



# 2022 Compliance with Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice Attestation

University of Otago

---

**March 2023**

# University of Otago 2022 Pastoral Care Code Attestation

---

## Preamble

### University Overview

The University of Otago is Aotearoa New Zealand's oldest university. It is a university of firsts with a proud history of delivering student-centred success for over 150 years. Learner flourishing in a supportive community environment is the hallmark of the Otago experience.

Under *Vision 2040*, the University of Otago's lead strategic document, the aspiration to be te Tiriti led is explicit and fundamental and will further cement the University's commitment to whakawhanaukataka. The University's vision is of transformation<sup>1</sup> and the mission includes delivery of excellence in learning and teaching and the provision of outstanding student experiences.<sup>2</sup>

The University's main campus is in Dunedin. In addition to fully distance students and students on the Dunedin campus, there are specialist health sciences campuses in Christchurch and Wellington, a specialist dental training facility in South Auckland, a teacher education campus in Invercargill, and a presence in Central Otago.

Total EFTS in 2022 were 19,174 with a headcount of 21,159 students. There were 1,321 International EFTS. Postgraduate EFTS were 18.1% of University EFTS and taura Māori comprised 13.8% of domestic student EFTS and Pacific, 6.6%. Across the campuses, Dunedin consisted of 92.1% of learners. Auckland had 0.2% of EFTS, Invercargill 0.5%, Wellington 3.4%, and Christchurch 3.8%.

Although having an important presence across the motu, Otago is known largely as a residential university associated most closely with Dunedin. The residential nature of Otago makes it distinctive in Aotearoa where the university provides an unparalleled undergraduate experience. This is a huge drawcard for taura looking for a unique student experience and provides much of the context for delivery of exceptional support systems and pastoral care.

The Dunedin campus typically has over 85% of commencing undergraduate taura from outside of the city. Over 90% of those undergraduate taura who have moved from out-of-town will live in Otago's Residential Colleges before moving to independent flatting in suburbs close to the main campus after first year.

The collegiate experience is fundamental to the Otago experience. The University-run colleges offer substantial pastoral and academic support to members of their communities. A comprehensive scholarships programme<sup>3</sup> and financial relief<sup>4</sup> are also deployed to ensure financial barriers are lifted and equity groups are supported to flourish.

Mindful that not all learners live in Residential Colleges and experience the benefits of those communities, the Locals Programme<sup>5</sup> provides a community in which to enjoy the benefits of collegiate life without living in a college. Additionally, the Pacific Islands Centre and Te Huka

---

<sup>1</sup> Vision: Our people and knowledge transforming lives, connecting communities, and nurturing the environment in Otago, Te Waipounamu, Aotearoa, the Pacific, and the world. (Vision 2040, [otago.ac.nz/otago0241079.pdf](https://www.otago.ac.nz/otago0241079.pdf))

<sup>2</sup> Mission: The University of Otago exists to create, advance, share, promote, preserve and apply knowledge. Committed to partnership with mana whenua and upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi, we undertake outstanding research and research-informed teaching, enable transformative learning and student experiences, and engage in meaningful service to society with a dedication to excellence, innovation and positive impact. (Vision 2040, [otago.ac.nz/otago0241079.pdf](https://www.otago.ac.nz/otago0241079.pdf))

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/future-students/fees-and-scholarships/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://ask.otago.ac.nz/knowledgebase/article/KA-10003172>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/locals/index.html>

Mātauraka both provide holistic support in a home-from-home for Māori and Pacific learners while International Student Support provides exceptional tailored wellbeing support for international learners.

For undergraduate learners the community experience is every bit as transformational as the academic experience. It offers school-leaver learners an opportunity to grow in independence and confidence and to flourish as young adults. This unique context also shapes how the University thinks about and delivers pastoral care and support to its community. From the exceptional care that Campus Watch provides to learners by being present in the communities they live in, the extensive social sports and recreation programmes run by both the University and OUSA, through to the community partnerships between Dunedin stakeholders to support safety in North Dunedin, the University works to provide comprehensive support solutions so learners of all backgrounds can succeed.

## Code Management and Governance

Within the Otago context, the *Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021* provides a valuable backdrop to the care and support for taura wellbeing and safety that is fundamental to the University's kaupapa. The Code is viewed as an explicit codification of the diverse components of learner wellbeing support and illuminates both practices that Otago is rightly proud of as well as highlighting opportunities to extend and enhance taura-centred wellbeing initiatives.

While learner wellbeing responsibilities under the Code are distributed across the University, general reporting and other Code compliance requirements is largely managed in the office of the Director of Student Services<sup>6</sup> in the Academic Division. The Student Services portfolio has responsibility for a diverse range of learner-centred support services and the Director reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). Locating responsibility for the Code in this structure ensures that the University's Senior Leadership Team has effective strategic oversight over Code matters while pastoral care initiatives can be effectively operationalised.

For the majority of 2022, Code administration was being managed through a fixed-term appointment to the role of Transition Pastoral Care Code Manager. This role was transitional while the previous Director of Student and Academic Services retired and a new Director, Student Services was appointed.

In June 2022 the Director of Student Services was appointed and institutional responsibility was passed to that role. After a stocktaking period, the transitional role was replaced with a Manager, Student Pastoral Care position; with recruitment processes currently underway. It is anticipated that an appointment will be made by mid-2023.

