
Self-Assessment Summary 2020

31 August 2020

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Executive Summary

Te Whare Wānanga o Wairaka, Unitec New Zealand, is on a path of continuous improvement focused on learner success and academic quality. The Unitec whānau is cohesive and in strong spirits, and is committed to the strategic direction set out in *Manaakitia te Rito, the Renewal Strategy 2019-2022*. This includes the goal of parity for Priority Group learners by 2022.

Unitec has continued the work that began before the last External Evaluation and Review (EER) in 2018, ensuring it has a robust academic quality management system and effective governance and leadership in place.

All eleven recommendations from the April 2019 EER Report have been fully-addressed.

In terms of educational performance, Unitec's qualification completions for all students, including Māori and Pacific learners in particular, are improving and are above Unitec's targets. Graduate outcomes have been steady for some years, with strong employment outcomes. Graduate outcomes for Māori and Pacific are better than for graduates overall and are well above targets. The institute's educational provision is of high quality and has led to Unitec achieving its highest-ever scores for student satisfaction and student course survey feedback in 2020.

In terms of capability in self-assessment, Unitec staff understand the institute's targets and how to achieve them. Teams have robust, well-refined evaluative processes based in reflective conversations and the *Āta Kōrero* model. Action planning and reporting are of high quality, and all staff know their responsibilities and how they contribute to meeting Unitec's goals.

The whole-of-organisation response to COVID-19 has been highly-organised and committed. Pastoral and academic support systems have been effective in meeting needs, and as a result, learner engagement remains high.



Unitec staff and stakeholders are committed to “*putting learners at the heart of all we do*” and are proud of what has been achieved since the 2018 EER. In 2020, Unitec is operating at the standard of a Category One institution.

2. About Unitec

About Unitec

Tungia te ururoa kia tupu whakaritorito te tupu o te harakeke

Set fire to the overgrown bush and the new flax shoots will spring up;
Clear away what is bad and the good will flourish

Since the External Evaluation and Review in 2018, Te Whare Wānanga o Wairaka, Unitec New Zealand, has taken major steps to ensure that learner success, academic quality, and continuous improvement are at the centre of planning, implementation and monitoring. The Unitec whānau is proud of the advances made since the 2018 EER and believes that it is operating as a Category One institution.

The institute's educational performance and self-assessment capability in 2020 are of high quality, as evidenced in high levels of student and staff engagement, and improving qualification completion outcomes. The shortfalls identified in the last EER have been fully-addressed.

All staff and stakeholders understand the crucial importance of lifting educational outcomes for priority learners, and the commitment to the stretch parity targets.

Unitec has refocused, *"putting learners at the heart of all we do"* as part of Manaakitia te Rito. It is well-placed to address future challenges.

Te Noho Kotahitanga – the Partnership Agreement

Te Noho Kotahitanga is Unitec's partnership with tangata whenua. It establishes a set of principles that express Unitec's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and underpin the values and kaupapa of the whole organisation.

- **Rangatiratanga – Authority and Responsibility**
- **Wakaritenga – Legitimacy**
- **Kaitiakitanga – Guardianship**
- **Mahi Kotahitanga – Co-operation**
- **Ngākau Māhaki – Respect**



Manaakitia te Rito – The Unitec Renewal Strategy 2019 – 2022

Manaakitia te Rito is Unitec’s three-year Renewal Strategy, established in 2019 and developed with the engagement of staff. It originated in Unitec’s Māori Success Strategy, and is based on a commitment to Te Noho Kotahitanga. Manaakitia te Rito puts students and communities at the heart of Unitec’s activities.

The harakeke (flax) plant represents the whānau. The rito (shoot) is the child. It is protectively surrounded by the awhi rito (parents). The outside leaves represent the tūpuna (grandparents and ancestors). The strategy is about nurturing and wrapping around support for Unitec’s students through building relationships so they belong.

Manaakitia te Rito includes a commitment to the goal of parity of outcomes for all learners at Unitec by 2022. Unitec recognises the scale of ambition of this stretch target to gain parity for Māori, Pacific and Under 25 learners, and is committed to the investment and energy required to achieve this outcome. The goal of parity is based on evidence and best practice which shows that what is good for Māori learner success in education is good for all learners.

In this video, Interim Chief Executive Merran Davis and Te Tumu Glenn McKay talk about [the importance of Manaakitia te Rito](#).



Unitec’s purpose and priorities are deliberately shared at all levels of the organisation to achieve clarity and alignment of activity and purpose. All Unitec teams have the same Purpose and Strategic Priorities underpinning area-specific ‘Team Takitahi’ and annual Action Plans. These are linked to individual performance plans so that staff understand how they contribute to learner success. This alignment of purpose and activity has been key to Unitec’s rejuvenation.

***He waka eke noa –
We are all on the same waka***

Unitec's Strategic Priorities

These are:

- Improve the success of all students, achieving parity for Māori, Pacific and Under 25s by 2022, enhancing International student success, and serving the educational needs of the West, Central and North Auckland communities.
- Provide high quality learning, teaching and applied research to develop work-ready lifelong learners and return to Category One status.
- Engage and inspire staff so they are proud to work at Unitec and are equipped with the capabilities to support quality learning.
- Build a financially sustainable organisation to invest in the future with an operating surplus by 2022.

Each Priority has a number of supporting strategies (e.g. Priority Group Success Strategies, the Research Strategy, the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy) that are linked to annual Action Plans (refer to relevant documents 2p at the end of this section).

Key improvements since 2018

After a number of years focused on investment in new facilities and restructuring of academic and administrative areas under the 'Transformation' project, Unitec was in a serious situation by 2018:

- Government loss of confidence in Unitec resulted in dissolution of the Unitec Council and appointment of a Commissioner.
- Major financial losses and overspending led to the need to secure a \$50 million loan.
- Reputational impact was followed by a fall in enrolments from over 9,000 EFTS in 2016 to just over 6,100 in 2019.
- Decentralised academic decision-making and lack of quality assurance had seriously impacted quality and consistency, contributing to two NZQA EER category downgrades.
- Staff morale and confidence in Unitec leadership was at an all-time low.
- By early 2018, the leadership team overseeing the 'Transformation' had almost all left Unitec.

Unitec's new leadership made the decision in 2018 to address major performance issues and to refocus on learners and academic quality, beginning with a review of Unitec's academic structure. Key changes included:

- Networks and Pathways were simplified into a more traditional structure of 11 Schools, each led by a Head of School and supported by Academic Programme Managers, Programme Coordinators and Discipline Leaders.

- A tier of management – the ‘Deans’ – was removed, enabling faster and easier organisational unification of purpose.
- In 2020, 11 Schools were reduced to 10 to better align the disciplines of Computing with Electrical Engineering, and Construction with Civil and Mechanical Engineering. The result is a more logical School structure that makes sense to new and current learners and staff.
- The importance of Unitec’s West Auckland campus was re-established. The School of Healthcare and Social Practice was formed, and a Waitākere Strategy developed to reinforce Unitec’s contribution and importance to the West Auckland community. As a result, the School and campus profile in West Auckland has improved markedly and new offerings that meet community needs are being introduced.

In 2019, following an EER downgrading to Category 3 and with a new leadership team in place, Unitec refocused on its core priorities of learner success and academic quality – *“putting learners at the heart”* and embarked on a prodigious programme of work across the organisation.

Unitec’s Executive Leadership Team (ELT), led by Interim Chief Executive Merran Davis, has been strengthened with the addition of an Executive Director Ako and Executive Director Schools and Performance (2k). These positions ensure a strong academic focus in the Executive. This has been further strengthened by the Heads of Schools reporting to an Executive member (refer to relevant documents 2l at the end of this section).

At time of writing, Merran Davis is just days from departing Unitec to a new leadership role at the NZIST as Deputy Chief Executive Transition and Transformation. Her replacement is Gus Gilmore, Chief Executive of MIT, now joint Chief Executive of both NZIST subsidiaries.

