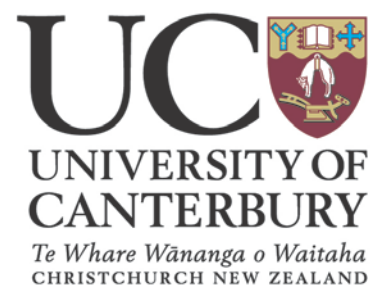


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27 March 2020

Elliot Harris

By email: fyi-request-12371-ca2c066b@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Elliot

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST OIA-20-15 – PASTORAL CARE PRACTICES

I refer to your official information request dated 3 March for information relating to the University's Pastoral Care practices. You requested

- 1) *Please provide a summary of how the University's pastoral care practices and processes have been altered or changed in order to ensure its compliance with the Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019.*

The University has made broad changes to our practices to ensure compliance with the Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019. This includes increased monitoring of student academic achievement and engagement, improved processes for reporting and assessing students of concern, and emergency processes where students fail to engage or respond to communications from the University. Changes were also made to the Student Declaration and the Student Agreement outlining the expectations and obligations of students and the University. The University has also begun delivering an online induction for all first-year students to work through during their first semester at UC. The modules incorporate videos, content, and downloadable resources and are broken down into five key topics – an introduction and welcome to UC, study and academic life, wellbeing (including mental health, wellbeing, positive relationships, and addictions to alcohol, drugs, and gaming), community, inclusivity and belonging, and safety and security on campus and within the wider Otago community. As of Semester 1, the University has recently developed and deployed a new initiative designed to empower students to take responsibility and autonomy over their educational studies and success while at UC – while monitoring the online activity and engagement of the student body in the online components of their courses and education. Using a “fitness tracker” approach to studying, students are able to monitor their progression within their course compared to that of their classmates. This is an Analytics for Course Engagement Tool (ACE) which is able to gather data from when student access and use the online academic platform LEARN – reviewing online questionnaires and quizzes, and tracking the watching of online lectures recorded through Echo360. This tracker is displayed on the dashboard of LEARN, and provides students with a better understanding of how they are progressing with the online material and content of their courses and provides comparison among classmates. This ACE tool does not track student grades or attendance in lectures, but the level of online engagement of each student. This initiative links in with Outcome 4 of the Domestic Code: Progress and Personal Development of Students.

- 2) *If the University considered that it was already compliant with the Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019, what practices, processes and or services does the University provide that enable it to believe so?*

Not applicable.

- 3) *How have individual contracts with students, within an accommodation context or otherwise been changed as to recognise the University's obligations under the Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019?*

UC Contracts with students have been amended to reflect the requirements of the Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019. This includes changes to ensure increased monitoring of students is compliant with the Privacy Act 1993. The Student Code of Conduct and Student Agreement were also changed to reflect increased monitoring and engagement with students.

The University has also received interim letters of understanding from the Halls indicating they will comply with the new regulatory framework, and is in the process of creating new service level agreements and contract provisions with Halls.

- 4) *What additional pastoral care systems (if any) have been put in place for 2020 in the accommodation context?*

All Halls have undertaken to meet the obligations of the Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019. Changes depend on the existing structure of the Hall. Some Halls have increased staffing, including employing additional Residential Advisors. Some Halls have made changes to meal systems. All Halls have been trained in use of student academic data as a wellbeing indicator. Systems have been implemented to ensure that UC and the Halls can quickly communicate any student concerns.

- 5) *How many complaints are made on average per year against the University under the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Interim Code of Practice 2016?*

The university does not record complaints made under this code separately from other complaints, and this cannot be determined without reviewing all complaints. This aspect of your request is therefore refused under s18(f), substantial research and collation.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Rachael McGregor
Information Advisor