In addition to the focus in Student Services, the Division Campus and Collegiate Life Services<sup>7</sup> (CaCLs) also actively manage Code matters that relate to student accommodation. In keeping with the complexity of this portfolio, all staff are responsible for adherence to the Code with a **College Warden charged with coordinating particular compliance activities.**

Student wellbeing matters are reported to and monitored by the University Council. **Code-related risks are included in the University's Risk Register. Risks are reported to the Senior Leadership Team and Council through the Audit and Risk Committee.**

In addition to the Council's governance function, University-wide structures for supporting and monitoring the Code are currently being finalised. It is proposed that Code activity is supported by a

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/student-services/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/campus-collegiate-life/index.html>

**Pastoral Care Code Reference Group (PCCRG).** This group will report to the University's Quality Advancement Committee<sup>8</sup>, a Senate Committee responsible for internal and external academic quality assurance and quality enhancement. **This structure supports a whole-of-university approach to the Code and embeds monitoring of the Code in a mature approach to evidence-based quality assurance.**

Terms of Reference and composition of the PCCRG are being finalised with plans to include academic and professional staff representation from across the University in addition to student representation from the Otago University Students' Association (OUSA), Te Rōpu Māori (TRM), Otago International Students Association (OISA), Otago Pacific Islands Student Association (UOPISA), and postgraduate representatives.

## Part One: Summary

### Process to Assess Code Compliance and Gaps

Extensive consultation about pastoral care at Otago was undertaken to accurately assess the current state. Stakeholders from across the organisation were consulted to identify strengths and opportunities in relation to performance against the Code. This work was largely undertaken by the Transition Manager, Pastoral Care Code, with CaCLs undertaking the analysis for accommodation-related matters.

Both **thematic interviews and focus groups** were used to assess compliance. Engagement involved senior leadership, professional and academic staff, and students. Consultation with staff extended across the University with meetings occurring with both individuals and teams from the: Office of the Vice-Chancellor; Academic Division; External Engagement Division; Research Division; Operations Division; Human Resources Division; and individual academic divisions (including the satellite campuses and staff representing distance and regional students). **A Pastoral Care email address was established and advertised to both staff and students inviting comments about Code compliance.**

Learner feedback about perceptions of pastoral care were also gathered from both individual meetings with students from OUSA, TRM, UOPISA, OISA as well as OUSA staff. Indirect feedback was also gathered through student participation on various committees. In addition to this qualitative approach, established student voice data gathering also informed the gap analysis. The University has rich student voice data through its various student opinion surveys and the Compulsory Student Services Fee setting exercise which also informed the Code compliance analysis.

An analysis of information provided to learners through the website and other University publications was undertaken. Learner-facing staff fed into this process by highlighting opportunities for additional or modified communication. A comparative exercise evaluating the information provided by other New Zealand universities was also undertaken.

Using this feedback and the informational review, the Transition Manager, Pastoral Care Code, undertook an analysis of the University's approach to pastoral care against the requirements of the Code. The Manager's substantive role as International Student Support Manager, meant that significant work had already been undertaken in relation to analysing the University's approach to pastoral care and the *Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016*.

The Director Student Services and Senior Strategy and Policy Adviser, Academic Division have reviewed the open gaps. Eleven gaps were identified in the 2021 Self-Review and Gap Analysis. These gaps all remain open. This is in part because of changes in key staff and in part because of the

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/council/committees/committees/otago001317.html>

complexity and, in some cases, the expense of compliance. The proposed governance structure for the Code will address some of these challenges.

## Status of 2022 Gaps

Outcome	Process	Clause	Status
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	1: Strategic Goals and Strategic Plans	7 (1) (a) and (b) (Gap in evidence) (1) Providers must have <b>strategic goals and strategic plans</b> for supporting the wellbeing and safety of their learners across their organisation, including student accommodation, describing how they will – (a) give effect to the outcomes sought and processes required by this code; and (b) contribute to an education system that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and supports Māori–Crown relations.	Open
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	1: Strategic Goals and Strategic Plans	7 (3) (a) and (b) (Gap in evidence) (3) Providers must <b>work proactively with learners and stakeholders (and document this work)</b> when – (a) developing their learner wellbeing and safety strategic goals and strategic plans described in subclause (1); and (b) reviewing their learner wellbeing and safety strategic goals and strategic plans described in subclause (2).	Open
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	3: Publication Requirements	9 (c) Providers <b>must make the following information readily available</b> , in accessible formats, to learners, staff and the general public, including on their websites (where available) –(c) <b>self-review reports</b> on the quality of their learner wellbeing and safety practices described in clause 8.	Open
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	4: Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Systems	10 (1) (1) Providers must <b>gather and communicate relevant information across their organisation (including student accommodation) and from relevant stakeholders to accurately identify emerging concerns about learners’ wellbeing and safety or behaviour and take all reasonable steps to connect learners quickly to culturally appropriate social, medical, and mental health services.</b>	Open
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	4: Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Systems	10 (1) (Gap in evidence) As above	Open
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	4: Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Systems	10 (2) (a) to (i)	Open

		(2) Providers must provide staff with ongoing training and resources tailored to their roles in the organisation, in relation to – (a) Te Tiriti o Waitangi; and (b) the provider’s obligations under this code; and (c) understanding the welfare issues of diverse learner groups and appropriate cultural competencies; and (d) identifying and timely reporting of incidents of racism, discrimination, and bullying; and (e) physical and sexual violence prevention and response, including how to support a culture of disclosure and reporting; and (f) privacy and safe handling of personal information; and (g) referral pathways (including to local service providers) and escalation procedures; and (h) identifying and timely reporting of incidents and concerning behaviours; and (i) wellbeing and safety awareness and promotion topics, including – (i) safe health and mental health literacy and support; and (ii) suicide and self-harm awareness; and (iii) promoting drug and alcohol awareness; and (iv) promoting healthy lifestyles for learners.	
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	4: Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Systems	10 (3) (g) (3) Providers must have plans for assisting learners, and responding effectively, in emergency situations in the learning or residential community (whether localised or more widespread), including – (g) recording critical incidents and emergencies and reporting these back annually (at an aggregate level and, as far as practicable, disaggregated by diverse learner groups) to provider management, learners, other stakeholders, and the code administrator.	Open
2: Learner Voice	2: Learner Complaints	13 (d)(i) and (ii) (Gap in evidence) Providers must –(d) ensure that the complaints process is easily accessible to learners (and those supporting them), including having practices for – (i) providing learners with clear information on how to use the internal complaints processes (including the relevant people to contact), and the scope and possible outcomes of the processes; and (ii) addressing barriers to accessing this information (for example, due to language, lack of internet access, fear of reprisal, desire for anonymity), such as providing alternative ways of raising a complaint;	Open
2: Learner Voice	2: Learner Complaints	13 (e) (f)(i) and (ii) Providers must –(e) record complaints; and (f) report annually to provider management, learners, other stakeholders, and the code administrator (including on provider websites where available) on – (i) the number and nature of complaints made and their outcomes (at	Open

