



# University of Waikato

## 2025 Pastoral Care Code

### Attestation Report

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Executive Sponsor | Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic     |
| Owner             | Director, Campus Life               |
| Report            | 2025 Pastoral Care Code Attestation |
| Date              | July 2026                           |
| Reporting period  | 1 January – 31 December 2025        |

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## Declaration

This report has been prepared in accordance with Universities New Zealand (UNZ) guidelines and provides an assessment of the University of Waikato's compliance with the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 (the Code). It demonstrates the University's ongoing commitment to fostering a supportive, inclusive, and student-centered learning environment.

Since the introduction of the Code, the University has undertaken a range of reviews, self-assessments, audits, and external evaluations. These activities have consistently demonstrated strong alignment with the Code while identifying opportunities for ongoing enhancement and continuous improvement.

The 2025 attestation process, completed in the first half of 2026, focused on initiatives undertaken and completed during 2025, alongside projects continuing into 2026. The assessment draws on operational data, internal reviews, student feedback and engagement activities, complaints and critical incident reporting, student survey findings, and institutional self-assessment processes. Together, these sources provide an evidence base for evaluating effectiveness, identifying areas for improvement, and informing future enhancements to learner support and wellbeing.

This report has been informed by consultation with relevant University stakeholders and the Waikato Students' Union (WSU). The University of Waikato is confident that it meets the expectations and requirements of the Code and remains committed to further strengthening learner support, wellbeing, and engagement through a programme of continuous improvement.

## Preamble

The University of Waikato is a comprehensive university with two main campuses in Aotearoa New Zealand, located in Hamilton and Tauranga.

The University recognises that supporting students is a shared responsibility across the University community, with academic staff contributing through learning and teaching environments and professional staff through the delivery of support services and programmes. As a result, pastoral care is embedded through a whole-of-university approach that integrates student wellbeing, safety, engagement, inclusion, and support across institutional policies, teaching and learning practices, student services, accommodation, and governance processes.

This approach is grounded in the University's strategic vision, Kia Haere Whakamua, and operationalised through the Waikato He Wai Māu: Academic Excellence and Student Success Plan. Together, these frameworks provide the foundation for an inclusive and supportive learning environment that promotes student success, wellbeing, belonging, and achievement. The Director of Campus Life holds primary accountability for the University's ongoing implementation of the Code.

## Introduction

The University has undertaken a series of Code-related assessments since 2021, including:

- 2021 Code Gap Analysis (all outcomes)
- 2022 Attestation Report (all outcomes)
- 2023 Self-Review (Outcomes 5–7: student accommodation)
- 2023 Site Visit (NZQA/Universities NZ, Outcomes 5–7)
- 2023 Attestation Report (all outcomes)
- 2024 Document Audit (Outcomes 8–12: international students)
- 2024 Self-Review (Outcomes 1–4)
- 2025 Attestation Report (current document)

This report includes the University's annual Complaints and Critical Incident report for 2025, satisfying Code Outcome 1, Process 4, Clause 10(3)(g) and Code Outcome 2, Process 2, Clause 13(e) and (f). The 2025 complaints and critical incidents reports are published on the University website.

Collectively, these assessments, together with outcomes from the Academic Audit Cycle 6 outcomes, student voice mechanisms, and internal self-review processes, provide assurance that the University remains compliant with the Code and continues to identify opportunities for improvement in learner wellbeing, safety, engagement and support.

### Student Profile

In the 2025 academic year, the University enrolled 16,493 students, representing 13,095 equivalent full-time students (EFTS). This included 9,388 domestic EFTS (72%) and 3,707 international EFTS (28%), comprising 2,745 onshore and 962 offshore students.

Key demographics for the total number of students are set out below.

Table 1: Key Student Demographics 2025

| Gender         | Headcount | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Female         | 9,898     | 60%        |
| Male           | 6,507     | 39%        |
| Gender diverse | 88        | 1%         |
| Total          | 16,493    |            |

| Ethnicity         | Headcount | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Pākehā / European | 5,123     | 31%        |
| NZ Māori          | 2,975     | 18%        |
| Chinese           | 2,579     | 16%        |
| Indian            | 1,688     | 10%        |
| Pacific Islander  | 891       | 5%         |
| Other             | 3,237     | 20%        |
| Total             | 16,493    |            |

These demographic characteristics inform the design of support services, learner engagement initiatives, and pastoral care activities across the University. It is noteworthy that, within the University's domestic student population, one in four domestic full-time equivalent students identify as Māori (25%), while approximately one in ten identify as Pacific (9.6%). These proportions are among the highest levels of Māori and Pacific enrolment within the New Zealand university sector.