Unitec’s Leadership Team is confident that its values are well-articulated, owned and lived by its staff. Unitec’s culture, based on transparent open communication, high trust and staff engagement, is thriving. The progress and improvements made are well-embedded into business-as-usual processes, and are well understood throughout the organisation.

Unitec’s community recognises that these positives are in large part due to the step-change achieved under Merran’s inspirational leadership.

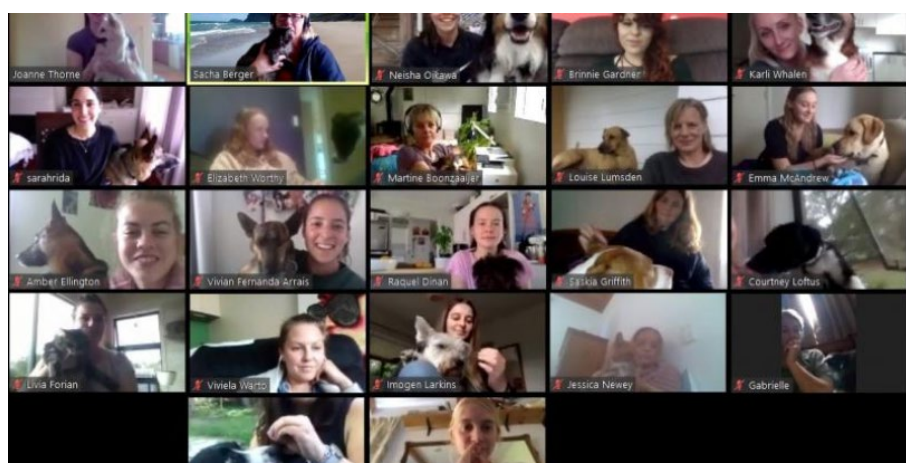
Case Study: “Putting Learners at the heart” – Unitec’s COVID-19 response

Unitec’s highly-effective COVID-19 response illustrates the institute’s values and commitment to learner success, and its capacity for responsive, learner-centred, whole-of-organisation activity.

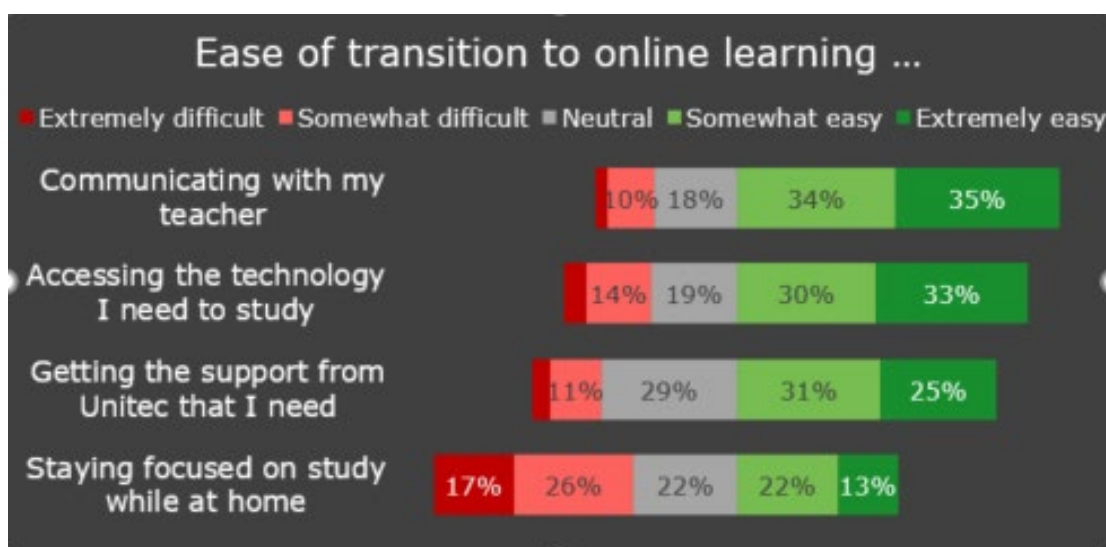
Even in the early days of COVID-19, Unitec staff were going out of their way to ensure support for learners [Unitec delivers care packages to students in self-isolation due to Coronavirus outbreak](#). Within four days of the first lockdown, all courses at Unitec shifted to online learning. Zoom sessions became a standard part of teachers’ toolkits

and students in areas as diverse as Dance, Acting, Nursing, and [Canine Behaviour & Training](#) began recording themselves in bedrooms, kitchens and backyards to provide evidence of learning.

Lockdown Dogs: Canine Training Moves Online



Unitec staff are proud of their efforts and outcomes, and that following the Semester One COVID-19 lockdown, both Student NPS and student course survey results rose for that period. At the time of writing, a second lockdown is underway, a further large COVID-19 response has swung into action, and all learning is being undertaken remotely. Unitec is confident that students are being supported, retained and are succeeding.



Impact of COVID-19 on learning – from Student NPS

The COVID-19 response at Unitec has been led by the Incident Management Team and the Academic Recovery Committee – both formed for the purposes of responding to COVID-19 and both comprising Executive Leadership Team members and other senior leadership alongside teaching and support staff (20).

As with all other educational organisations, the effort by the Unitec community has been huge, and is told in the numbers below from the Semester 1 lockdown.



Relevant documents

- [2a Te Noho Kotahitanga – The Partnership Agreement](#)
- [2b Manaakitia te Rito – The Renewal Strategy 2019 - 2022](#)
- [2c Importance of Manaakitia te Rito Video](#)
- [2d Unitec Milestones 2018 – 2020](#)
- [2e Māori Success Strategy](#)
- [2f Pacific Success Strategy](#)
- [2g International Success Strategy](#)
- [2h Under 25s Success Strategy](#)
- [2i Priority Group Operational Plan Example](#)
- [2j Unitec Student Success Strategy](#)
- [2k Unitec Organisational Chart](#)
- [2l Unitec Schools Programme Map](#)
- [2m Academic Governance Committee organisational chart](#)
- [2n Waitākere Strategy](#)
- [2o COVID-19 Response Incident Management Team Review](#)
- [2p Strategies to Action Plans Flow Chart](#)

3. The 2019 EER Recommendations

The 2019 EER Recommendations

The 2019 EER report made eleven recommendations, seven relating to the overall KEQs, and four to specific Focus Areas evaluated by the EER Team. These recommendations have been fully addressed and have resulted in significant improvements in the quality and effectiveness of Unitec's training and education.

In addition to the specifics of the recommendations, Unitec has established a comprehensive, whole-of-institution Academic Quality Action Plan (refer to relevant documents 3a & 3b at the end of this section). Its purpose is to embed a focus on academic quality and learner success as business-as-usual activities that are subject to continuous evaluation and improvement.

A consistent message across Unitec since the Plan's introduction has been that this activity is primarily about 'business-as-usual' improvements to support learner success, as well as a response to the EER recommendations.

The Academic Quality Action Plan was introduced in August 2019, and its priorities were incorporated into all School and Support Team Action Plans to ensure consistency in implementation and measurement of impacts and improvements. The Plan's 2020 goals have been met, and improvements implemented and monitored.

Progress towards Action Plan goals have been reported every month to Unitec's Board, to the Unitec Academic Committee and ELT. Reports are in the form of a memo from the Executive Director Ako accompanied by a full Project Plan update, identifying percentage progress on activities and towards goals (3a & 3b).



Simon says...

Kia ora koutou

Thank you to all staff involved in the Internal Evaluation and Review (IER). It was a HUGE EFFORT and I have been gratified to see your very positive engagement with this event.

Initial feedback on the IER from our external consultants is very positive. Our focus area teams have generally acquitted themselves very well, and you'll be pleased to know that the panel were impressed. We will have a full report on the IER soon, but for now, key messages from the panel are:

June 2020

Unitec staff are provided with updates through weekly Extended Leadership Team meetings, and monthly all-staff 'Academic Quality Action Plan Updates' that incorporate news items alongside the full Project Plan.