		an aggregate level and, as far as practicable, disaggregated by diverse learner groups); and (ii) learner experience with the complaints process and the outcome of their complaint; and	
4: Learners are Safe and Well	3: Proactive Monitoring and Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Practices	22 (1) (a) to (c) (1) Providers must have practices for – (a) requesting that domestic learners 18 years and over provide a name and up-to-date contact details of a nominated person; and (b) describing the circumstances in which the nominated person referred to in paragraph (a) should be contacted in relation to their wellbeing and safety; and (c) contacting the person nominated by domestic learners 18 years and over, in the circumstances described in accordance with paragraph (b), or where the provider has reasonable grounds for believing that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat to the student’s life or health;	Open
6: Accommodation Administrative Practices and Contracts	2: Student Accommodation Contracts	31 (5) (Gap in evidence) Providers must ensure that accommodation providers keep a log of complaints received from residents concerning a breach or breaches of this code in relation to student accommodation and make this log available to the residents.	Open



## How will you measure the effectiveness of the new initiatives you have put in place to close identified gaps against the Code?

Since the initial gap analysis there is greater stability in terms of the most pressing practical challenges to learner safety and wellbeing from the pandemic. In addition to this change in context, the University has undertaken a significant exercise in strategic planning. From that strategic planning, the interim Vision 2040 has been approved and it is anticipated that Pae Tata, a comprehensive action plan to 2030 that cascades from Vision 2040, will be endorsed by Council in May 2023. This plan will provide a framework for next steps in the pastoral care space which will intersect with the Learner Success Plan that is being developed.

In addition, the University has had new key appointments in student support. The Director, Student Services was appointed in June 2022 and has been reviewing the learner pastoral care landscape in consultation with stakeholders.

The change in context, in strategic imperatives, and in key staff means that it is timely to review both the initial gap analysis and the overall approach to measuring the effectiveness of learner wellbeing support. Leading the coordination of this will be the Manager, Student Pastoral Care.

The appointment of a permanent Manager, Student Pastoral Care is imminent. The appointment will oversee the institution's implementation and administration of the Code focusing on all-of-institutional approach to Code requirements.

As well as coordinating reporting and other compliance responsibilities, the role will manage the identification and closing of gaps, developing, and facilitating best practice approaches in pastoral care initiatives, as well as management of an institution-wide training programme. The role will have functional relationships both within Student Services and across the University.

The Manager will review how we measure the effectiveness of new support initiatives. They will utilise the extensive existing University quality assurance processes with a view to systematising both quantitative and qualitative analysis providing regular reporting to the University's Senior Leadership Team. An exercise to identify any gaps we have in that assessment will be undertaken and will be informed by best practice in evaluating learner pastoral care.

The University enjoys good dialogue with learners. Otago works closely with student representatives, involving learner decision-makers at all levels of the organisation. Student opinion surveys provide a formal mechanism for assessing the effectiveness of pastoral support and there are a variety of channels for learner feedback.

To assess the lived experience of learners it is important to provide taurira a variety of options for providing feedback to the university and to have these evolve as student needs evolve. The Manager, Student Pastoral Care will have responsibility for overseeing and enhancing student engagement and student voice and ensuring student voice mechanisms are responsive and fit for purpose and are clearly articulated in a student partnership framework.

Finally, Code Gap Working Groups will be established to monitor and assist with closing the current gaps. These groups will report to the Pastoral Care Code Reference Group (PCCRG). Updates and recommendations will be reported by PCCRG to the Quality Advancement Committee (QAC). The working groups will be constituted until the relevant gap is satisfactorily closed and the PCCRG will have a mechanism to surface up recommendations to university senior leadership. This structure will involve students and will be documented and publicised to ensure a transparent whole-of-institution approach within a robust quality assurance framework.