## Student Support Services

Student pastoral care at the University is delivered through an integrated model that spans academic faculties and specialist on-campus services, with a clear focus on supporting both academic success and personal wellbeing. Dedicated academic support is provided through faculties and central student support hubs. Student support services are funded through the Student Services Fee and administered in collaboration with the Waikato Students Union (Figure 1). An overview of the University student support services is detailed in Appendix 1.

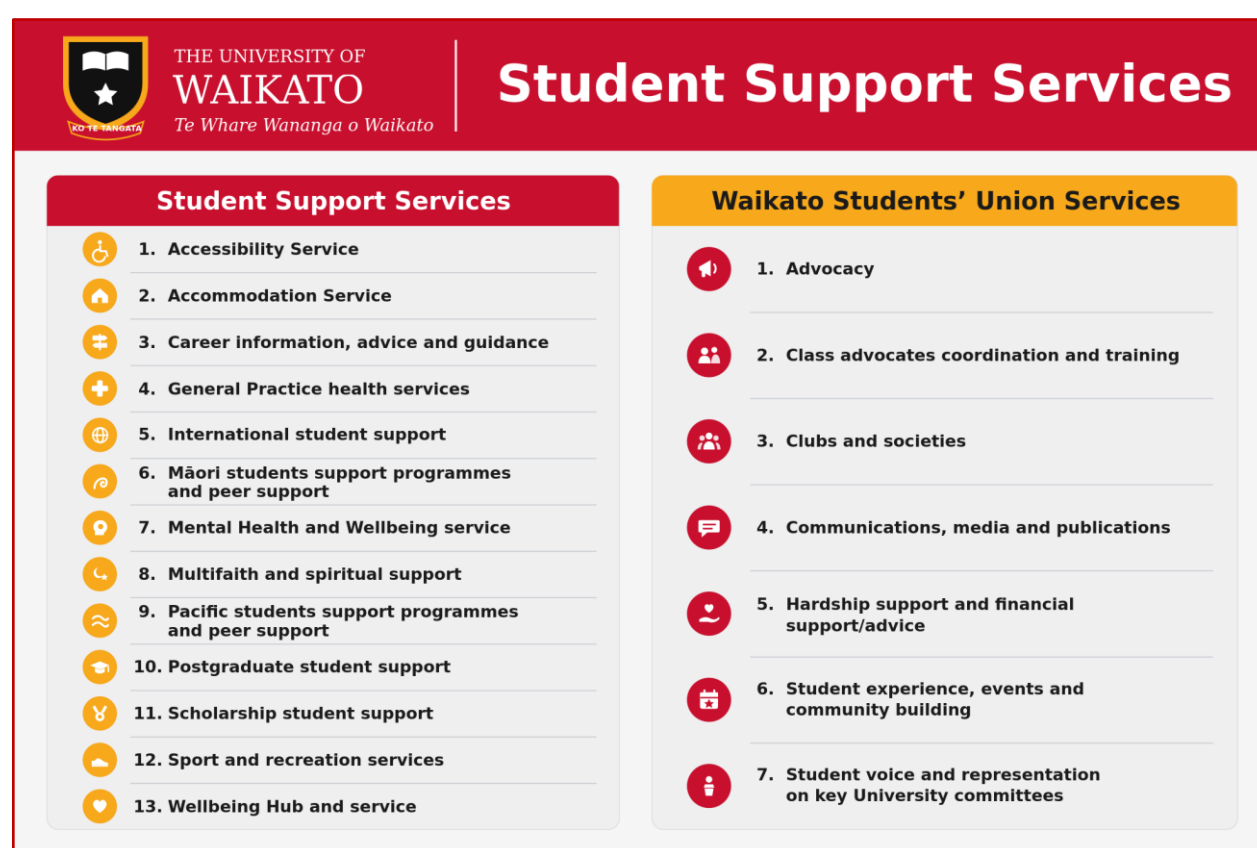


Figure 1. Student Support Services delivered by the University of Waikato and the Waikato Students' Union

## University and Waikato Students' Union Partnership

The University and the Waikato Students' Union maintain a strong and collaborative partnership. Oversight of the Student Services Fee is provided through the Student Services Governance Committee, which comprises four University representatives (including the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, and the Director of Campus Life) and four senior Waikato Students' Union representatives (including the President of the WSU and the General Manager).

