



Te Kete Aronui – Division of Humanities

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020

### The Division

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The Division of Humanities comprises the College of Education, the Faculty of Law, Te Tumu (School of Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies), and the thirteen Departments and Centres which make up the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Bachelor of Arts degree with its wide range of majors, the Division offers undergraduate diplomas and degrees in Education, Language and Culture, Music, Performing Arts and Theology, as well as professional programmes in Law, Planning, Social Work and Teaching.

### Mission

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The mission of the Division of Humanities is to engage in high-quality research and research-informed teaching in the arts, social sciences, and professional subjects for the benefit of students, the community and international scholarship. The Division of Humanities seeks to address the following strategic imperatives have been identified by the University of Otago: Excellence in Research; Excellence in Teaching; Outstanding Student Experiences; Outstanding Campus Environments; Commitment as a Local, National and Global Citizen; Strong External Engagement; Sustaining Capability.

A humanities degree imparts essential knowledge about the world we live in by deepening understanding of how people think, feel and behave, how we interact with one another and how we interpret our experience, how social and political institutions function, how human societies evolved into what they are today and how different cultures relate to one another. Most importantly, a humanities education develops essential lifelong learning skills such as critical thinking, flexibility and competence with language. Together with the knowledge of the human and natural world that the arts and the social sciences impart, it is these skills that prepare humanities graduates for employment.

The need for high quality humanities graduates is greater than ever. New ways of thinking are changing the way we behave and organise ourselves. Advances in travel and communication have brought people into closer contact with one another, while a revolution in information technology has globalized the world economy. The world of today needs graduates who can understand the nature of what is occurring, and who can act effectively in this new environment.

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<sup>1</sup> In this document, the word Department is used to signify each of the sixteen academic units in the Division of Humanities.

## Goal 1: Research

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*To advance and disseminate knowledge in the Humanities and Social Sciences through excellence in scholarship, research publication and postgraduate teaching.*

### Strategic Objectives

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1. Ensure all academic staff are research active.
2. Increase the number and quality of research publications and their impact.
3. Increase the number and value of external research grants won.
4. Increase and/or maintain the PBRF rating of all academic staff.
5. Increase the number of graduate students completing research degrees.
6. Foster excellence in postgraduate research and supervision.
7. Support research that empowers Māori and Pacific communities.
8. Foster research that is of benefit to the community.

### Strategies

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1. Provide funding support to all permanent academic staff towards attendance at at least one international and one domestic conference per year.
2. Secure funding to support the initiatives of researchers that are likely to result in a high-quality research outputs.
3. Ensure that the Division is able to collect appropriate data on staff research outputs.
4. Support initiatives for staff to secure funding from commercial and community sectors.
5. Support initiatives for staff to undertake research that has impact in the community or that is of benefit to our external partners.
6. Ensure that no academic staff member has a workload that exceeds the maximum prescribed in the Division of Humanities workload model.
7. Rationalise the number of papers offered to ensure efficient operation.
8. Ensure that all academic staff appointed to positions subject to PBRF appraisal have a research degree (normally a PhD), and/or a record of research publications in the area of the appointment.
9. Maintain high standards of admission for students undertaking postgraduate research degrees.
10. Establish and maintain strategic alliances and networks with potential research partners, including overseas ones.
11. Ensure that researchers are provided with appropriate space, equipment, RSL, fieldwork opportunities, and other forms of support (e.g. funding to attend conferences and undertake research).

## Goal 2: Teaching

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*To achieve and maintain excellence in teaching to ensure that our graduates are independent learners engaged in critical thinking informed by quality research and professional practice.*

### Strategic Objectives

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1. Ensure that Humanities graduates attain the ‘Attributes of a University of Otago Graduate’.
2. Foster and support effective teaching and assessment practices.
3. Ensure that all degree programmes are characterized by coherence, depth, breadth, currency and progression.
4. Ensure that all teaching is informed by research, and, in professional subjects, by professional practice.
5. Ensure that all courses and programmes offered are adequately resourced.
6. Increase the percentage of postgraduate students.
7. Advance the internationalisation of learning in terms of curricula, student exchange, and the delivery of programmes.
8. Encourage and assist staff to explore alternative modes of delivery, new technologies for teaching and for the provision of teaching materials.

### Strategies

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1. Implement the Division’s workload model.
2. Take measures to increase student satisfaction in areas identified as needing attention in the Graduate Opinion Surveys, and Student Opinion Surveys.
3. Ensure that all courses and programmes conform to graduate profiles and that these profiles are updated regularly.
4. Review the viability of academic programmes in terms of (a) enrolments, and (b) staffing capacity.
5. Expand and support the opportunities for Otago students to study abroad.
6. Provide opportunities for greater international staff interchange.
7. Develop and implement a Student Marketing and Recruitment Plan on an annual basis.

