

## Feedback based on questions asked by Finance Committee

- 1. Can independent corroborating evidence be provided to ensure the rigour of the work underpinning this business case and the proposed delivery plans? For example, could Suri Bartlett be asked to attest to the rigour of the work?**

This business case has been prepared by an experienced Senior Project Manager (Corinne Smail) and the Associate Director - Digital Transformation (Peter Borich). It was undertaken in collaboration with Finance, the Planning and Management Information unit, Chief Operating Officer, Provost, Director of Digital Solutions, and the SSP Governance Group. It follows on from the SSP Project Charter that was endorsed by SLT in April 2020, and SSP will continue to have SLT oversight throughout the delivery period.

As part of the ongoing governance process, the Audit and Risk Committee will also continue to provide oversight of SSP. Following the PWC Internal Audit, the Provost now updates SSP progress at each Audit and Risk Committee meeting via the standing agenda item, and also provides a regular SSP Update to Council in the VC Report.

In addition to the established SSP oversight processes, Management has been exploring how to provide independent assurance on significant projects without incurring the time and cost of a full audit process. A limited review process is being trialled on SSP where, at selected times in the lifecycle of a programme, a limited assurance review will be completed by PWC. The approval of the SSP business case triggers the first such review. The scope of the review will be finalised over the next week or two, and targets a report going to the 16 November Audit and Risk Committee.

Following one of the recommendations of the PWC Internal Audit, Suri Bartlett (Tenzing Limited) was invited to join SSP Governance in August 2020 (delayed due to COVID). To date he has attended one SSP Governance meeting as well as individual meetings with the Provost, the Chief Operating Officer, and members of the SSP team.

In his role in SSP Governance, Suri has already asked questions about the approach taken to establishing the costs and possible risks, ie he asked us to describe a similar approach by another organisation. We have addressed his queries by describing Otago's work, including confirming with Otago that its overall programme costs are also approx. \$6 million; as well as confirming that for the first phase by Fusion 5, Otago's agreed deliverables were completed one week late (due to COVID), and just under budget. We also confirmed to Suri that the four companies we contacted to submit a RFP to be our external partner (an action recommended by PWC and which was undertaken following the University's standard IT procurement process) were very similar in their estimate for the CRM, ie [REDACTED]. Furthermore, following his advice, we added more information in the business case about risks and mitigations.

As with all governance members, Suri's role is to ensure that SSP's decision-making framework is robust, and that the programme's capital investments will be well managed during the programme.

**2. Can we map the Project Review Gates on to financial decisions (ie stage the spend) ahead of a full programme plan?**

	Review Gate 1 Apr-21	Review Gate 2 Dec-21	Review Gate 3 Apr-22	Review Gate 4 Dec-22	Total
Project resources Fusion 5 Portal Booking system Integrations Contingency					
<b>Total ('000)</b>	<b>1623</b>	<b>2175</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>1507</b>	<b>6115</b>

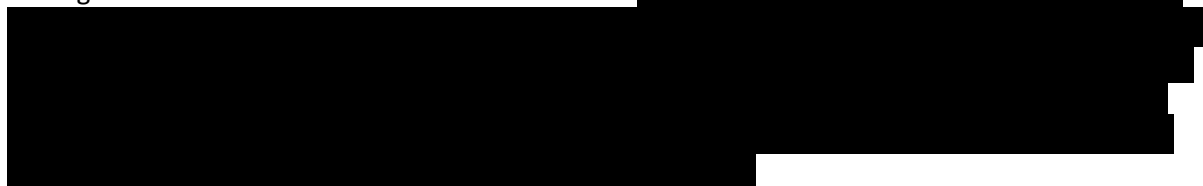
The financial assumptions stated in the business case apply to the above Project Review Gates.

**3. Is there additional corroborating evidence (either from University pilots or from the other universities) that can help give Council confidence that this is the right way to proceed and have confidence in delivery?**

Paerangi - the Student Success Framework referred to in the *SSP Update* (and added again at the end of this document) is a values-based framework built upon the guiding principle of rangatiratanga which we demonstrate through promoting learner agency. It supports the student journey from enquiry to graduation and beyond. This overarching framework is based upon learnings from previous University reports and papers; student journey workshops; interviews with students about what success means to them; pilot activities; and world best practice in student-centred institutional transformation. A large number of reports, references, case studies, and outcomes from previous and current pilots are held on the SSP SharePoint site and can be made available on request. Below we refer to a small number of the pilot initiatives and comparative national and international experiences that have informed SSP to date:

**Workstream i: Admissions and Enrolment**

This workstream is tied to the technology that we plan to introduce, including the personalised portal as well as integration with current systems such as Marketo. The major component is to replace our current Online Enrolment System and will apply to all students, international and domestic, and regardless of location. Students will be able to apply at any time of the year. Enrolment will be separated. The development work is very much a team effort as we are guided by those who do this work. Our approach is informed by the previous work of SSTP ratified by our business analyst over the last few weeks who undertook a sector scan of the domestic university market players (specifically AUT, Canterbury, Massey, Waikato, Otago). While all of them have online form capabilities against submitting an admission, only four have a concept of a portal to manage admission and enrolment related functions.



We have already prepared basic wireframes that will help inform our intended Proof of Concept (PoC) work from Fusion 5. A wireframe is also known as a screen blueprint and is a visual guide that

represents the skeletal framework of a website or form. Wireframes are created for the purpose of arranging elements to best accomplish a business objective and a creative idea. The wireframe depicts the page layout or arrangement of the website's content, including interface elements and navigational systems, and how they work together. The Proof of Concept will show to our staff and students for the first time how the new process will work (the portal work is planned for 2021). This PoC is intended to be delivered this year ready for building and integrating the system in 2021. The PoC phase is important as it is a cost-effective method for validation prior to investing in the 'real' system. It will be an exciting moment to share this with stakeholders and will help people conceptualise what we have been working on over the last few months.

## **Workstream ii: Student Retention**

In addition to the wider reference material referred above, SSP has conducted a stocktake of University retention related activity and related interviews with staff. Specific University pilots that have been undertaken to understand the new approach to retention include:

The trimester 3, 2019 retention pilot using PHIL123, aimed at supporting students who failed half or more of their courses the previous trimester:

- The pilot comprised a co-ordinated and proactive approach to wrap-around support from the Success Coach and Tutor, instructional re-design, student self-reflection, and student commitment through an independent learning plan.
- 90% of the students from this cohort who engaged with the Student Success Coach successfully passed the course and saw a retention rate into trimester 1 2020 of 91%, compared with 71% for **all** students who failed half or more of their courses in the previous trimester.
- Overall, 83% of all students enrolled in PHIL123 passed the class, even though the majority of the class comprised previously low achieving or modelled at-risk students. This compares with a pass rate of 73% for the prior 3 years. The overall retention rate into trimester 1 2020 was 87%.
- 73% of students who were modelled as at risk of failing the PHIL123 course specifically, passed the course. The retention rate for this cohort was 81%.
- The students' evaluation questionnaire showed that all students who engaged with the Student Success Coach said it was a very positive experience and positively impacted their ability to manage university life. These students were more connected with the course, felt more confident about studying at the end of trimester 3 compared to the start, and were more likely to be retained the following trimester.

Wider piloting in trimester 1 and 2 was impacted by COVID, however during that time the SSP Retention Project has continued to work on further initiatives including:

- Development of an advisor-to-student ratio calculated specifically for our University through a comprehensive caseload calculation approach based on an individual institution's student body, which is recommended by NACADA the global community for advising and applied successfully in institutions such as Texas A&M University.
- Personalised proactive advising from a single point of contact.
- Monitoring student achievement and engagement during the trimester combined with proactive outreach.
- Ongoing training for advisors in holistic and inclusive techniques.
- Proactive outreach to students to plan for the next trimester.
- Developing online forms and workflows to reduce the advisor's administrative burden.
- Best practice in case management and consistent processes.

- Participating in the development of the minimum student experience and first year transition.
- Actively responding to the code of practice for domestic tertiary students/pastoral care of international students through the development of the holistic model of advising and academic support.

### **Workstream iii: Multi-channel Service Centre**

The proposal for a multi-channel student service centre came out of the SSTP Target Operating Model report provided by KPMG (commissioned by the University in April 2018). This report was based on extensive design work with University stakeholders, used case studies to describe students' journey, and corroborated the importance of coordinating support services at University-wide level as per the *SSP Update*. Additionally, KPMG's 2019 CRM review stated (page 3) that "VUW would only truly realise the benefits of this investment [CRM] if it was complemented with re-consideration of the existing organisation design, operating model modifications, process simplification, and standardisation."