The Waikato Students' Union plays an important role in supporting the student experience by providing independent advocacy and support services for students. It also facilitates student

participation in University decision-making processes. This partnership helps ensure that student perspectives inform institutional planning, policies, and service delivery.

## Equity and Inclusion

The University of Waikato has a number of strategic initiatives aimed at achieving equitable outcomes for learners, particularly for Māori, Pacific, disabled, and other under-represented student groups.

### *Māori and Pacific Learner Success*

The University has invested in data-informed and learner-centered approaches to better understand and address disparities in educational outcomes. A key report, [\*Weaving the Mat of Māori and Pacific Learner Success\*](#) (Ako Aotearoa, 2022), combined learner analytics, research, and student voice to develop targeted support initiatives for Māori and Pacific students (Fig. 2). This work led to dedicated first-year programmes such as [\*Te Kāhui Pīrere\*](#) for Māori students (Fig. 3) and the [\*Imua Learner Leader Initiative\*](#) for Pacific students (Fig. 4), with a focus on culturally responsive teaching, strong relationships, and learner success. The University's [\*Pacific Strategic Plan 2021–2025\*](#) provides an institution-wide framework for improving Pacific student outcomes.

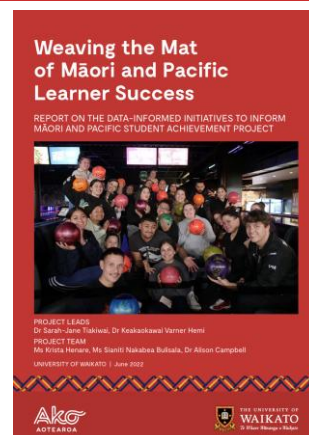


Figure 2. Weaving the Mat Project Report



### Te Kāhui Pīrere programme for first year Māori students

We've created a programme that will help you in your first year. We'll help you understand your degree, how to prepare for University, even receive budgeting advice at the end of the year for those who are flatting.

Māori Ki Waikato Facebook

Figure 3. Te Kāhui Pīrere Programme

### Imua Initiative



#### Leadership and success in the first year of study

In many Pacific languages, the word *mua* is associated with leading or moving forward.

The Imua Initiative draws on cultural legacies of learning excellence and leadership, provides wraparound manaakitanga for Pacific students, builds crucial academic and digital skills for university study, and introduces students to our Waikato Pacific family.

Students who complete this programme get a headstart on preparation, have a high pass rate and get better grades in their courses. Students leave the programme as learner-leaders. The programme is free of charge to all Pacific first year students.

Figure 4. Imua Initiative

## Disability Action Plan

The [Disability Action Plan 2023–2025](#) aims to improve participation, access, and achievement for disabled learners by committing to five objectives (Fig. 5). Developed through extensive consultation with staff and students, the plan outlines actions to foster an inclusive, safe, and welcoming university environment, enhance physical and digital accessibility, strengthen inclusive teaching and learning practices, and increase opportunities for disabled learners to engage fully in university life. It reflects the University's commitment to promoting equity, inclusion, and success for all learners.

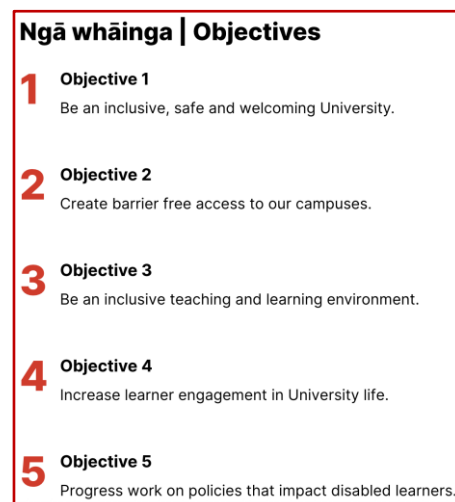


Figure 5. DAP objectives

## Part One – Assessment of Compliance

### Overall Assessment

The University of Waikato demonstrates strong alignment with both the intent and requirements of the Code. Ongoing monitoring, review, and self-assessment activities indicate that systems supporting learner wellbeing, safety, engagement, and success are well established and operating effectively. Learners are supported through a comprehensive range of academic, wellbeing, accessibility, health, and support services underpinned by governance oversight, institutional policies, and collaborative partnerships across the University community.