## Part Two: Full Gap Progress Table

Outcome	Process	Clause	Full Year Update
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	1: Strategic Goals and Strategic Plans	7 (1) (a) and (b) (1) Providers must have strategic goals and strategic plans for supporting the wellbeing and safety of their learners across their organisation, including student accommodation, describing how they will – (a) give effect to the outcomes sought and processes required by this code; and (b) contribute to an education system that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and supports Māori–Crown relations.	<p>In 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a gap in evidence stating that it <b>did not have a defined strategic learner wellbeing and safety vision across the University</b>. This meant that although overall practice was compliant, some areas of pastoral care initiatives tended to be <b>more reactive</b> than they could have been, and some areas of support were <b>not evenly shared</b> across the University.</p> <p>In response to the identification of this gap, the University undertook an audit of current wellbeing and safety processes and initiatives. The audit highlighted a wide range of wellbeing support services being offered at the University with <b>over 80 initiatives identified by central support services</b>.</p> <p>The appointment of a new Director, Student Services has meant that some time has been taken to analyse the information gathered in the audit. <b>A need to broaden the scope of the support audit has been identified and this will be undertaken by the Manager, Student Pastoral Care</b>.</p> <p>The initial stocktake has informed strategic plans in Student Services and work has started by the Director to develop a <b>Student Wellbeing Framework (SWF)</b>. Initial consultations have occurred with the Office of Māori Development, Human Resources, Health and Safety as well as OUSA.</p> <p>Over 2022 the University has been redeveloping its strategic frameworks at the highest level. With the release of Vision 2040 and an explicit statement of the aspiration to te Tiriti led, there is now the development of a new strategic plan under which all strategy documents and action plans will fit. This will include the SWF. <b>Once the overarching strategic framework is approved by University Council, work will continue on the development of the SWF</b>.</p>
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	1: Strategic Goals and Strategic Plans	7 (3) (a) and (b) (3) Providers must work proactively with learners and stakeholders (and document this work) when – (a) developing their learner wellbeing and	<p>In the 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a gap in evidence stating while compliant in practice, it may be necessary to <b>review our policy guidelines to more clearly reference and align with the requirements in the Code to co-develop learner wellbeing and safety strategic goals and plans with students</b>.</p>

		safety strategic goals and strategic plans described in subclause (1); and (b) reviewing their learner wellbeing and safety strategic goals and strategic plans described in subclause (2).	<p>The University continues to work closely with students on strategic goals and plans, however we are not consistently explicit about the expectation that this must occur. Learner voice is interwoven on committees from Council through to departmental groups. Students were involved in developing Vision 2040 and are vital participants in strategic meetings from the Boards of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, the Emergency Management Team, Senate, The Student Wellbeing Group, Sophia Charter Implementation Working Group to name a few relevant groups. While most committees and groups have students formally included in their membership, some include learners by custom rather than clearly mandating it.</p> <p>Plans are underway for the Manager, Student Pastoral Care to work with the Office of the Registrar to review and update policy guidelines to better reflect the University's practice. This will then align more closely with Code requirements.</p>
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	3: Publication Requirements	9 (c) Providers must make the following information readily available, in accessible formats, to learners, staff and the general public, including on their websites (where available) –(c) self-review reports on the quality of their learner wellbeing and safety practices described in clause 8.	<p>In the 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a gap in practice citing that while strategic plans and goals are published on the website, they are not currently presented in a way that clearly links them to the Code. Additionally, the Self-Review reported the quality of learner wellbeing and safety practices had not been published on the website.</p> <p>Plans are underway for the Manager, Student Pastoral Care to work with the Office of the Registrar to develop a separate learner safety and wellbeing section in the Policy Library and to explicitly link relevant policies, procedures, and guidelines to the Code.</p> <p>An initial scoping exercise of the Student Services website has been undertaken by the Director Student Services and the Senior Advisor Policy and Strategy, Academic Division. The University's website is currently under development and as part of that process a learner wellbeing webpage will be developed that links to the Code and self-review documents.</p>
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	4: Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Systems	10 (1) (1) Providers must gather and communicate relevant information across their organisation (including student accommodation) and from relevant stakeholders to accurately identify emerging concerns about	<p>In the 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a gap in practice stating that different tools for recording student issues and engagement meant that while an individual service or area recorded emergency wellbeing or safety concerns, there was not a whole of institution approach to records and information sharing.</p>

		<p>learners' wellbeing and safety or behaviour and take all reasonable steps to connect learners quickly to culturally appropriate social, medical, and mental health services.</p>	<p>The University is working on a number of solutions for this challenge. The University has been developing its <b>CRSM</b> and this is now being used in Student Experience and AskOtago. This system <b>could be developed to include support services which would assist with information sharing and more easily identifying early warning signs of student with wellbeing risks. In addition, the University is undertaking a Digital Learning System Review which intersects academic and pastoral information.</b></p> <p>The Information Technology Services Division is actively working with Student Services to produce a <b>support information roadmap. A Business Analyst will shortly be engaged to evaluate needs in this space. Using continuous improvement principles, a strategy for implementing requisite changes in this area will be undertaken over 2023-24.</b></p>
1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System	4: Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Systems	10 (1) (Gap in evidence) As above	<p>In the 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a gap in evidence citing that while in practice the University maintains responsive safety and wellbeing systems these were due to excellent internal networks and staff cooperation rather than use of consistent systems and protocols to escalate emerging concerns.</p> <p><b>A review is underway in Student Services of the At-Risk Student Procedures.</b> These procedures outline the process for managing complex and serious learner welfare matters. A review of best practice in other universities and consultation with students will be incorporated into the redevelopment of the procedures.</p> <p>Once finalised, a <b>communication and training plan to disseminate these processes to University staff will also be developed.</b> It is anticipated that training open to all staff in the University will be available as part of the Human Resources Learning and Development and Academic Leadership Programme suite of trainings. Bespoke training for programmes with specific needs (such as placements) will also be developed in conjunction with academic leaders from the relevant area.</p> <p>In addition, the initial scoping exercise of the Student Services website has <b>identified areas where support services could communicate more effectively. Changes will be addressed as part of the redevelopment of the University website and will be undertaken by the Manager, Student Pastoral Care.</b></p>