Unitec has fully addressed the EER recommendations and as a result, a significantly better and higher quality institution will present itself for the EER visit in October 2020.

The 11 EER recommendations are addressed below, using the exact wording from the EER Report April 2019. The EER recommendations were titled in the EER report as ‘*Recommendation KEQ 1, 2, etc*’, or as “*Recommendation FA 1, 2, etc*” referring to ‘Focus Areas’.

Recommendation KEQ 1: Set both realistic targets and stretch objectives for achievement outcomes, particularly qualification outcomes in consultation with relevant communities of interest (specifically for Māori and Pacific targets). Ensure these are promulgated throughout Unitec.

In mid-2019, student achievement targets were established for all Educational Performance Indicators. These were approved for Unitec as a whole for 2019-2022 by the Academic Board and Executive Leadership Team. Following this, specific targets were set by each programme and by Schools for the same EPIs, using historical trends and ITP sector benchmarks. These targets were also endorsed by Academic Board and ELT.

The ‘stretch target’ of parity for all Priority Group learners was set with the support of the Unitec community, the endorsement of the Māori Advisory Rūnanga and Pacific Advisory Fono Faufautua.

Parity means that the targets approved for all Unitec learners apply equally to Māori, Pacific and Under-25 learners. This is based on Unitec’s commitment made in Manaakitia te Rito. Because Unitec’s Māori and Pacific learners historically have poorer outcomes against most indicators than other learners, Unitec has developed and implemented strengthened Māori and Pacific Success Strategies and established a major, high priority programme of activity under *I See Me* in support of these parity targets. Unitec intends to do all it can to achieve the parity targets.

Targets have been fully promulgated at Unitec, initially through collaborative target-setting exercises in Schools, ensuring a high level of staff awareness and buy-in. Subsequently, all targets have been embedded in strategies and action plans for all teams. All team plans include the specific actions to be undertaken in support of targets. Staff awareness of what needs to be done is very high.

Recommendation KEQ 1: Improve reporting to senior management and governance on core academic matters, including regular academic progress reporting to allow for early interventions if targets are not on track.

Each team at Unitec has a ‘Takitahi’ and Action Plan (3h & 3i) that addresses their role in supporting Unitec’s strategies and targets. Action Plans are set annually and tweaked during the year as changes and new priorities or issues arise.

Every two months, the Schools and the Directors of Priority Group Success areas report to the ELT, Academic Board (AB) and the Unitec Board on the 'RAG' (Red / Amber / Green) status; progress against the actions being taken. This report includes a commentary on what is being done where actions are falling behind schedule (refer to related documents School Operations Plan Update 3j and Success Strategy RAG Report example 3k).

Course Evaluation and Planning (CEPs) occurs throughout the year. Twice-yearly after official SDR results are confirmed, Programme Evaluation and Planning (PEPs) is also undertaken (3q). Based on these CEPs and PEPs, Heads of School provide an Evaluative Commentary on the past year at school and discipline level in relation to targets and Key Evaluative Questions (3l).

Priority Group Directors also report on progress twice yearly across the institution against targets, and consider the effectiveness of interventions, and areas for development and improvement.

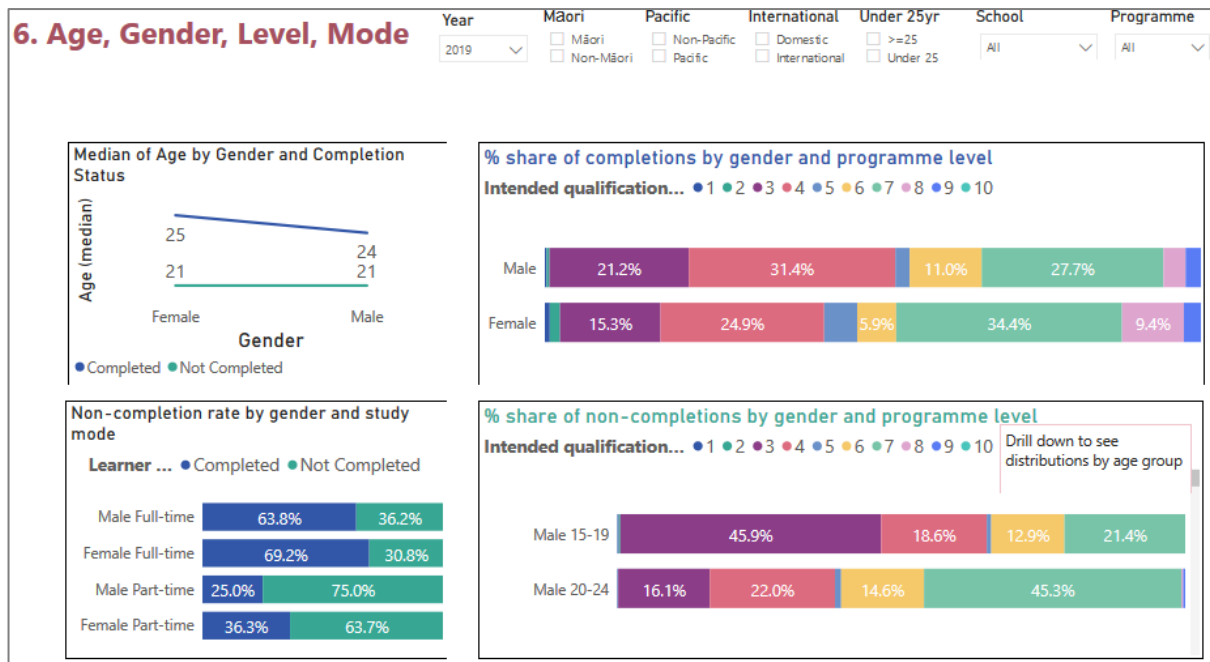
A review of targets will be undertaken in early 2021. All current student achievement targets were set in mid-2019, and related actions implemented in late 2019 - early 2020. Given this timeframe, 2020 results are the first in which the impact of these outcomes is expected to improve significantly. A review of targets will logically follow that.

Recommendation KEQ 2: Undertake more detailed study into the reasons that prevent some learners from completing their studies and/or returning after Year One. Ensure the Academic Board actively monitors such matters and works on interventions within the purview of Unitec.

In support of learner success, a large programme of work was established in early 2019 to better understand the reasons for learner non-completion. Unitec teaching staff and many operations staff now have access to accurate information about the reasons for learner non-completion and the barriers to retention and success. This information has been used to plan and implement interventions such as outreach to learners and more targeted support for course designs that meet learner needs. Among the actions taken:

- Research programmes have been launched by Unitec's Priority Group Directors to investigate causes of non-completion.
- The electronic SEAtS attendance monitoring system, introduced in 2018, provides real-time attendance data that allows staff to monitor and support at-risk learners, and contributes to learner analytics. SEAtS operates via a mobile phone app or a swipe card and card readers in all learning spaces.
- The Learner Outreach Project provides rich qualitative data drawn from its 'outreach' contacts with learners who are at-risk.
- Power BI and 'academic dashboards' provide institution-wide access to high quality data on Educational Performance Indicators and associated analytics, including Qualification Non-Completion Profiling. Comprehensive training was provided to

staff on how to use Power BI (Below is an example screenshot from the Power BI Non-Completions Dashboard).



Unitec has seen improved initiatives and outcomes based on these data sources:

- Qualification Completion Rates have increased in the August 2020 SDR to 58.2%.
- Learner needs are being more readily identified, leading to more effective use of Student Support services. This usage is showing a direct correlation to improved outcomes.
- Student 'Net Promoter Score' Satisfaction Survey results have continued to improve each semester, including during COVID-19.
- Student Course Survey results for Semester One 2020 of an average 8.1/10 are the highest since these surveys began in 2018.

Recommendation KEQ 3: Strengthen the competencies and mandate of the Academic Board to improve oversight of all matters affecting teaching and delivery quality (this should include setting policies and improving monitoring).