### **Workstream iv: Enabling Technology**

Regarding the CRM and portal, our plans are very much aligned with other Australasian universities and have leveraged the recommendations in the KPMG and PWC reviews. Late last year, members of the SSP team and Digital Solutions attended a Sydney event hosted by KPMG that covered the CRM decisions of Australian universities. They also visited Newcastle and met with colleagues from UNSW Australia, Charles Sturt, Southern Cross, and Wollongong.

[REDACTED]. This is also the approach of AUT, Otago, Massey, Canterbury, Lincoln, Otago Polytechnic as well as many overseas universities. [REDACTED] Otago, for example, has already centralised (now branded as 'AskOtago') its core administrative functions from across all areas of the University for both staff and students. This took several years to achieve and was a difficult transition. Otago has since commissioned Fusion 5 to overlay the service management framework utilising a CRM.

We regularly liaise with other NZ colleagues (as we do for much of our work, networks are vital) though the impact of COVID has affected this. For example, Digital Solutions were scheduled to visit AUT when the second Auckland lock-down occurred. See also, [Otago Polytechnic's plans](#) and [University of Otago's CRM](#).

### **Workstream v: A different way of working**

Paerangi was created specifically for our University, with next steps being to develop a visual representation of the co-ordinated individual initiatives that will contribute to each of the outcomes; and the third (final) level, which details the inputs/outputs/KPIs etc of each of those initiatives. The Paerangi framework stems from [New Zealand's Tertiary Education Commission's Ōritetanga – tertiary success for everyone](#) and is based on world best practice. We are building networks within New Zealand to establish a wider community of practice that includes other universities (particularly the University of Auckland) and other higher education institutions, such as Wintec which is already doing good work with learner success. There are also international connections through the [Achieving the Dream](#) organisation which represents over 277 US institutions of higher education

committed to evidence-based institutional improvement and student success, and which informed New Zealand's TEC's Ōritetanga.

As referred to in the *SSP Update*, Georgia State University has previously demonstrated how a university can transform student success by implementing a holistic student support programme. The ROI for the University with just a one-point increase in retention (325 students) resulted in an additional \$3.8 million per year. From 2011 to 2017, the University increased the number of degrees awarded from 4,222 to 7,047 (67%). Tim Renick, Georgia's Senior Vice President for Student Success, visited New Zealand last year on the invitation of the TEC. Amongst other observations, he stated that "campus politics" matters and you need the authority to readily direct reforms such as adopting new technologies, adapting advising practices, and ensuring that predictive analytics can be applied. He also observed that a decentralised model with barriers to communication and consistency, means making transformative change on a campus is extremely difficult.

To give another example: in 2008, Florida International University had 80% of its first-year students returning yet the four-year graduation rate was just 20%. In 2009, the University decided to shift from faculty to professional advising and, over time, increase the number of advisers. FIU's four-year graduation rate has risen by 15 percentage points and full-time student retention has increased by six percentage points to 88%, and it continues to rise. Again, a high ROI.

A 2020 Hanover Research report on student success synthesises sectoral experiences. In this report it is noted that institutions changing to a centralised advising model should:

- Develop a multi-year plan with the involvement of all stakeholders (note: Paerangi – student success framework as well as the other workstreams);
- Hire a new advising director early in planning reorganisation and use pilots to identify potential problems (note: the proposed Titoko Establishment Director);
- While integrating advising units, organise advisers into clusters that can address specific experiences, programs or colleges to maximise impact on student success at all levels and years (note: the Paerangi Student Success Framework and the proposed organisational re-design plans).

Our participation in these national and international communities of practice, and the research and learnings they enable, will continue to inform SSP as it develops over the next two years.

#### **4. New risk: What happens if key Fusion 5 staff leave? In other words, how can we mitigate the vendor's risk?**

Here are the various areas Fusion 5 has developed to ensure the project is set up for success:

- Collaborative working with University Project team – throughout the project, Fusion5 team will work collaboratively and closely with SSP project team's core members like PM, BAs and Solution Architect etc. Fusion5 will provide the thought leadership to guide the joint project teams to deliver the required outcomes. The University Project team will be consulted and involved heavily. This will ensure Fusion5 and University teams work as one team and the knowledge will be shared so the University will build up internal knowledge and capability in the solution that will be delivered;
- Multiple consultants in each workshop/work stream – Fusion5 resource large CRM implementations with multiple consultants in each stream (functional & technical). The estimate has allowed two consultants in each workshop, which will ensure no-one becomes a

single point of failure. At the beginning of each stage (e.g. analysis, design, build), the Project Manager and Lead Consultant will go through the designed approach for the joint team to ensure everyone is on the same page. All the consultants working on the project will follow the same template and standards;