### **Goal 3: Community Engagement**

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*To make available to the wider communities the knowledge, expertise, research findings, and cultural resources available in the Humanities, for the mutual benefit of the community and the Division.*

#### **Strategic Objectives**

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1. Provide opportunities for members of the wider community to hear academic experts talking about the current state of knowledge.
2. Provide opportunities for members of the wider community to experience arts and culture.
3. Make information and skills available to the wider community through voluntary involvement in professional organisations and community activities.
4. Exercise the obligation of the University to be the critic and conscience of society and to uphold freedom of academic speech.
5. Ensure staff contribution to community engagement is adequately recognized.

#### **Strategies**

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1. Maintain and enhance a programme of open lectures and public seminars.
2. Maintain and enhance a programme of performing arts activities.
3. Encourage staff in the Division to participate in public debate on issues of importance as concerned intellectuals.
4. Recognise and support staff participation in community organisations and encourage staff to make their skills available to the community.
5. Increase the participation of the Division's researchers in project research addressing issues that advance the public good.

## **Goal 4: Internationalisation**

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*To internationalise the Division in a manner consistent with the goals of the University of Otago.*

### **Strategic Objectives**

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1. Enhance the internationalisation of the curriculum.
2. Increase recruitment and enhance the experience of international students, particularly at postgraduate level.
3. Increase and strengthen strategic alliances with international education providers.
4. Increase and strengthen international networks and research collaborations.
5. Foster links with Matariki Network partner institutions.
6. Maintain and enhance links with relevant institutions in the Pacific.
7. Increase the mobility of research students within international networks.
8. Increase the proportion of University of Otago staff and students competent in other languages.

### **Strategies**

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1. Encourage and support applications for grants for the internationalisation of the curriculum, travel and benchmarking.
2. Develop and strengthen programmes that foster knowledge and understanding of the international environment.
3. Increase the number of Humanities students studying abroad as exchange students.
4. Develop programmes attractive to international students, such as conjoint degrees, one-year taught Masters and summer field schools.
5. Develop and maintain formal relationships with quality institutions overseas that will result in staff research and teaching collaboration and interchange.
6. Benchmark against best practice universities and international enterprises to enhance performance.
7. Increase student and staff awareness of the relevance and importance of additional languages to their academic and career aspirations, through course advising, targeted publicity, school liaison, and staff career development.

## Goal 5: Student Support

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*To provide a scholarly and supportive environment for Humanities students to enable them to achieve their academic goals.*

### Strategic Objectives

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1. Improve the quality and availability of advice from staff to students.
2. Maintain and improve the provision of resources and administrative support to meet the needs of postgraduate students.
3. Increase support for the recruitment, retention, and progression of Māori and Pacific Islands students.
4. Increase awareness of special needs of international students.
5. Enhance student involvement in the development of Divisional initiatives and practices.
6. Enhance the progress, engagement and retention of students.

### Strategies

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1. Ensure reasonable accessibility of staff to students and provide quality face-to-face advice.
  2. Review the current system of course advising to ensure best practices are adopted.
  3. Ensure that all research-only postgraduate students are provided with appropriate space and equipment.
  4. Maintain and enhance the networks of support for Māori and Pacific Islands students in Humanities.
  5. Ensure the effective operation of the class rep system, in consultation with OUSA.
  6. Ensure appropriate opportunities for student representation on divisional boards and groups.
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## Goal 6: Māori Development

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*In keeping with the University of Otago's Māori Strategic Framework, the Division of Humanities seeks to*

- *deepen the University's commitment to achieving equitable Māori participation and success rates in tertiary education;*
- *champion an environment in which scholarship and partnership will flourish to advance Māori development aspirations; and*
- *embed mātauranga Māori within the University's core functions.*

### Strategic Objectives

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1. To demonstrate visible and proactive leadership at all levels in the Division to contribute to Māori development.
2. To meet the Division's ongoing obligations to the University's Māori Treaty partner
3. Foster and promote research that is transformative and beneficial for Māori communities, including research that increases understanding of te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori, and supports the division's commitment to excellence in research.
4. Increase the recruitment, retention and achievements of Māori staff and students in the Division.
5. To create and enhance exemplary learning and teaching environments which allow staff and students to engage capably with te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori across the Division.
6. Promote and support te reo Māori and tikanga Māori (Māori language and cultural practices) amongst all staff and students across the Division.