Following the Category 3 EER outcome, Unitec committed to a programme of work to significantly bolster academic governance and management oversight of academic quality and student performance.

The Executive Director Ako Simon Nash was appointed Academic Board Chair in March 2019, replacing Merran Davis who remained on the Academic Board as Unitec Interim Chief Executive. This change re-introduced some critical distance for the Chief Executive role, who no longer also had to act as Chair of the Academic Board.

Reporting and governance relationships between the Executive Leadership Team and Academic Board, and with the (then) Commissioner, and (now) Unitec Board have been strengthened to ensure good communication and shared understandings of issues, as well as strong oversight of academic quality.

The system of academic governance committees and terms of reference were reviewed in late-2019. Changes were made to terms of reference to ensure the appropriate committees had oversight of related activity and reporting, and to improve coordination across committees.

Governance committee members have been engaged in ongoing capability development to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to fully exercise their responsibilities.

Resources and communications have been improved. A Governance Committee Members' Handbook is in development for Academic Board and all sub-committees.

Collectively these changes ensure that:

- Meetings are effectively managed and chaired
- Committee members take shared ownership of issues, and actions are followed up and monitored.
- All important matters relating to student achievement and academic quality are being attended to.
- Memoranda and reporting are standardised and of higher quality
- All agendas, attachments, memos and minutes are published on Unitec's intranet 'the Nest' and available to staff, improving the democratisation of information.

Unitec's Quality Management System (QMS) was reviewed in late-2019, ensuring all aspects of academic quality and learner success were being addressed. The QMS sets out monitoring and reporting processes and related delegations, and assigns oversight to the relevant academic governance committee (related document 3m).

Recommendation KEQ 4: The Academic Board should consider what actions it can take to record the support needs of individual students, to ensure holistic and ongoing support can be provided to avoid either re-assessments or misdiagnosis of known barriers to learning.

As described under Recommendation KEQ 2, work has been underway to improving understanding of the reasons for student non-completion and retention issues. This includes the Non-Completion Project and Power BI resources, research projects, and SEAtS Attendance Tracking. These provide high quality data to support interventions for at-risk learners, such as the Learner Outreach Project.

In late 2019 the Academic Board and ELT approved resourcing for the Learner Outreach Project as a programme of activity to monitor at-risk learners and provide access to

pastoral and academic supports. The Project is described in Section 4 KEQ 1; key components of the project are:

- A team of Learner Outreach Advisors embedded in Schools to support at-risk learners.
- A Student Support Database that identifies at-risk students by correlating data on indicators such as non-attendance, low grades and non-payment of fees.
- Real-time 'outreach' to at-risk students to provide academic and pastoral support.
- Partnering with teaching teams to ensure they are responding to individual students' needs.
- Monthly reporting to ELT and Academic Board on progress.

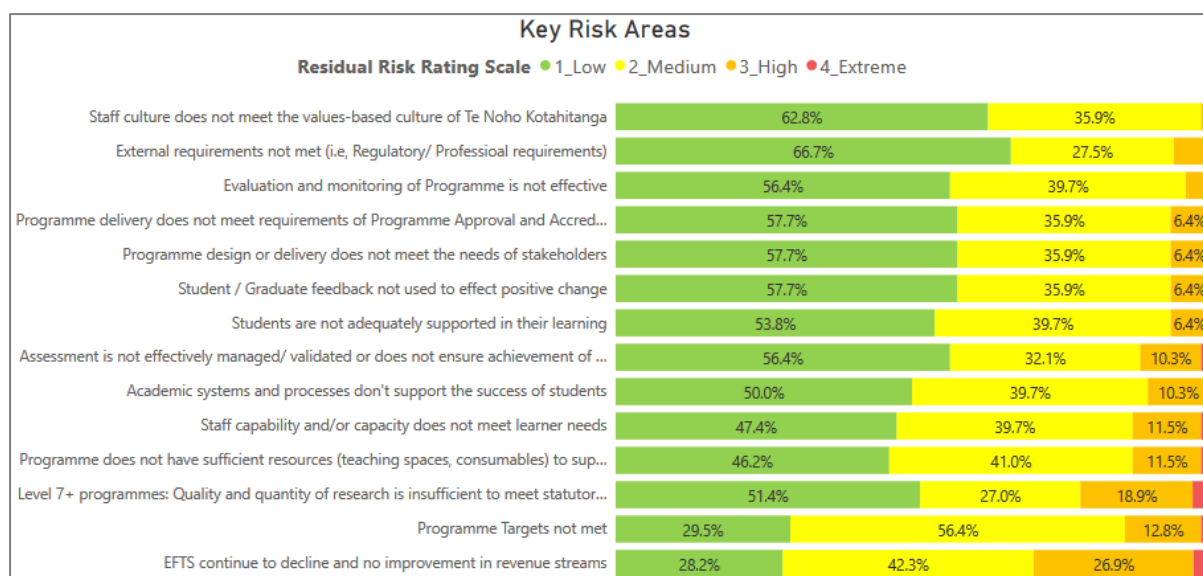
Over time, this Project is also producing data that supports the design of improved interventions and better predictive capability.

Recommendation KEQ 5: Develop a robust academic risk register and academic schedule/calendar of events to guide quality assurance processes.

As part of the review of Quality Management Systems (QMS) the Chairs of academic committees identified the monitoring and reporting actions that were needed for oversight of the QMS.

Committee work plans were then established and approved, each with delegated responsibility for oversight and action, and a schedule of monthly reporting to committees. These work plans enable Academic Board to be confident of its oversight.

A key element in the QMS is the monthly Risk Registers established in 2019 for the Executive Leadership Team and Academic Board. In 2020, the Academic Risk Register was extended so that risk is assessed and reported by all Programme Academic Quality Committees. Risks are identified and rated, and then 'roll-up' from programme committee level to Academic Board and are reported in Power BI. Reporting allows all committees to have effective oversight of risks and their mitigation (3n & 3o).



Screenshot of Power BI Academic Risk Dashboard

Recommendation KEQ 6: Work collaboratively with the Commissioner to advance the 'renewal' work programme in a manner that ensures financial viability and minimises risk and disruption to students.

Unitec's Renewal Plan was established in 2018 to ensure Unitec would have a sustainable business model by 2020. It was an urgent response to a major financial crisis and loss of confidence by staff and external stakeholders. Alongside impending RoVE developments, Unitec's Board had been dissolved and a Commissioner appointed. In this context, NZQA's Recommendation KEQ 6 recognised the importance of advancing the 'renewal' work.

The Renewal Plan had four objectives:

1. To design a sustainable operating model and structure for a minimum of 6,000 EFTs for 2020 and beyond
2. To realise overall cost savings of 20% across the organisation (\$25M)
3. To engage effectively with our people and key stakeholders throughout the process
4. To enable Unitec to recover and grow in core areas of opportunity

By the time of the April 2019 EER report, progress against these objectives was well-advanced.

- Extensive staff and stakeholder engagement on the Renewal Plan was undertaken, including staff consultation on cost savings initiatives in mid-2018, proposals for change in late 2018, and a major staff consultation event in February 2019.
- Unitec achieved its savings objectives through a major cost-cutting and restructuring exercise, with expenditure reduction of \$26.1 million in 2019. This cost reduction and achievement of an operating surplus (EBITDAR) was reported in Unitec's 2019 Annual Report.

- Rationalisation of the academic portfolio focused on ensuring growth would be possible in core areas. All Schools were involved in decision-making on savings in late 2018, then again to present their updated 'School Portfolios' and growth plans in mid-2019.

The leadership of Unitec is very pleased that the goals of the Renewal Plan were achieved while seeing significant lifts in staff engagement from 65% in May 2018 to an all-time high of 83% in May 2020. Student engagement as measured by the Net Promoter Score, also increased from +4 in May 2018 to its highest ever rating of +19 in April 2020, while maintaining overall educational performance. The Unitec community is proud of this achievement and is moving forward positively.