During 2025, the University continued to strengthen its approach to pastoral care through a programme of continuous improvement informed by student feedback, operational data, self-review activities, and external assurance processes. Significant developments included completion of the development of the Service Excellence Framework (SEF) through the Student Support Programme (Fig. 6). Informed by extensive engagement with 126 students and 100 staff, the SEF establishes a cohesive, university-wide model for delivering consistent, equitable, and student-centered support. The Framework provides a foundation for ongoing improvements to the student experience and will be implemented over several years, with a focus on digital enablement, proactive student support, student experience and engagement, and continuous improvement.

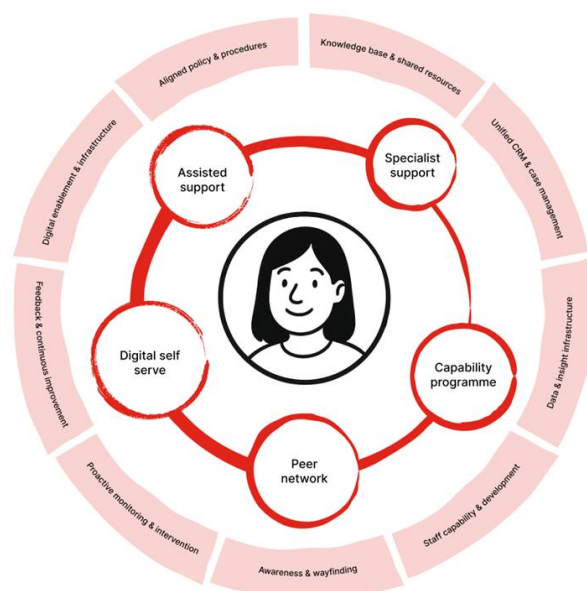


Figure 6. Student Excellence Framework

Also, during 2025, the University undertook a comprehensive review of its student mental health and wellbeing services. The resulting review report was submitted to the University Council's Health, Safety, Risk and Audit Committee and will help inform future planning and enhancements to student wellbeing support.

### **Strengths**

- A whole-of-university approach to learner wellbeing and pastoral care that integrates academic, wellbeing, accessibility, engagement, and support services.
- A comprehensive range of services and programmes that support learner safety, wellbeing, belonging, and engagement, and academic success.
- Established processes for monitoring learner needs and identifying opportunities to enhance support through student feedback, operational reporting, self-review, and service evaluation activities.
- A strong and collaborative partnership between the University and the Waikato Students' Union (WSU), supporting student advocacy, representation, engagement, and success.
- Dedicated teams, programmes, and initiatives focused on enhancing the success, retention, wellbeing, and sense of belonging of Māori and Pacific learners.
- A deep commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Māori advancement, and meaningful partnerships with iwi, which continue to shape the University's strategic direction and contribute to a culturally responsive and inclusive learning environment.

### **Areas Continuing to Mature**

- Ongoing enhancement of accessible and inclusive support services for diverse learner groups.
- Further development of coordinated approaches to supporting learners who may be at risk of disengagement from study.
- Strengthening mechanisms for closing the student feedback loop and communicating actions taken in response to learner feedback.
- Continued development of systems and reporting capability to support data-driven decision making and service improvement.

### **Actions Underway**

- Develop a Fitness to Study Policy and supporting procedures to provide a clear and consistent framework for responding to situations where personal circumstances may significantly affect a student's ability to engage safely and effectively in study.
- Review and enhancement of student disciplinary regulations and procedures, with a focus on clear, fair, and educationally focused processes.
- Further development of student engagement and partnership approaches through ongoing collaboration with the Waikato Students' Union.
- Implementation of recommendations arising from recent reviews of student support, accessibility, and wellbeing services.

## Evidence Base

Beyond the reporting obligations of the Code and the UNZ/CUSPaC verification processes, the University's continuous improvement approach is informed by Academic Audit Cycle 6, internal self-review processes, operational performance data, student feedback and engagement mechanisms, complaints and critical incident reporting, and collaboration across student-facing services. Collectively, these sources provide assurance regarding compliance with the Code while also supporting evaluation of service effectiveness and identification of opportunities for improvement.

## Measuring Effectiveness

Effectiveness is assessed using a range of quantitative and qualitative evidence sources that together provide insight into both the student experience and service performance. These include the Student Barometer Survey (for domestic and international students) and New Student Survey, teaching and paper evaluations, service utilisation and performance measures, indicators of equity and access indicators, student feedback and complaints, and information derived from operational reporting and case management systems.

Findings from these sources are considered as part of ongoing service evaluation and continuous improvement processes to ensure support services remain responsive to learner needs and aligned with the expectations of the Code.