### Strategies

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1. Encourage and support Heads of Departments to engage with Māori Strategic Framework goals.
2. Provide training and support to departmental kaiāwhina.
3. Build and promote relationships between Ngāi Tahu, and all Māori, with departments, centres and research groups within the Division.
4. Profile and support existing post-graduate research and encourage new research amongst Māori students.
5. Create and support opportunities for research in te reo Māori.
6. Provide opportunities for all staff and post-graduate students to engage in discussions about kaupapa Māori research and mātauranga Māori research and to profile examples of this research within the Division.
7. Support Māori staff in attaining higher qualifications.
8. Further develop systems to monitor and report on Māori student retention and achievement.
9. Appoint suitably qualified Māori academic staff to new positions in key departments and look for innovative ways to "grow our own" if the likelihood of appointing qualified staff is difficult.
10. To identify existing expertise and encourage curriculum collaboration.
11. To develop the capacity for all staff to integrate te Ao Māori, te reo Māori and mātauranga Māori into existing teaching and research, as appropriate, including to proactively look for opportunities to include an appropriate level of Māori and New Zealand content in new papers and in the revision of current papers
12. For all departments, centres and research groupings in the Division to have a Māori name and bilingual signage.
13. To encourage more staff to engage in te reo and tikanga learning on campus.
14. For the Divisional staff to lead by example with a commitment to te reo and tikanga Māori.

## Goal 7: Pacific Development

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*To increase Pacific students' participation and achievement in academic and professional programmes offered by the Division of Humanities, to advance knowledge of Pacific cultures and issues confronting Pacific peoples and strengthen relationships with national and regional partners.*

### Strategic Objectives

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1. Increase the number of Pacific students enrolling and completing qualifications offered by the Division.
2. Develop and support Pacific teaching and learning activities and environments in the Division
3. Include Pacific topics and issues in the curricula of academic and professional programmes offered in the Division
4. Increase the number of Pacific staff in the Division.
5. Support Pacific staff in the attainment of higher qualifications.
6. Increase the number of research projects being undertaken with a Pacific focus.
7. Encourage staff in the humanities to engage with Pacific communities

### Strategies

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1. Increase the number of Pacific students in all Humanities majors.
2. Ensure that Schools and Departments are regularly updated about the recruitment and retention of Pacific students.
3. Engage with the Māori and Pacific Islands Advisory Board, Office of Pacific Development and Pacific Academic Staff Caucus to develop effective actions for achieving the strategic objectives relating to Pacific peoples.
4. Continue to work with the Pacific Islands Students' Centre to implement policy.
5. Develop the relationships between the Division and the National University of Samoa, the University of the South Pacific, and the theological colleges in Samoa and Fiji.
6. Promote academic interchange between academic staff in the Division and staff in NUS and USP for teaching and research purposes.
7. Actively seek research collaboration with regional and international development partners
8. Foster postgraduate and staff research in issues relating to Pacific cultures, issues and development.
9. Explore relationships and opportunities of mutual benefit with Pacific alumni groups and the Division.



## Goal 8: Staff Support

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*To provide all staff with appropriate support to enable them to achieve the objectives of the University and Division, and to develop professionally to their fullest potential.*

### Strategic Objectives

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1. Actively assist staff to achieve their research and teaching objectives with resources, guidance, and clarity of expectations.
2. Foster a stimulating academic environment that promotes intellectual enquiry and dialogue, and innovation in teaching.
3. Recognise and reward excellent performance.
4. Provide opportunities for staff participation in Divisional and Departmental policy formation and decision-making.
5. Maintain full and open communication between management and staff throughout the Division
6. Provide opportunities for the professional development for all staff.

### Strategies

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1. Implement the Division's workload policy to rectify anomalous workloads.
2. Ensure that each department maintains an annual plan to provide support for attendance at appropriate academic conferences on an equitable basis.
3. Ensure that each department develops and maintains a 3-to-5-year forward plan for Research and Study Leave, to enable staff to take RSL leave on an equitable basis, within the constraints of available resources.
4. Maintain a strategic initiatives fund at Divisional level to support initiatives relating to research and teaching that cannot be funded from any other regular sources.
5. Maintain within each Department regular fora to enable staff to be consulted on issues of Department-wide importance.

## Goal 9: Management

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*To ensure that the human, financial and physical resources are managed fairly, openly, effectively and efficiently with the Division.*

### Strategic Objectives

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1. Maintain a close relationship between income and costs, while recognising a need to cross-subsidise programmes that are agreed to be strategically important.
2. Ensure that the Divisional structure provides the maximum efficiency in the use of financial and human resources and is responsive to the needs of staff.
3. Provide adequate physical and space resources to support the effective functioning of Departments and programmes.
4. Maintain transparency of information to Departments as to the nature and rationale for budgetary decisions.

### Strategies

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1. Provide full statistical data on income, costs, enrolments, and staff/student ratios to Departments and staff on a regular basis.
2. Obtain Division-wide agreement on strategic priorities, especially where these require cross-subsidization.
3. Eliminate any structures or processes within the Division that do not add value, or involve double-handling.
4. Continue to lobby the University administration for appropriate space to accommodate the needs of the Division.
5. Increase the level of transparency in the financial planning throughout the Division
6. Maintain accountability systems and processes to ensure cost-effective use of the Division's resources.