By late 2019, a more forward-looking Renewal Strategy *Manaakitia te Rito* was approved and implemented. Pressure remains however with EFTS in 2020 reducing further, largely due to the loss of International students from the closure of New Zealand's borders during COVID-19.

Recommendation FA 1: Develop an operational plan to implement the Māori Success Strategy. Ensure this includes academic targets to address disparities. Ensure both academic and general management mechanisms are established to monitor progress. Ensure the strategy and planning maintain the support of Māori communities, and that this can be readily demonstrated.

Unitec has maintained its commitment to *Manaakitia te Rito* and its parity goals by expanding and ring-fencing resourcing for the support of Māori and Pacific learners. This has happened despite ongoing pressure to control costs, and has allowed Unitec to fully operationalise its Māori and Pacific Success Strategies. The results are increasingly evident in a more inclusive organisation where Māori and Pacific learners have improved outcomes, and are learning in culturally familiar environments.

Te Tumu, the Executive Director Māori Success Glenn McKay, was appointed in February 2018. Under his leadership engagement with Unitec's Rūnanga Māori Advisory Group has been hugely strengthened, and a new Māori Success Strategy approved in late 2018 with the Rūnanga in full support. The Rūnanga meets quarterly to review progress against the Strategy.

Toni Rewiri, Te Taharangi Director Māori Success, was appointed in March 2019 and leads a dedicated team of Māori Academic Support Staff, three Learning Advisors, Marae staff, and five Kaihautū Māori Advisors who oversee the Success Strategy's operationalisation in Schools.

Recommendation FA 2: Develop an operational plan to implement the Pacific Success Strategy. Ensure this includes academic targets to address disparities. Ensure both academic and general management mechanisms are established to monitor progress. Ensure the strategy and planning maintain the support of Pacific communities, and that this can be readily demonstrated.

The Director Pacific Success Dr Falaniko Tominiko was appointed in June 2019. Among his priorities was to strengthen Pacific leadership and ensure the full support of the Fono Faufautua Pacific Advisory Group for the Pacific Success Strategy (updated mid-2019). The Fono meets five times per year to review progress against the Strategy. The Director leads a team of three Pacific Learning Advisors and three Pacific Navigators who support the Success Strategy in Schools.

Additionally:

- All Schools also have Māori and Pacific Success Champions. These Champions are Academic School staff who work to embed and support activity in Schools.
- The Māori and Pacific Success Strategies have fully-developed and approved operational plans, incorporating the achievement of Parity Targets.
- Progress against actions and towards outcomes for all strategies are reported at Academic Board and Executive level, and to Unitec's Board every two months.
- All ten Schools have full Operations Plans that embed the actions and targets from Priority Group Strategies. These are also reported every two months, providing a consistency of implementation and a collective focus on learner success.

Recommendation FA 5: Urgently review provision within the Social Practice Pathway to ensure all programmes can demonstrate delivery and learning options aligned with course approvals. This should also ensure assessment practices are demonstrably fair, valid and transparent, including regular internal and external moderation that is fit for purpose. A review of policies and practices regarding the use of recognition of prior learning is also required.

The EER recommendations and associated commentary on 3 programmes within the Social Practice area were significant enough that the decision was made to undertake full reviews, including of learning, teaching and assessment practices. A Project Plan was developed by the School, including monthly staff capability development workshops. Evidence for all the below improvement actions is available.

The NZ Certificate in Health and Wellbeing

- All assessments for the ARA-purchased programme have been refined to better reflect the focus on Mental Health and Addiction.
- Learning outcomes, assessment and marking schedules have been aligned
- Student have clear, easy-to-understand advice about assessments

The wider impact of these improvements are that learning, teaching and assessment are better aligned with each other and with industry expectations, and staff capability and understanding of moderation and compliance processes is strong.

The Bachelor of Social Practice

- Better embedding of mātauranga Māori in courses has supported rising Māori learner success in the programme.
- The 'FONO' programme of academic and pastoral supports for Pacific learners has lifted their success.
- Staff capability in assessment and moderation has improved, and a consistent assessment template has been adopted across the programme, leading to better-designed courses.
- An MoU with Toi Ohomai and MIT was established in 2019, so that partner subsidiaries can provide peer-feedback and external benchmarking on all aspects of programmes.
- The Bachelor of Social Practice Advisory Committee was reviewed, leading to new Terms of Reference with clearer purpose and operations. This has had a positive impact on programme decision-making and improvements.

The Master of Applied Practice (MAP)

The MAP team joined with the whole Social Practice team to undertake capability development in RPL/APL processes. The small number of RPL/APL applications remaining are tracked and actioned and all processes are fully compliant with Unitec policies.

An external consultant Judith Brown conducted a review of the culture and practices of the three programme teams. Significant improvements in academic quality have been achieved, and the team rejuvenated. A highly successful NZQA Monitors' visit was made in 2019, with the commendation stating:

"Alongside with the SWRB panel, the monitor was impressed by the consistency in feedback about the quality and management of the degree that was received by all parties with the panel ... In my experience, this is not often the case within complex intuitions, and is a testament to the manner in which Unitec leadership has responded to the impact of the previous, failed transformation project and the impact of the re-categorisation following the EER reports"

There were 4 recommendations and no requirements. An equally successful Social Worker Registration board full 5-year accreditation was completed in 2019. These achievements reflect the enhancements of the Social Practice team.

A new Head of School was appointed in 2019. The School has engaged staff, is in a good space, has rising enrolments, and is confident that it is operating to a high standard with strong student performance outcomes.

Recommendation FA 6: Work with the relevant standard-setting body to resolve any outstanding matters regarding assessment and moderation practices.

The issues related to the expiring National Certificate in Plumbing and Gasfitting, and involving the Skills Organisation, were resolved in 2019. In part, this was due to the conclusion of the moderation relationship with Skills as Unitec shifted away from unit standard based programmes with the closure, in August 2019, of the Certificate in Plumbing and Gasfitting (CDPGFT).

With the closure date of the CPGFT not able to be extended, a major piece of work was undertaken to transition students from the CPGFT to the replacement New Zealand qualifications. This process was supported by a full time secondment from Te Puna Ako learning and teaching team to ensure assessment (including APL) and moderation practices, and the mapping and transition from a single programme to the new programmes was robust.

Since this time the first courses in the new programmes have been delivered and internally moderated, with ongoing capability development and independent oversight from Te Puna Ako. The internal moderation is being used to inform improvements in the courses and assessment practices in general. Planned external cluster moderation has been delayed due to Covid-19, with arrangements now being made to progress this.

In addition to this work, Unitec's view was that a complete review of the School of Trades & Services, within which the Plumbing and Gasfitting programme was located, was required. A review was commissioned in 2019 from an external consultant Peter Quigg. His report led to the establishment of *Project Takohanga*, including a comprehensive plan for improvements to the culture, management and operation of the School, including its industry engagement, ITO relationships, and managed apprenticeships. Progress on *Project Takohanga* is now well-advanced and starting to realise important benefits for staff and learners (refer to relevant document^{3p}).

Some of the indicators of change include:

- Strengthened staff engagement and improved capability
- Improved academic quality and learner success
- Strengthened relationships with transitional ITOs
- Strengthened academic management and leadership
- Clarity about School and programme operations, roles and responsibilities

Informal recommendations for the School of Applied Business

In addition to the two Schools above, a number of points were made in the EER report in relation to the School of Applied Business. While these did not lead to any formal recommendations, Unitec's judgement was that the issues identified deserved to be

treated as recommendations. In the time since the report, the following has been undertaken:

Major reviews of postgraduate programmes, including stakeholder engagement and revision of learning, teaching and assessment practices:

- Full reviews of postgraduate Business offerings was undertaken by an external consultant. She recommended a “fresh curriculum is required to reflect changes in industry practice and marked demand”. A suite of new programmes – a Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Masters of Applied Business have been developed with extensive stakeholder consultation and support forthcoming. These are awaiting NZQA approval.
- The Master of Applied Practice (Professional Accounting) was fully redeveloped into a new Master of Professional Accounting (MPA). This is awaiting NZQA approval.