## Part Two – Gaps Identified

The following table summarises areas identified through previous Code reporting, self-review activities, and institutional assurance processes as requiring ongoing development. Progress against each area is monitored annually as part of the University's continuous improvement approach to maintaining compliance with the Code.

Table 2: Gap Progress

| Outcome, Process, Clause | Gap / Action                                                                                                                                                                         | 2025 Update                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 01: 10(1)                | <b>Gap:</b> A Fitness to Study Policy and supporting procedures are not in place.<br><br><b>Action:</b> Develop a Fitness to Study Policy and supporting procedures.                 | <b>In Progress.</b> Consultation and drafting commenced in 2025. The proposed policy will provide a consistent and supportive framework for managing situations where personal circumstances significantly affect a student's ability to engage safely and effectively in study. Formal consultation and approval processes are scheduled for 2026.                                       |
| 01: 10(1) & (2)(e)       | <b>Gap:</b> Student disciplinary regulations and procedures required review and refinement.<br><br><b>Action:</b> Review and update student disciplinary regulations and procedures. | <b>In Progress.</b> A review of the University's student disciplinary regulations commenced in 2025. As part of this review, trial process changes were implemented to support a greater emphasis on educational, restorative, and proportionate responses to student misconduct. Draft amendments to the regulations and associated processes will be prepared for consultation in 2026. |

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 02: 12(a)–(e)   | <p><b>Gap:</b> Student consultation and partnership mechanisms require further development.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Strengthen institutional approaches to student partnership and engagement.</p>                             | <p><b>In Progress.</b> The WSU developed a draft Student Engagement Framework in late 2025. During 2026, the University will review the draft Framework and align this with the Service Excellence Framework, alongside any relevant policy considerations.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 03: 18(b)       | <p><b>Gap:</b> Campus accessibility audit</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Commission an independent campus accessibility audit.</p>                                                                                                    | <p><b>In Progress</b> — preparation stage complete. During 2025, the Disability Action Plan Steering Group defined the scope, methodology, and expected deliverables for an independent audit. Consultant-led audit activities will commence in 2026, with outputs to include a campus-wide accessibility map, comprehensive report, and opportunity register.</p>                                                                             |
| 01: 4, 10(3)(g) | <p><b>Gap:</b> Critical incidents data is not disaggregated by diverse learner groups.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Develop capacity to disaggregate critical incident data by diverse learner group.</p>                           | <p><b>In Progress.</b> Work is underway to improve the collection and reporting of learner demographic and information associated with critical incidents. This will strengthen the University’s ability to identify patterns, understand impacts on diverse learner groups, and inform future wellbeing and risk-management initiatives.</p>                                                                                                  |
| 02: 13(f)(ii)   | <p><b>Gap:</b> The requirement to report on students’ experiences of the complaints process is not currently being fulfilled.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Implement reporting on student experience of the complaints process.</p> | <p><b>In Progress.</b> The University has an established process for collecting learner satisfaction feedback; however, student participation is currently very low, with typically only 0–3 responses received each year. A review will consider opportunities to improve learner participation and ensure that feedback regarding complaint resolution can be used to inform service improvements and strengthen the learner experience.</p> |

The University considers these gaps to be opportunities for further enhancement rather than indicators of non-compliance. Progress against each action will continue to be monitored through established governance and assurance processes.

## Part Three – Complaints and Critical Incident Reports

This section satisfies the reporting requirements of Code Outcome 1, Process 4, Clause 10(3)(g) and Code Outcome 2, Process 2, Clause 13(e) and (f). All complaints data relates to the period 1 January to 31 December 2025.

Student complaints and critical incident information are reviewed through the University's established governance and assurance processes. The Student Complaints Report and the Student Critical Incidents Report were considered by the University Council Health, Safety, Risk, and Audit Committee to support ongoing monitoring of learner wellbeing, safety, and institutional performance against the Code.

### Student Complaints

Student service complaints are received via the University's student complaints online portal: [Make a complaint: University of Waikato](#).

The portal encourages students to consider a range of resolution options before submitting a formal complaint. This approach is intended to assess whether concerns can be resolved at a local level, where appropriate, prior to formalisation, depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint.

All complaints received through the MyComplaints system are triaged and tracked by designated staff based in the Complaints team. Complaints can also be assigned to a single delegated authority for decision making in accordance with the relevant University regulations.

The student complaints detailed below are divided into two groupings, as the online portal separates the complaints into the following categories: General Complaints and Student Misconduct Complaints.

Table 3 shows that the University received a total of 74 general complaints from students including 46 academic-related complaints, 1 facilities complaint and 27 staff complaints.