<p>1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System</p>	<p>4: Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Systems</p>	<p>10 (2) (a) to (i)  (2) Providers must provide staff with ongoing training and resources tailored to their roles in the organisation, in relation to – (a) Te Tiriti o Waitangi; and (b) the provider’s obligations under this code; and (c) understanding the welfare issues of diverse learner groups and appropriate cultural competencies; and (d) identifying and timely reporting of incidents of racism, discrimination, and bullying; and (e) physical and sexual violence prevention and response, including how to support a culture of disclosure and reporting; and (f) privacy and safe handling of personal information; and (g) referral pathways (including to local service providers) and escalation procedures; and (h) identifying and timely reporting of incidents and concerning behaviours; and (i) wellbeing and safety awareness and promotion topics, including – (i) safe health and mental health literacy and support; and (ii) suicide and self-harm awareness; and (iii) promoting drug and alcohol awareness; and (iv) promoting healthy lifestyles for learners.</p>	<p>In the 2021 Self-Review, the University said that there could be a gap in practice because much of the training offered in the University is undertaken on an opt-in rather than compulsory basis.</p> <p>The University has a comprehensive training programme which is developed to suit the changing needs of the organisation. New campus-specific student safety and critical incident training sessions were added to the Academic Leadership and Development Programme in 2022.</p> <p>Wellbeing and safety training covers all aspects of 10 (2) however not all training is compulsory for all staff. The University undertook an Employment Related Processes Review in 2022. Training and development matters were included in the review and an implementation plan is currently under development. This affords an opportunity for compulsory training to be addressed.</p> <p>Obligations under, and compliance with, the Code are integrated into all relevant training sessions, however there is a need for Code-specific training sessions. A Code training session is under development and will be delivered in 2023 by the Director Student Services and the Manager, Student Pastoral Care.</p> <p>The University is also adopting the Pastoral Care Code Training module developed by the University of Auckland. Integration of the module into the University’s training platforms is underway and Otago specific content is being developed to include in the module. Options to include this module into inductions are being explored and the training will be rolled out to staff once the system requirements are resolved.</p>
<p>1: A Learner Wellbeing and Safety System</p>	<p>4: Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Systems</p>	<p>10 (3) (g)  (3) Providers must have plans for assisting learners, and responding effectively, in emergency situations in the learning or residential community</p>	<p>In the 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a gap in practice. Critical incidents are reported to senior University leaders, to Code administrators, and relevant stakeholders (such as Police, WellSouth, and Te Whatu Ora). Information about relevant critical incidents is shared with affected learners as part of management of the event. A great deal of care is taken to share appropriate information in a support and safety-focused manner that prioritises student wellbeing.</p>

		(whether localised or more widespread), including – (g) recording critical incidents and emergencies and reporting these back annually (at an aggregate level and, as far as practicable, disaggregated by diverse learner groups) to provider management, learners, other stakeholders, and the code administrator.	However, <b>statistics on critical incidents are not reported annually to learners.</b> Even when aggregated, low numbers make reporting without breaching privacy or causing other unintended negative consequences make this challenging. <b>The Manager, Student Pastoral Care will review other Universities for best practice and will work with the Privacy Officer, the Strategy, Analytics, and Reporting Office, and OUSA to develop a strategy for reporting.</b>
2: Learner Voice	2: Learner Complaints	13 (d)(i) and (ii) Providers must –(d) ensure that the complaints process is easily accessible to learners (and those supporting them), including having practices for – (i) providing learners with clear information on how to use the internal complaints processes (including the relevant people to contact), and the scope and possible outcomes of the processes; and (ii) addressing barriers to accessing this information (for example, due to language, lack of internet access, fear of reprisal, desire for anonymity), such as providing alternative ways of raising a complaint;	<p>In the 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a gap in evidence in ensuring complaints processes are easily accessible for learners.</p> <p>While the University has complaints processes, they are often embedded in formal policies and statutes, that means it is not always clear for learners to identify the correct pathway for making a complaint nor the likely process a complaint may follow. <b>Work is ongoing in certain areas to support learners to make complaints.</b> For example, in 2022 documentation relating to sexual misconduct complaints was developed, clarifying what could happen in a Proctor’s investigation under the Sexual Misconduct Policy.</p> <p>University staff work closely with OUSA Support to ensure that they are aware of developments in complaints processes so that they can support students to raise a complaint and can provide the University feedback about challenging systems.</p> <p><b>Despite one-off initiatives to improve transparency, this continues to be a challenge.</b> After review of the relevant webpages related to complaints procedures, the Director Student Services has started working with the Office of the Registrar to <b>develop an accessible complaints system that takes the complexity of raising a complaint.</b> As well as a learner-friendly <b>complaints webpage</b>, an <b>AskOtago Knowledge Base article will be developed for staff to assist students with how to make a complaint.</b></p>
2: Learner Voice	2: Learner Complaints	13 (e) (f)(i) and (ii) Providers must –(e) record complaints; and (f) report annually to provider management, learners, other stakeholders, and the code	In the 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a gap in practice in recording and reporting on all complaints. While internal processes are partially responsible for this there is also inherent complexity in ensuring all complaints ranging from low-level to serious and occurring across a range of departments in the University are recorded.