The establishment of a customer relationship management system, using Zoho software, to ensure high quality industry engagement and input to programme offerings. This includes developing a new form to record staff - industry engagement.

Improvements to the School’s pastoral and academic support practices for its incoming students have been made, including:

- Tracking of attendance and Moodle engagement to identify and support at-risk learners
- ‘Early Low-Stakes Assessment’ in courses to encourage a sense of early success and to help identify students needing support
- National Assessment Tool testing in key courses, with referral to the [Pathways Awarua](#) programme for students with scores below 4.

A review of the Bachelor of Business was undertaken in 2019. Improvements were identified and are underway, including an updated graduate profile, and updated majors, including a potential leadership major and business analytics major. This work is progressing, cognisant of NZIST initiatives to create a single degree-level programme for accounting.

Relevant documents

[3a Academic Quality Action Plan – Overview](#)

[3b Academic Quality Action Plan – Full Project Plan](#)

[3c Māori Success Strategy](#)

[3d Pacific Success Strategy](#)

[3e International Success Strategy](#)

[3f Under 25s Success Strategy](#)

[3g Priority Group Operational Plan Example](#)

[3h Takitahi – Support Team example](#)

[3i School Action Plan – example](#)

[3j Schools Operations Plan Update](#)

[3k Priority Group Success Strategy RAG Report – example](#)

[3l Head of School Evaluative Commentary - example](#)

[3m Quality Management System Stocktake](#)

[3n Unitec Risk Register](#)

[3o Academic Risk Register – Power BI Dashboard](#)

[3o Academic Risk Register – Report Example](#)

[3o Academic Risk Register – Staff Intranet Resources](#)

[3p Project Takohanga Overview](#)

[3q Programme Evaluation Plan \(PEP\) Example](#)

4. KEQ 1: How well do learners achieve?

KEQ 1: How well do learners achieve?

Unitec learner achievement is generally above targets and improving. Course completions in 2019 are above targets. Qualification completions in 2020 Semester One are above targets and improving, with a particularly strong improvement for Māori learners. This is critically important as part of Unitec's parity targets.

Retention and Progression are both just below the 2019 targets and ITP sector average benchmarks, although rates are strong for Māori and Pacific learners.

Unitec, School and programme targets 2019 - 2022

2019 - 2022 targets were set by Academic Board and approved by the Executive Leadership Team and the (then) Unitec Commissioner in June 2019. The targets were based on past performance and benchmarked against sector performance, and aligned with the goals of Manaakitia te Rito. Targets are also either in line with, or exceed TEC Investment Plan targets. Unitec's 2022 targets represent a 3-5% increase on 2018 actual results.

Unitec	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2019 Target	2020 Target	2021 Target	2022 Target
Successful course completion	83.0%	82.9%	82.0%	83.0%	84.0%	85.0%
Qualification completion	55.8%	53.8%	55.0%	56.0%	58.0%	60.0%
1st year retention	71.5%	70.8%	72.0%	73.0%	74.0%	75.0%
Progression (from L1-4 to higher)	28.9%	31.2%	32.5%	33.0%	33.5%	34.0%
Employment/Further study	84.5%	82.4%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%

Following institute targets being set, workshops were held with Schools to set Programme and School targets that would collectively contribute to achieving the institute targets. Programme targets were generally stretch targets, based on estimates of 2022 EFTS (as they are EFTS weighted) and taking into account past performance and sector performance. School level targets were determined based on programme level targets.

Benchmarking of performance and targets was undertaken using a range of metrics, including:

- Sector averages from Education Counts, typically against ITP and University sector averages.

- Student EPI performance is measured against TEO type (e.g. ITP and University sector averages) as well as key institutions such as MIT, AUT and University of Auckland.
- Some measures, such as GESC, are evaluative primarily against internal benchmarks due to lack of available sector data.
- Student Net Promoter Score (NPS) is regarded as an important 'lead indicator' of progress towards targets. Unitec's NPS is compared against industry NPS benchmarks through an independent market research company.

Most benchmarking data is available in Unitec's Power BI dashboards. This ensures it is available to all staff to support decision-making and judgements about progress, for example, during twice-yearly programme evaluations.

All targets have been set with wide consultation and endorsement across Unitec and among stakeholders. A review of all targets will be undertaken in early 2021.

School	Successful Course Completion Target	Qualification Completion Target	First Year Retention Target	Progression Target
Applied Business	86.0%	61.0%	80.7%	
Architecture	88.0%	55.0%	84.0%	25.0%
Bridgepoint	74.0%	73.6%		65.6%
Building Construction	89.2%	49.0%	79.1%	
Community Studies	85.0%	57.2%	79.5%	
Computing, Electrical and Applied Technology	90.0%	70.0%	79.0%	25.0%
Creative Industries	92.5%	66.0%		
Environmental & Animal Sciences	83.0%	70.0%	82.0%	30.9%
Healthcare & Social Practice	88.0%	65.0%	80.3%	25.0%
Trades & Services	80.0%	45.0%	75.0%	30.7%

Priority Group targets

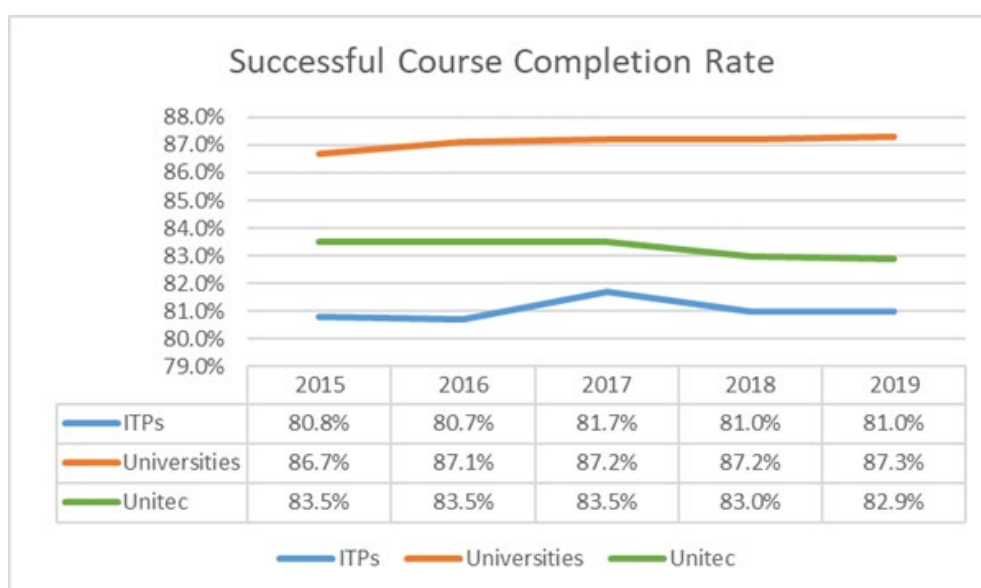
Priority group targets were informed by the School target-setting process. Target-setting was led by the Executive Director Student Success and Priority Group Directors, and has the full support of Māori and Pacific stakeholders.

The target of parity for Māori and Pacific learners is a stretch target. Unitec is fully committed to achieving this by 2022, and has set interim targets that it sees as achievable for 2019 – 2021.

	2019 Target		2020 Target		2021 Target		2022 Target	
	Māori	Pacific	Māori	Pacific	Māori	Pacific	Māori	Pacific
Successful course completion	72.3%	71%	76.3%	75%	81.3%	80%	85.0%	85%
Qualification completion	48.5%	46%	52.0%	50%	56.0%	55%	60.0%	60%
1st year retention	65.0%	60%	68.5%	65%	72.5%	70%	75.0%	75%
Progression	34%	34%	34%	34%	34%	34%	34%	34%
Employment/Further study	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%

Course Completion

In 2019 Unitec's overall course completion rate was **82.9%**. Over 2015-2019 Unitec completion rates were between 83-84%, consistently 2% above the ITP sector benchmark. At 82.9% Unitec has exceeded its 2019 target of 82%, and has the goal of 85% by 2022. While relatively stable, course completions are a major contributor to qualification completions and their improvement is a high priority. Most strategic actions currently underway to address course completions have been implemented since mid-2019 and at earliest would impact on Semester One 2020 results.