Of the 74 complaints received in total, 11 were withdrawn. The remaining 63 complaints were investigated, of which 53 were resolved during the year and 10 remained ongoing at year end, including several complaints received in December.

Table 3: General Student Complaints 2025

| General Complaint Type | No.       | Incorrect complaint or withdrawn | Investigated | Resolved  | Ongoing   |
|------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| Academic - course      | 6         | 1                                | 5            | 3         | 2         |
| Academic - enrolment   | 6         | 0                                | 6            | 4         | 2         |
| Academic - processes   | 32        | 3                                | 29           | 26        | 3         |
| Academic – integrity   | 2         | 0                                | 2            | 2         | 0         |
| Facilities             | 1         | 0                                | 1            | 1         | 0         |
| Staff                  | 27        | 7                                | 20           | 17        | 3         |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>74</b> | <b>11</b>                        | <b>63</b>    | <b>53</b> | <b>10</b> |

Table 4 shows that the University received 7 complaints of alleged misconduct from students about other students. The complaints were processed utilising the University's student discipline process.

Of the 7 complaints: 0 were withdrawn and the remaining 7 complaints investigated, of which all 7 were resolved.

Table 4: Behavioural Student Complaints 2025

| <b>Student Misconduct Complaint Type</b> | <b>No.</b> | <b>Incorrect complaint or withdrawn</b> | <b>Investigated</b> | <b>Resolved</b> | <b>Ongoing</b> |
|------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Student behaviour                        | 7          | 0                                       | 7                   | 7               | 0              |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>7</b>   | <b>0</b>                                | <b>7</b>            | <b>7</b>        | <b>0</b>       |

Academic-related matters continued to account for the majority of student complaints in 2025, particularly complaints relating to academic processes. Complaint themes are reviewed by relevant University areas and contribute to ongoing service improvement, policy review, and process enhancement activities. The University's complaints process provides an important mechanism for identifying areas requiring attention while also supporting transparency, procedural fairness, and continuous improvement.

## Student Critical Incidents

In accordance with the criteria set in 2023 by NZQA and the Committee on University Student Pastoral Care (CUSPaC) the definition of a 'critical incident' encompasses three primary situations:

- A student death that occurs on campus including in student accommodation.
- A student death that occurs off campus and involves a 'learner at risk'. A student is defined as a learner at risk when the university has reasonable grounds to believe that the student was dealing with serious issues relating to their health, safety, and/or wellbeing.
- An occurrence of serious physical and/or mental harm to a student(s) occurred and either:
  - planning to manage/mitigate the event/incident risk was inadequate and/or an event/mitigation plan was not followed.
  - or an external review/investigation was undertaken.

Table 5 (following page) shows that no critical incidents were reported in 2025.

Table 5: Student Critical Incidents 2025

| Critical Incident Type                                                                                                                                                                                           | 2025 Total reports | Incident closed | Open or under investigation | Domestic student | International student |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Student death on campus                                                                                                                                                                                          | 0                  | 0               | 0                           | 0                | 0                     |
| Student death off campus of a 'learner at risk'. <sup>a</sup>                                                                                                                                                    | 0                  | 0               | 0                           | 0                | 0                     |
| Serious harm (physical or mental) to a student and either:<br>- planning to manage/mitigate the event/risk was inadequate or a plan was not followed, or.<br>- an external review/investigation was carried out. | 0                  | 0               | 0                           | 0                | 0                     |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>0</b>           | <b>0</b>        | <b>0</b>                    | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b>              |

While a range of learner wellbeing, health, safety, and support matters were managed through routine operational processes during 2025, none met the NZQA/CUSPaC definition of a reportable critical incident. The University continues to monitor student wellbeing and risk through established support, health, safety, and pastoral care processes and maintains procedures for the identification, escalation, management, and review of serious incidents where required.

Complaints and critical incident reporting form part of the University's broader assurance framework for pastoral care and learner wellbeing. Information arising from these processes contributes to service reviews, policy development, staff training, and continuous improvement initiatives aimed at enhancing the student experience and maintain compliance with the Code.

## Part Four – Highlights and Good Practice Examples

The following examples demonstrate how the University continued to strengthen learner wellbeing safety, inclusion, engagement, and success during 2025. The initiatives illustrate both established areas of good practice and activities undertaken as part of the University's ongoing programme of continuous improvement in support of the Code.

