run of programme delivery saw 164 hours of social connection across 9 weeks between 6 volunteers and 6 participants. A collaboration with Alzheimer's Otago.
- Successful first semester with **The Place Project** partnership between the Social Impact Studio and South Dunedin Community Network, Dream South D and Caversham Community Group. Students contributed 462 hours across 14 events, ranging from the South Dunedin Street Festival to neighbourhood newsletter drops.
- Nineteen study abroad/exchange students celebrated as **Global Impact Scholars** at the International Student Farewell, each completing at least 20 volunteer hours, a skills portfolio and impact reflection during their time at Otago.
- The regular **Teddy Bear Hospital** was held on 11 May at the Tūhura Museum, in partnership with the Otago University Medical Students' Association and aiming to make visits to the doctor less scary for children.

Celebrating Excellence – awards and recognition

This is not an exhaustive list of the achievements of our staff, students and alumni. We recognise that our staff in particular are working hard every day, producing outstanding results and achievements at all levels. This represents a sample of some of their recent achievements.

- **Professor Craig Rodger**, of the Department of Physics, has won the International Union of Radio Science's (URSI) Karl Rawer Gold Medal. Craig was recognised for his internationally influential research in space weather and near-Earth plasma physics, which has implications for satellite systems, communications, and technological infrastructure.
- The **Dunedin Study** has celebrated an important milestone – the successful completion of its age 52 data collection phase. 92% of the study members are still participating- a rate not matched anywhere in the world. The study follows the lives of 1,037 babies born in Queen Mary Maternity Hospital between 1 April 1972 and 31 March 1973. The last data collection phase was from 2017-2019.
- Biomedical Sciences received significant external recognition, including **Professor Peter Dearden** receiving the MJD White Medal from the Genetics Society of Australasia, **Nicole Power** receiving an Otago Teaching Excellence Award, and PhD student **Phoebe Adler** winning the 2026 Neuroendocrinology PhD Prize.
- Faculty of Biomedical Sciences researchers Associate Dean Māori **Dr Nathan Kenny** (Ngāi Tahu and Te Ātiawa) and Associate **Professor Michael Knapp** have secured Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment funding. Nathan is leading a project to combat an invasive golden clam threatening freshwater ecosystems and Michael's research is looking to detect kauri dieback. [Read more here.](#)
- **Taurite Tū**, a strength and balance exercise programme designed for Māori kaumātua received two awards at the recent Asia Pacific Eldercare Innovation Awards. One

award was for best programme innovation that inspires active ageing with music, culture and dance, and the other was for best programme innovation that empowers people to live well and age with dignity. Project lead School of Physiotherapy Associate Dean (Māori) **Katrina Pōtiki Bryant** was elated by the programme's success.

- First year student **Alexander Lee** is the recipient of the inaugural University of Otago/Dunedin City Council Entrance Scholarship. This scholarship is aimed at ensuring people are supported to study in an area that is important to the development of the city and the University.
- Pacific Otago PhD graduate **Dr Mere Taito** has received the 2026 Tracey Banivanua Mar PhD Prize from the Australian Association for Pacific Studies for her thesis titled “Kavei Se Tae! – A Genealogy of Rotuman Texts: Reading Early 20th Century Rotuman Publications; Writing Multilingual Archival Digital Visual Poetry”.
- **Dr Ashleigh Barrett-Young**, of the Department of Psychology, has uncovered another clue to potentially identifying Alzheimer's disease early. Researchers investigated a specific biomarker in blood plasma, ptau181, which has been shown in other studies to be strongly associated with Alzheimer's disease in later life. The findings add to the growing evidence that Alzheimer's-related processes may begin decades before clinical symptoms appear.
- **Elena Piere**, a PhD candidate working across Human Nutrition, Food Science and Management, won the Research Excellence Award at the WasteMINZ Awards with her “Waste less, care more: Reducing food waste in aged residential care” project. As part of the project, 14 aged care facilities co-designed and tested a food waste reduction toolkit over six months. Simple changes saw a 24 per cent reduction in kai waste, keeping more than 13 tonnes out of landfill.

Upcoming Events

Inaugural Professorial Lectures

- 22 June Professor Philip Bird, Department of Surgery & Critical Care (UOC)
- 21 July Professor Jeremiah Deng, School of Computing
- 22 July Professor Dawn Coates, Faculty of Dentistry

7. Exclusion of the Public

The Chancellor moves that the public be excluded from the whole of the proceeding of this meeting/the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely, —

- Item 8 SLT Register of Interests
- Item 9 Part 2 of the Minutes of the previous meeting of the University Council
- Item 10 University Council Work Plan and Action Follow-up Register
- Item 11 Vice-Chancellor’s Business
- Item 12 Campus Development
- Item 13 Digital Technologies Committee
- Item 14 Finance and Budget
- Item 15 Audit and Risk
- Item 16 Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Item 17 People and Culture
- Item 18 Delegation sought for conferment of degrees and other awards
- Item 19 Reappointment of the University of Otago Public Orator
- Item 20 Strategy Day
- Item 21 Council Only Business
- Item 22 Late Papers
- Item 23 Diligent Update

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows: -

General Subject	Reason for passing this resolution	Ground under Section 48(1)(a) for the passing of this resolution
Items (as listed) Confidential Minutes and Reports	Good reason for withholding information under the Official Information Act	Section 48(1)(a)(ii)

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a)(ii) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Sections 6,7 and/or 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 (except Section 9(2)(g)(i)) as the case may require. The interests which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows (all references are to Section 9 of the Official Information Act):

Item 8	SLT Register of Interests	ss 9(2)(a), (i), and (k)
Item 9	Part 2 of the Minutes of the previous meeting of the University Council	ss 9(2)(i), and (k)
Item 10	University Council Work Plan and Action Follow-up Register	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 11	Vice-Chancellor’s Business	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 12	Campus Development	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 13	Digital Technologies Committee	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 14	Finance and Budget	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 15	Audit and Risk	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 16	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 17	People and Culture	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 18	Delegation sought for conferment of degrees and other awards	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 19	Reappointment of the University of Otago Public Orator	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 20	Strategy Day	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 21	Council Only Business	ss 9(2)(a), (i), (j) and (k)
Item 22	Late Papers	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)
Item 23	Diligent Update	ss 9(2)(i) and (k)

AND THAT for Items 8-16 Emeritus Professor J Maclauren, Professors G Cook, J Palmer, J Ruru, D Sika-Paotonu, Mr S Willis, Mr D Thomson, Mr B Trott – along with, for particular items, Ms D Peach (Head, Risk, Assurance and Compliance), Mr K Maley and Mr C Hale (Strategy Analytics and Reporting Office) – be permitted to remain at this meeting after the public has been excluded because of their knowledge of the matters to be discussed. This knowledge, which will be of assistance in relation to the matters to be discussed, is relevant to those matters because it relates to aspects of the administration and/or knowledge of specific capital projects of the University of Otago for which these people are responsible. Mr R Tomlinson (Audit New Zealand) will be permitted to join for items relating to the 2025 Audit exercise. The Registrar and Secretary to the Council and Deputy Secretary to the Council are also permitted to remain at the meeting to provide secretarial support and advice.

University of Otago Council Part 1