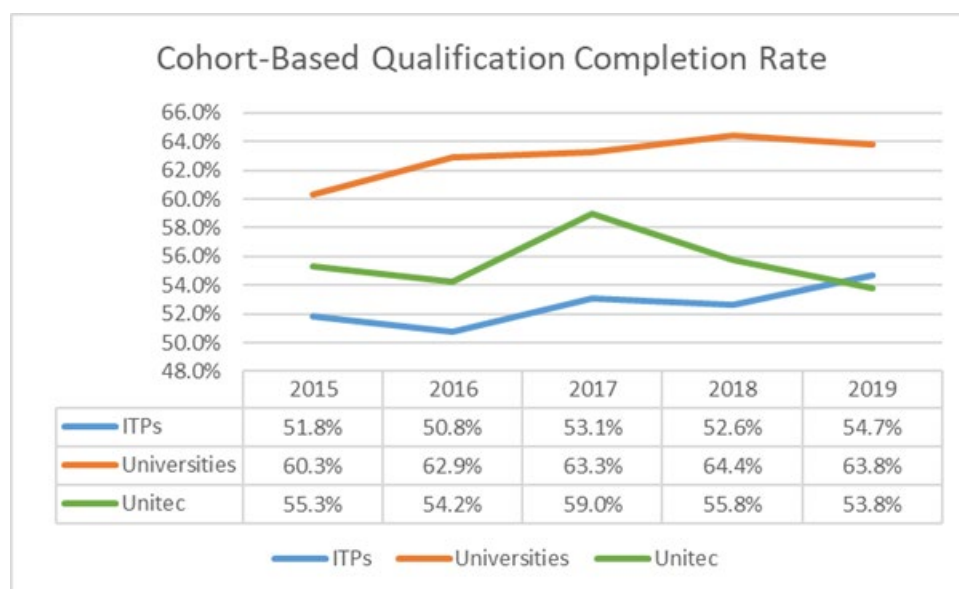
Benchmark data from Education Counts. All Unitec data is from Single Data Return. 2019 SCC of 82.9 is based on August 2020 SDR data.

Cohort-Based Qualification Completion

Unitec's Qualification Completion rate has been consistently above the ITP sector average between 2015-2018. The below table shows Unitec's official reported qualification completion rate of **53.8%**. Using this figure, Unitec's results appears to be inconsistent with a trend of 56-58% since 2015.

This decline in qualification completions prompted Unitec to undertake further analysis (described in the next section). Based on an analysis of the Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Architectural Studies, a truer reflection of Unitec's QCR is **57.2%**.

At the August 2020 SDR, the Qualification Completion rate is **58.2%** for the 2020 reporting year. This is likely to rise further by the end of 2020. It is above the 2020 target of 56% and is a very encouraging result that indicates Unitec's initiatives are leading to better outcomes for learners.



The impact of some International Chinese enrolments on QCR rates

Over 2007-2018 Unitec enrolled a large number of young International Chinese Students into Unitec courses in the Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Architecture Studies in order to allow them access to Unitec's Moodle resources. This was as part of an arrangement whereby Unitec staff and resources were used in teaching at partner Universities in China. Approximately 2,000 students were enrolled part-time for Moodle access, although they were never taught as Unitec students and never intended to complete Unitec courses or qualifications.

The impact of this practice on Unitec's QCR rate, particularly for International and Under-25 students, has been significant and will continue through to 2022. Excluding those students from Unitec's Qualification Completions produces the figures below, lifting Unitec's overall QCR by between 1.0 – 3.5% in different years, and putting Unitec's 2019 result above its target. The impact of this has been on Unitec's EPIs, but has had no impact on TEC funding as all students are International.

Unitec	Reporting Year				
QCR	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Unitec - including Shandong	55.3%	54.2%	59.0%	55.8%	53.8%
Unitec - excluding Shandong	57.3%	56.1%	60.1%	56.7%	57.2%

Under 25 - including Shandong	51.6%	51.3%	58.2%	54.8%	48.4%
Under 25 - excluding Shandong	55.0%	54.4%	60.1%	56.3%	54.1%
International - including Shandong	48.6%	49.9%	62.2%	63.6%	56.2%
International - excluding Shandong	58.6%	59.1%	68.9%	69.7%	78.6%

Excluding Shandong students also has a significant positive impact on QCR for the Schools of Architecture and Applied Business.

School of Architecture	Reporting Year				
QCR	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
School - including Shandong	55.1%	48.0%	47.0%	49.7%	52.2%
School - excluding Shandong	55.1%	48.0%	47.0%	49.7%	67.3%

School of Applied Business	Reporting Year				
QCR	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
School - including Shandong	51.1%	54.2%	64.8%	59.4%	50.3%
School - excluding Shandong	60.7%	64.4%	70.4%	64.2%	68.8%

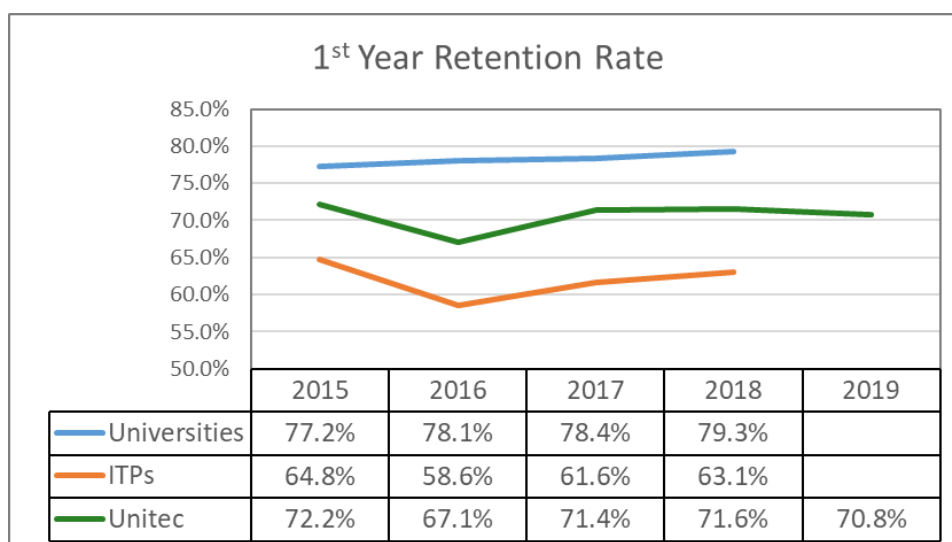
Notwithstanding the positive impact described above, and that a 'revised' QCR of 57.2% exceeds Unitec's 2019 target, the institution is aware that more needs to be done to improve outcomes for learners. A large programme of work is underway to better understand non-completions and a number of major interventions are already in place to improve retention and success; described later in this section.

Retention

First year retention in 2019 was 70.8%, just below the target of 72%, although well above the ITP average benchmark. Improving retention is an important contributor to reducing non-completions and is being addressed through various initiatives, including expanding the use of Early Low Stakes Assessments (part of the early *I See Me* initiatives in 2019), and *Hāpai Ō* – a programme in 2020 targeting courses with poor-performance for first year Māori and Pacific learners.

Early 'lead' indicators of student satisfaction are also improving, and Unitec recognises that this will track through into improved retention and success outcomes:

- The Student Net Promoter Score has risen steadily from -2 in 2017 to +19 in Semester One 2020.
- Student course survey results for Semester One 2020 of an average rating of 8.1/10 are higher than in 2018 and 2019 semesters.