Table 6: 2025 Pastoral Care Highlights and Good Practice

| Initiative                          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Contribution to Learner Wellbeing and Success                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Service Excellence Framework</b> | Developed through the Student Support Programme with engagement from 126 students and 100 staff, the Service Excellence Framework establishes a university-wide model for consistent, equitable, student-centred support delivery. Implementation will focus on digital enablement, student experience and engagement, proactive and preventative student support and continuous improvement. | Provides a clear institutional framework for improving the consistency, accessibility and coordination of student support services. This supports the Code by strengthening the University's ability to respond to learner needs in a systematic and evidence-informed way. |

|                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Support Coordination and Learner Success Programme</b> | During 2025, the University reviewed the existing Ōritetanga Learner Success project and planned the transition to centrally managed Support Coordination. In 2025, the Support Coordination team sent emails to 10,425 students, received emails from 5,514 students, logged 163 phone calls and undertook 1,414 student support tasks. | Strengthens early identification and coordinated support for students who may be at risk of disengagement. This contributes directly to pastoral care by providing more proactive, consistent and outcomes-focused support for learners                                                                       |
| <b>Review of Mental Health and Wellbeing Services</b>     | A comprehensive independent review was completed in the second half of 2025, with findings presented to the Health, Safety, Risk and Audit Committee. The review made 12 recommendations that will be implemented in 2026.                                                                                                               | Provides assurance that wellbeing services are being reviewed and improved through appropriate governance processes. The recommendations create a clear basis for strengthening support for learner wellbeing and safety.                                                                                     |
| <b>New Māori-focused Academic Offerings</b>               | Four new Māori-focused academic offerings were introduced in 2025: Te Ara Poutama Toitū (Māori-medium undergraduate teaching qualification), a Major in Kaupapa Māori Psychology, a Postgraduate Certificate in Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Analytics, and a Bachelor of Teaching (Māori Medium).                                    | Expands opportunities for Māori learners to engage in programmes grounded in mātauranga Māori, kaupapa Māori approaches and Indigenous knowledge. These offerings support learner belonging, cultural affirmation and educational pathways that reflect the aspirations of Māori learners and communities.    |
| <b>Expanded Māori Student Support</b>                     | Kaupapa Māori support and expertise were embedded within the Psychology and Environmental Planning programmes alongside the established Te Kāhui Pīrere programme, strengthening culturally responsive support for Māori students.                                                                                                       | Strengthens access to culturally responsive pastoral and academic support for Māori learners within discipline areas. This contributes to learner belonging, engagement, and success by ensuring support is available in ways that reflect Māori values, perspectives and lived experience.                   |
| <b>Te reo Māori and Tikanga Staff Development</b>         | Five-point te reo Māori and tikanga Māori papers were developed and trialed with two cohorts of staff to enhance staff cultural capability and confidence in Te Ao Māori. The initiative will continue in 2026.                                                                                                                          | Enhances staff capability to provide culturally responsive support and interactions with learners. By building understanding of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and Te Ao Māori, the initiative supports an environment in which Māori learners can experience greater belonging, cultural safety and engagement. |

|                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Pacific Student Support and Family Engagement</b>                    | The Challenge the Horizon programme supported Pacific graduate and postgraduate students with a strong focus on family engagement. Alongside Imua for first-year Pacific students.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Supports Pacific learner wellbeing, transition and success through culturally responsive support models that recognize the importance of family, community and belonging.                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Accessibility Service Review and Service Improvement Initiatives</b> | The Accessibility Service completed a comprehensive review in mid-2025 and implemented a range of service improvements including website enhancements, improved booking system, assistive technology catalogue in Alma, and a Jamworks note-taking license. In addition, 198 Study Support Plans were developed and integrated into the MyWaikato, with further work undertaken to transition these into Reasonable Adjustment Plans in 2026. | Improves equitable access to learning and university life for disabled learners. The review and service improvements strengthen the University's ability to provide timely, consistent and appropriate support for students with accessibility needs.                                       |
| <b>Adapted Play Programme and Inclusive Recreation</b>                  | UniRec expanded opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in physical activity through specialised exercise programmes, a trial Adapted Play programme, and wheelchair basketball. A total of 20 students participated across these initiatives.                                                                                                                                                                            | Throughout the year, the UniRec team expanded opportunities for students with disabilities to engage in physical activity through specialised exercise programmes, a trial Adapted Play programme, and wheelchair basketball. A total of 20 students participated across these initiatives. |
| <b>International Student Transition and Support</b>                     | Pre-arrival webinars were reviewed and expanded in 2025 with more than 50 webinars provided for approximately 1000 students. Several divisions also established dedicated international student support roles, including a pastoral care programme in the School of Engineering.                                                                                                                                                              | Strengthens transition support for international students by providing timely information, connection and guidance before and after arrival. This supports wellbeing, belonging, informed decision making and early access to assistance.                                                   |
| <b>Waikato Students' Union Advocacy Service</b>                         | The WSU Advocacy Service dealt with 379 student cases in 2025. This consisted of 157 cases of academic-related issues and 222 cases of personal/non-academic issues. This was an increase from 208 cases in 2024.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Provides students with access to independent advocacy and support, helping them navigate academic, personal, and procedural matters. Increased use of the service demonstrates the importance of visible and accessible advocacy pathways for students.                                     |