- Project artefacts documentation standard – Microsoft DevOps or a similar tool will be adopted to capture the project artefacts (e.g. User Story, Acceptance Criteria, Test Script). The expectation when a consultant captures a user story/build task is that it can be picked up by another consultant easily. Fusion 5 has refined these processes over many years to ensure they are adopted in a common way, and are readily translated by someone new;
- Keep register up to date – any assumptions or decisions being made will be logged in a central repository with clear details. DevOps provides full traceability on any change or communication against any user story;
- In a scenario that Fusion 5 needs to onboard a new consultant to replace a key project team member, handover will be managed and will not incur any cost to the customer.

SSP will also add this to the programme risk register though it is a very low risk.

## **5. Finally**

If the Business Case is approved by Council on 5 October, by end of 2020 we should have:

- Demonstrated a Proof of Concept for the separated Admission and Enrolment process for international and domestic students;
- Completed the full Statement of Work by Fusion 5 for the CRM and full admission process;
- Selected a vendor for the portal (requires a separate procurement process);
- Appointed the Establishment Director;
- Appointed a second Business Analyst to work with the University and Fusion 5;
- Completed the Change Management project plan for organisational re-design;
- Digital Solutions scaled up to meet agreed system integrations requirements;
- Met with relevant university staff to discuss SSP update and the suggested future approach, including nurturing excitement for these plans;
- Developed a full implementation plan for Phase 1;
- Completed an SSP audit by PWC.

If there are delays these deliverables will not occur until the end of first quarter 2021, pushing the programme as a whole out into 2023 with associated additional costs.

Supporting learners to pursue their passion and excel in their chosen area of study

# PAERANGI

## STUDENT SUCCESS FRAMEWORK



At Te Herenga Waka - Victoria University of Wellington, student success is enabled through rangatiratanga which we demonstrate through promoting learner agency. **Student Success** is the outcome of a personal and enriching learning experience that culminates in the achievement of students' academic goals in a timely manner and prepares them to realise their life aspirations



**CONNECTION**



**ENTRY**



**PROGRESS**



**COMPLETION**

OUTCOMES  
STUDENT  
STAFF  
UNIVERSITY

**Whai mātauranga**  
Students prepare for University through a pathway that provides the best foundation for successful university study and to navigate university life

**Whanaungatanga**  
Students are in a pathway of study that aligns with their academic and future goals, and are proactively connected with supports targeted to their individual needs so they enter the classroom best prepared to learn

**Akoranga**  
Students receive the type and intensity of learning and holistic support to suit their unique and diverse needs, and continue on a study pathway that suits their individual circumstances

**Whai mātauranga**  
Students successfully complete their study to qualification completion and transition to further study or employment

**Manaakitanga**  
Staff understand who students are, particularly those students who come to campus with needs that might be considered nonacademic but that have significant impact on academic performance

**Whanaungatanga**  
Staff develop more intentional, relational and enduring connections with students and together develop a personalised success plan

**Kaitiakitanga**  
Monitoring students' progress toward their goals throughout the trimester and proactively connecting students with appropriate holistic academic and university living support when they need it

**Rangatiratanga**  
Professional and academic staff work together to support students to successful qualification completion, and support their transition to further study or employment

**Strategic**  
Improved retention of students moving from entry to enrolment

**Strategic**  
Improved retention of commencing students in their first year of study

**Strategic**  
Improved retention of students during the year and transitioning between years of study

**Strategic**  
Improved retention of students from under-graduate study into post-graduate study, or supported into employment

### ENABLED THROUGH THESE FOUNDATIONS

**Whole of institution** A suite of complementary activities that transcend traditional silos, to achieve a common goal of student success

**Inclusive** Inclusive and responsive to a diverse community of students and staff

**People** Professional development and training modules to empower staff and enable the student success framework

**Policy** That enables learner agency and supports student progression and success

**Data** To inform initiatives and understand their effectiveness; raise students' self-awareness; empower staff; facilitate proactive student outreach

**Technology** To capture, transform and share information; and to automate routine transactions and free staff time to focus on developing connections with students

**Sustainable** A sustainable framework that supports continuous improvement