		<p>administrator (including on provider websites where available) on – (i) the number and nature of complaints made and their outcomes (at an aggregate level and, as far as practicable, disaggregated by diverse learner groups); and (ii) learner experience with the complaints process and the outcome of their complaint; and</p>	<p>The University supports lowest-level resolution of complaints and learners are encouraged to raise concerns with staff directly before they escalate into serious issues. While the Manager, Facilitation and Mediation reports on informal complaints, <b>many learner issues would be managed at the Department or Division level and reporting those would not be practical.</b></p> <p>Where complaints are raised anonymously in quality assurance processes such as Departmental Reviews and student opinion surveys, they are communicated to relevant Heads of Departments or Divisions to manage.</p> <p>In terms of formal complaints, in the Office of the Registrar, student appeals and academic grievances are reported on annually to the University Council, the Proctor’s Office records and reports on non-academic student complaints, and the Director Student Services reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on support services formal complaints.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that <b>work is needed on a whole of university approach to student complaints.</b> While Student Experience, for example, use a CRSM to record and report on student complaints, that system is not available for all staff. There are complex systems challenges that will need to be worked through with the Information Technology Services Division that are anticipated to take some time to resolve.</p> <p>The 2022 Employment Related Processes Review makes recommendations that may impact learner complaints processes and it is anticipated that the Office of the Registrar and the Academic Division will work closely with Human Resources on implementation of recommendations.</p> <p>To clarify what data are held when students make formal complaints it is proposed that an AskOtago Knowledge Base article is developed as well as clearly publicising it on a learner friendly webpage.</p>
4: Learners are Safe and Well	3: Proactive Monitoring and Responsive Wellbeing and Safety Practices	22 (1) (a) to (c) (1) Providers must have practices for – (a) requesting that domestic learners 18 years and over provide a name and up-to-date contact details of a nominated person; and (b) describing the circumstances in which the	<p>In the 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a gap in practice regarding <b>practices for requesting the contact details of learners, describing the circumstances in which the nominated person will be contacted, and contacting the nominated person in accordance with those circumstances.</b></p> <p>The University has a process in place for holding emergency contact information, however ensuring it is up to date is complicated requiring learners to proactively alter this information</p>

		<p>nominated person referred to in paragraph (a) should be contacted in relation to their wellbeing and safety; and (c) contacting the person nominated by domestic learners 18 years and over, in the circumstances described in accordance with paragraph (b), or where the provider has reasonable grounds for believing that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat to the student's life or health;</p>	<p>when necessary. In practice, community networks operate to ensure that next of kin or other emergency contacts can be contacted quickly in an emergency, however enhancement of current systems solutions are also being explored to ensure that practices are more robust.</p> <p>The University has processes in place to contact nominated contacts in emergency situations in Residential Colleges, Student Health, and the Proctor's Office. <b>In accommodation contracts, these circumstances are made clear while in other areas there is a gap in explicit publication of these circumstances.</b> As much as possible, a learner would be involved in that communication, however, when that is not possible professional standards are followed in any disclosures with the Proctor working with the Campus Cop or the New Zealand Police.</p> <p>Work is underway to update the Privacy of Student Information Statement to clarify processes around disclosure of personal information in emergency situations and it is planned that consultation with learners be undertaken later in 2023 with a view to systems changes following.</p>
6: Accommodation Administrative Practices and Contracts	2: Student Accommodation Contracts	<p>31 (5) Providers must ensure that accommodation providers keep a log of complaints received from residents concerning a breach or breaches of this code in relation to student accommodation and make this log available to the residents.</p>	<p>In the 2021 Self-Review, the University reported a <b>gap in evidence in recording complaints from residents.</b> It was stated that some inconsistencies were identified regarding the nature and detail of the complaints included in a record. In addition, there was a <b>gap in practice in making a log of complaints related to breaches of the Code available to the residents.</b></p> <p>The <b>consistency of use of StarRez</b> is under continuous improvement. In order to produce the log of complaints related to Student Accommodation a clearly defined process on recording is required to ensure that the report generated collects all complaints.</p> <p><b>A Working Group</b> has identified privacy and systems issues that need to be resolved before becoming fully compliant in this area. Current processes mean that students can receive anonymised complaints information upon request.</p> <p>The aggregation of anonymised complaints information requires a change to the StarRez database. This is currently being worked through and when it is resolved, there will be publication of this data.</p>



## Part Three: Highlights and Good Practice Examples

The University of Otago has a proud history of providing exceptional pastoral care to learners to foster outstanding transformative student experiences. The provision of pastoral care of students is everybody's concern. Pastoral care is both centralised, for instance in student support services, and decentralised, for instance in academic departments and there are countless examples of good practice in learner support across the University. The University also partners with community stakeholders to ensure learners can access wrap-around support.

At the end of 2022, University Council approved an interim final version of *Vision 2040* which replaced *Strategic Direction to 2020* as the University's lead strategic document. *Vision 2040* articulates the commitment to exceptional and transformative student experiences in an institution that aspires to be Te Tiriti led and immersed in its Pacific context. *Vision 2040* makes explicit commitments to student safety and wellbeing and highlights that manaakitaka and whakawhanaukataka are foundational components of the Otago student experience. Included in the focus on learner success is the responsibility for ensuring campuses are free from racism, discrimination, and bullying, and to providing effective avenues for student representation and advocacy.

As part of the creation of the Student Wellbeing Group<sup>9</sup>, a scoping audit of the wellbeing-support activities on the Dunedin Campus was undertaken. Even without broadening the audit into residential colleges or academic divisions, the quantity and range of pastoral care initiatives identified, was extensive. From the School of Surveying Te Kura Kairā Student Wellbeing and Support Team who won a 2022 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Award<sup>10</sup>, the virtual "Check in, not Out" initiative (an open-door session for online international students to check in, run by International Student Support in collaboration with the Otago International Students Association (OISA), for students to get a sense of connection to Otago and the international onshore student community) to the services provided by the Graduate Wellbeing Coach (coaching for graduate research candidates to help manage academic demands by working with candidates to create a healthy work/life balance) the University facilitates both learner-to-learner support as well as expert staff support.