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Waikato Students' Union Hardship Support</b> | The Waikato Students' Union expanded its Kai Cupboard, Food Parcel, and Hardship Grant resources in response to increased student demand. The equivalent of 50 food parcels were distributed – a mixture of food and vouchers. A total of 86 students received financial aid, with cash grants generally averaging between \$200 - \$500. | Responds to financial hardship as a barrier to wellbeing, participation and engagement. This supports the Code's focus on learner wellbeing by ensuring practical assistance is available when students experience acute need.                  |
| <b>Staff Pastoral Care Induction</b>            | The Pastoral Care Code training module was reviewed, updated, and embedded in the University's Essential Learning programme and new staff induction process.                                                                                                                                                                              | Builds staff awareness of Code responsibilities and supports more consistent pastoral care practice across the University. This strengthens institutional capability and helps ensure learner support is understood as a shared responsibility. |

## Part Five: Attestation

The University of Waikato confirms that it meets the intent and requirements of the Pastoral Care Code of Practice. This attestation is supported by governance oversight, internal assurance processes, and ongoing monitoring of student outcomes and service effectiveness.

Formal endorsement is provided by the Waikato Students' Union and the University Council's Health & Safety, Risk and Assurance Committee.

## Appendix 1: Academic and Pastoral Care Support Services

Student pastoral care is integrated across academic and specialist support services throughout the University. A high-level overview of specialist support services is provided below.

| Service Area                  | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Academic Support Services     | Dedicated academic support is provided through faculties, central student support hubs on the Hamilton and Tauranga campuses, and specialist learning support and resources.                                                                                                                                             |
| Student Health Services       | In Hamilton, the Student Health Service provides a multidisciplinary team including doctors, nurses, counsellors, mental health nurses, and psychologists. In Tauranga, a dedicated Student Health Nurse provides direct support and referral pathways to community health providers.                                    |
| Wellbeing Support             | The University provides wellbeing workshops, seminars, webinars, and an online mental health and wellbeing portal. The Wellbeing Hub on the Hamilton campus provides a welcoming environment where students can connect and access support.                                                                              |
| Accessibility Services        | The Accessibility Services team supports students with long-term, temporary, and short-term impairments — including sensory, physical, specific learning, neurodivergent, mental health, and temporary conditions — to ensure equitable access to learning and university life.                                          |
| Māori Student Support         | Te Pūoho Hubs serve as key points of contact for Māori students, supported by Whītiki Tauira peer leaders. Te Kāhui Pirere supports first-year Māori students. Te Āhurutanga develops Māori student leaders. Te Toi o Matariki and MAI ki Waikato support Māori postgraduate students.                                   |
| Pacific Student Support       | Dedicated Pacific student services include Imua (first-year transition), Challenge the Horizon (graduate and postgraduate support), study groups, academic support, mentoring, and programme planning assistance. The Conch on the Hamilton campus provides a dedicated Pacific student space.                           |
| International Student Support | The International Student Services Office provides pre-arrival information, airport reception, orientation, academic guidance, immigration and visa support, and English language support services. Pre-arrival webinars and dedicated divisional IS roles further strengthen this provision.                            |
| Waikato Students' Union       | The WSU provides independent student support and advocacy, student voice engagement, hardship support (Kai Cupboard, Food Parcels, Hardship Grants), academic integrity support, class rep training, and tenancy advice. The WSU Hamilton building includes social, cooking, and study spaces, and a Muslim prayer room. |

## Appendix 2: Waikato Student Union Statement of Confirmation



Statement of Confirmation.

Te Awa Kōtui Waikato Students' Union has reviewed and provided input into the University of Waikato 2025 Attestation for The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 document.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'David West', is written over a faint circular stamp.

David West,  
WSU General Manager

Date:

22nd July 2026