An ongoing highlight in learner wellbeing support is the relationship the University has with its student associations. Otago enjoys an exceptional working relationship with OUSA, Te Rōpu Māori (TRM), Otago University Pacific Islands Students Association (UOPISA), and Otago International Students Association (OISA). In the learner support and advice space, OUSA staff are viewed as providing essential professional advice and support that most appropriately comes from an external organisation. In terms of university decision-making OUSA student representation is included at the highest levels. For example, the OUSA President sat on the University's COVID Emergency Management Group, a high-level group driving the University's COVID response. This inclusion of student voice was key to ensuring that University's Senior Leadership Team and other relevant staff had real-time feedback regarding the needs of students in the pandemic environment and facilitated joined-up collaborations. Together OUSA and the University delivered over 4500 care packs to students in isolation during the Omicron outbreak. In addition to student representation on committees, Senior University leaders regularly meet with student association members to both mentor student leaders and to ensure responsiveness to student voice.

---

<sup>9</sup> This group was created by the Acting-Vice-Chancellor and comprises professional and academic staff representatives from a variety of student support services, accommodation services, Health and Safety, and OUSA. In addition, student representatives from OUSA, TRM, and UOPISA are members of the group. The purpose of the group was fostering whole-of-institution approaches to student wellbeing and pastoral care.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/otagobulletin/otago0236933.html>

While there are many initiatives that the University is rightly proud of, the focus of this report will be on on-campus support because of the strategic importance that being a largely residential institution plays for Otago. The main Otago campus plays a unique role in Dunedin. The University is a large employer in a relatively small city and the yearly influx of students into the city injects vibrancy and activity. The relationship between the University and the City is of fundamental importance to both town and gown. Part of the unique Otago experience is the opportunity to live with thousands of other learners near the campus. A North Dunedin experience is a huge drawcard for learners and creates both opportunities and challenges for the provision of safety-enhancing pastoral care. The following five areas highlight the holistic approach that the University takes to learner wellbeing and safety.

## The Sophia Charter

One of the highlights of the March 2022 – 2023 period was reaping the benefits of work by the University in partnership with OUSA, Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ), the Police, Otago Property Investors Association, Te Pūkenga, student and alumni group Hold on to Your Friends (HTYF), and the Dunedin City Council (DCC) under the auspices of The Sophia Charter<sup>11</sup>. Following the tragic death of Sophia Crestani in 2019, Sophia’s whānau came together with North Dunedin stakeholders to work to ensure a safer student environment. The Sophia Charter affirms a community-wide commitment to harm reduction and to enhancing the wellbeing of North Dunedin students.

The goal of the Charter is that North Dunedin is a strong student neighbourhood where residents take responsibility for themselves, each other, and the wider community; it will be a place that is fun, vibrant, safe, and secure and that fosters student success and wellbeing. There is an annual Charter hui in which senior staff from partner organisations, including the Vice-Chancellor and Dunedin’s Mayor, meet with Sophia’s parents and student representatives to formulate strategies for this kaupapa.

In addition to the high-level commitment to the goals of the Charter, individual Charter partners commit to practical initiatives that are designed to enhance learner experience in North Dunedin. The Proctor’s Office leads a senior working group comprising University staff, OUSA, FENZ, the DCC, and Otago Property Investors. This group meets regularly to work together on practical issues. At the end of 2022 agreement was reached from the DCC to institute weekly rubbish collections. This will assist greatly with an ongoing challenge of broken glass and loose rubbish in one of the most densely populated parts of New Zealand. The “Good One Register” is promoted by the University as an important initiative backed by a variety of community and government parties where learners can register their parties to help ensure that they have parties that are both great and safe. The Proctor’s Office visits all two-storey flats to explain the serious hazards associated with large parties and works closely with the Police to ensure as much as possible that students have fun in safe ways.

The University is committed to supporting the Sophia Charter to be student-centred and student-led. The annual North Dunedin Clean Up Day is a student run initiative supported by Charter partners where students work together to tidy up their neighbourhood. In March 2023 a static display and website celebrating and reaffirming the commitment to the Charter was unveiled in the University’s Information Services Building. This centrally located display ensures that Sophia’s

---

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/about/social-responsibility/sophia-charter>

memory lives on and provides a focal point where students can make suggestions (either anonymously or not) for improving the North Dunedin student experience.

The inclusive community-based approach Otago is taking to harm minimisation is paying off. 2022 saw fewer examples of antisocial behaviour in the student community. While this could have also been due to COVID restrictions, this trend has continued into 2023. The beginning of the year is the time that the most risk-taking behaviour occurs, and again fewer harmful incidents were recorded. The University works tirelessly with community partners and students alike to ensure that this continues.

## Te Huka Mātauraka

The Māori Centre/Te Huka Mātauraka (THM)<sup>12</sup> aspires to be world leaders in indigenous learner support. THM is a key contributor to taura Māori achieving academic success and having an outstanding experience while at Otago. It also contributes to the University's commitment to fulfil its obligations to takata whenua under te Tiriti.

THM is at the heart of Māori taura life at Otago. The centre maintains strong relations with mana whenua and other iwi providing whakawhanaukataka to learners from across the motu. It is a space on campus where taura can be surrounded by the values of te ao Māori and anchors them to a place that meets their needs and supports them in a way that has a direct, positive impact on their academic success. During the past three years THM has supported over 2,300 students annually.

The Centre provides a range of services for Māori learners, including orientation, transition to university support, pastoral care and counselling, academic support and tutorials, and a mentoring Programme. A psychology intern, Kaitohutohu Māori Counsellors, Māori Chaplains, and Hauora Connectors are embedded in THM providing integrated wrap-around support immersed in te ao Māori.

THM works closely with Associate Deans Māori, Kōhatu Centre for Hauora Māori, which provides exceptional pastoral and academic support for Māori Health Workforce development, and other support services to ensure that Māori learners receive integrated support tailored to their needs.

Taura voice is woven into the approach THM takes. The Centre is co-located with Te Rōpu Māori/the Māori Students Association. This adds to the vibrancy of the Centre and contributes to the highly successful holistic whānau-centred approach to taura flourishing in a home-from-home that THM fosters.

## Disability Information and Support

Disability Information and Support (DIS)<sup>13</sup> is a sector-leading service for students with impairments. The small team at DIS provides quality specialist support that enables students with impairments to reach their educational goals and develop their full potential. DIS' remit is to ensure students with impairments have access to the full university experience, to foster an inclusive environment where peoples' differences and differing needs in relation to disability are understood, accepted and valued, to assist teaching staff in the delivery of teaching support to students with impairments, and to act as a resource for university staff and students in relation to disability issues.

---

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/maoricentre/index.html>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/disabilities/index.html>

DIS are an efficient and effective team of disability support specialists who support strengths-based learner-centred inclusion. The Manager of DIS, Melissa Lethaby, is recognised nationally for her expertise in disability support. Melissa is also President of Achieve, the national post-secondary education disability network, and was pivotal in developing the Kia Ōrite Toolkit, a code of practice for achieving equitable and inclusive learning environments for disabled learners. The DIS management team also provide expert advice across the University sector.

In 2021 the pass rate of students who accessed support services from DIS was 82%, as compared with students who identified as having an impairment which affected their study, and did not use DIS, whose pass rate was 76%. The overall pass rate for all students studying at Otago during 2021 was 91.6%. The 2022 Quality Advancement Unit Departmental Review of DIS saw the service receive 14 commendations for the support they give to both individual learners and for creating a positive culture of equity and inclusion University-wide. The service was also a recipient of a 2023 University of Otago Award for Excellence in Teaching<sup>14</sup> reflecting the exceptional wraparound service they provide to learners with impairments.

## Campus Watch

Campus Watch<sup>15</sup> provides a unique 24/7 approach to pastoral care at Otago. Campus Watch staff operate in and around the main campus and serve to foster and maintain a safe and secure environment that enables all students to realise their potential. Part of the Proctor's Office, Campus Watch is not a new service but is constantly evolving in response to learner safety and welfare needs. It supports both the University of Otago and Te Pūkenga Otago Polytechnic.

Campus Watch provide a wide variety of practical support to the student community. They help with anything from unlocking student flats to delivering essential supplies during lockdowns. The team undertakes learner welfare checks and are often first on the scene in a crisis. Working closely with emergency services, they are an essential part of the city-wide approach to the student community. The team are integrated into all areas of student support and work closely with a variety of support services to assist with learners accessing the pastoral care they need.

Always available for a chat, Campus Watch act as both friendly neighbourhood watch and as walking information booths. Having trauma-informed training and excellent knowledge of student services, Campus Watch can point learners in the right direction for support. Working closely with Colleges, Te Huka Mātauraka, the Pacific Islands Centre, the Locals Programme, Recreation Services, and Te Whare Tāwharau (Sexual Harm Prevention and Support), Student Health, Campus Watch is a lynchpin in provision of wraparound support.

Campus Watch run a safety patrol every Wednesday to Saturday providing safe transport home from Campus in North Dunedin from 11pm to 3am<sup>16</sup>. The Proctor's Office provides free trailers to students to dispose of rubbish, works closely with OUSA and other agencies on campaigns such as the voluntary glass ban, safer parties, and neighbourhood responsibility. On top of this, the Campus Watch team are excellent at putting on barbecues for students at pop-up events.

---

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/otagobulletin/news/otago0244229.html>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/proctor/campuswatch/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/proctor/campuswatch/otago025144.html>

The Campus Watch service is typical of Otago’s approach to learner welfare and safety. It is a unique service that is responsive to the needs of the Otago student community and are an essential part of the fabric of the North Dunedin community.

## Inter-College Competition

The **Inter-College Competition/Tauwhāinga Kāreti<sup>17</sup>** is a jewel in the recreation offerings at Otago and is emblematic of a service that is responsive to the learner environment. This programme is not merely nationally significant but is globally significant in terms of its ambition to enhance learner wellbeing. Otago are world leaders in using a formal programme of recreation opportunities to foster a sense of community amongst the first-year student community.

The Inter-College programme facilitates a wealth of fun and meaningful opportunities for first-year students to interact with the wider student community. It allows learners to create social connections with the intention of enhancing relationships beyond the four walls of their College, flat or home. Through participation in sport, cultural and games events, this competition fosters each student’s personal growth by helping them to create a balanced first-year experience, all the while instilling belong to the collegiate community (which includes Residential Colleges, the Locals Programme, University Flats, and Te Pā Tauria (Otago Polytechnic Village, Te Pūkenga)), University, and Polytechnic.

The programme is intentionally designed to enhance the student experience while providing opportunities for learners to gain greater leadership, teamwork, and fair play qualities. The competition’s key point of difference is its grounding in valuing participation-based recreational events. The University wants as many students as possible to take part in the competition and for those that do to develop relationships and a sense of family that extend across the institution.

In 2022 there were 400 sports teams competing in Sports Day, cricket, waka ama, football, netball, volleyball, basketball, touch, wildcard, badminton, and futsal. There were 194 entries in cultural activities ranging from Battle of the Bands, drama, cultural performances, debating, arts, 48 Film Festival to dance. There were 239 teams and entries in games ranging from chess to lazer tag as well as sustainability and community service opportunities as part of the programme.

## Summary

This snapshot of the good practice in Otago’s pastoral care merely skims the surface of the excellent work undertaken in the learner welfare and safety space. In addition to the services above, the University is a leader in its approach to sexual harm and to the provision of support in Colleges. In a tradition of firsts, unique solutions have developed for Otago’s unique conditions. Understanding our learners and prioritising outstanding student experiences are, and always will be, at the heart of these developments.

---

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.otago.ac.nz/inter-college-comp/index.html>