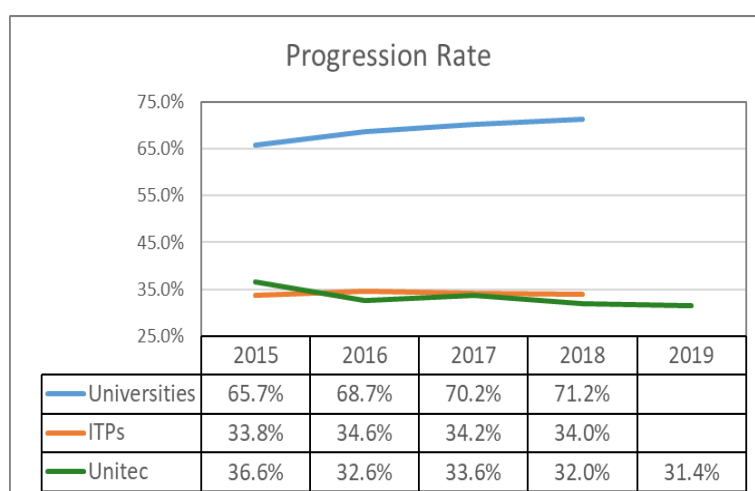


Progression

Progression from Levels 1-4 through to further study is reported for SAC funded students only to align with the default progression reporting in TEC Ngā Kete. Progression for International students is discussed further below with the SAC funding filter removed.

Overall progression was **31.4%** in 2019. This represents a slight decline over the last five years and is just below the ITP sector benchmark. Unitec's School of Bridging Education have the specific goal of helping learners prepare for further study. The School's overall Progression rate is 74.3%, and for the Study and Career Preparation programmes, the rate is 82.9%.

Progression at Unitec is generally strongest among Under 25 learners. Female learners are twice as likely to progress as males, although the reasons for this are not yet well understood. There has been a steady increase in progress in Trades programmes, rising from 6.2% in 2018 to 16.3% in 2020.



Early 'lead' indicators of student satisfaction mean that overall Unitec is confident of attracting and retaining more graduates to higher level courses in future.

Priority Group outcomes

Improved outcomes for Priority Groups is a key commitment for Unitec as clearly signalled by the 2022 parity targets. They are the focus of significant activity and resourcing through the *'I See Me'* project.

All colour coding is based off the 2022 institutional targets

■ >10% below target ■ 0-10% below target ■ 0-10% above target ■ >10% above target

	Māori	Successful Course Completion Rate	1st Year Retention Rate	Qualification Completion Rate	Progression % from Level 1-4 to higher
▲	Māori	73.2%	62.2%	42.1%	42.5%
	Non-Māori	83.9%	71.7%	55.0%	29.6%

Course completions for Māori in 2019 were 73.2%, which follows a gradual decline from 76.3% shown in 2015 and with a widening gap to non-Māori, for whom the overall rate is not declining. Course completions for Māori are above the ITP sector, comparable to MIT, and with similar Māori/non-Māori variances as the sector. Unitec remains committed to the much higher stretch parity targets that it has set.

A number of Schools at Unitec have shown the benefits in consistently higher course completion rates of having comprehensive wrap-around supports for learners. 2019 results for these schools are Healthcare and Social Practice at 85.7%, Community Studies at 81.9% and Creative Industries at 84.1%. Bridgepoint (Unitec's School for Bridging Education) is similarly seeing the benefits of its work with Māori students to embed mātauranga Māori in courses, both through the appointment of a Māori Success Champion, and through strong staff engagement with the *I See Me* programme. Bridgepoint has a sustained plan in place for all priority group learners.

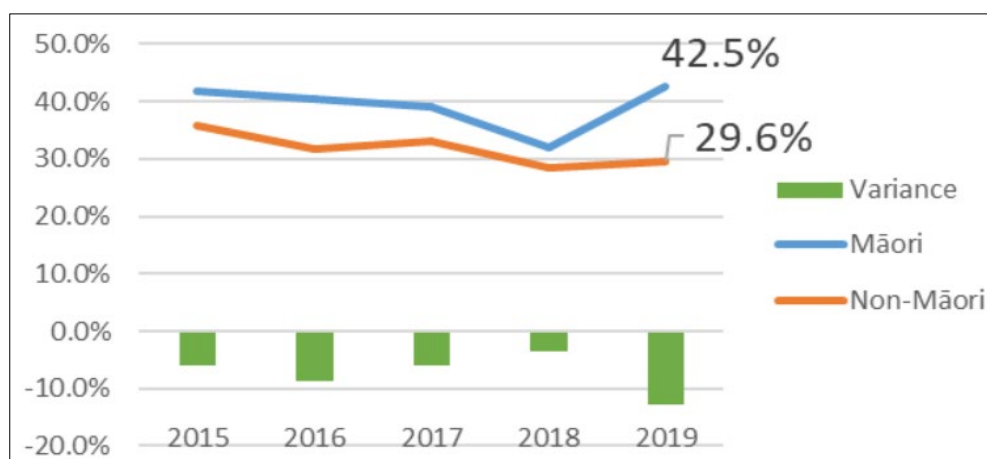
The area most needing to lift achievement for Māori course completions is Trades and Services, where a significant programme of work *Project Takohanga* (3p) is in place to support Priority Group learners and improve their outcomes. The work includes addressing an issue with the delivery of managed apprenticeships that negatively impacts on course completions. A standout performer within Takohanga is the *Māori Pacific Trades Training* initiative, providing excellent pastoral care and support for priority group learners.

First Year Retention of 62.2% remains well above the ITP sector benchmark, with the gap between Māori and non-Māori narrowing by 3% over the period 2016-2019. This gap is expected to continue to narrow, as the results of intensive pastoral and academic support through projects such as *I See Me* will have a positive impact on retention.

Progression for Māori of 42.5% is well above Unitec targets and has been consistently higher than non-Māori for the past five years. This needs to be better understood. One explanation offered by Schools is that employment opportunities for lower-level graduates have reduced and are attracting some graduates back to further study. It is also likely that the huge efforts put into improving relationships and pastoral and

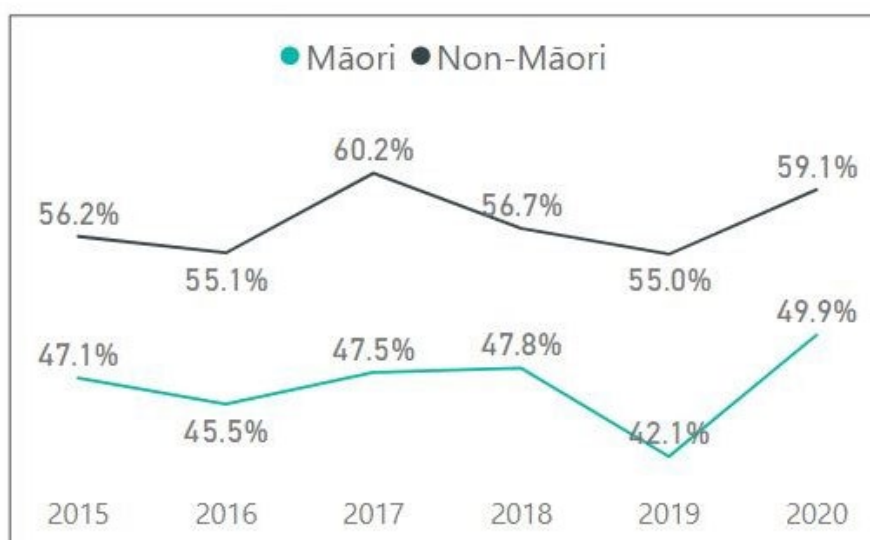
academic supports for Māori and Pacific students is bringing some graduates back to Unitec for further study.

Māori Progression rates share similar trends to comparable ITPs (MIT, Wellington Institute of Technology) over 2015-2019. It is commonly a downward trend, reaching its lowest in 2018 and bouncing back in 2019.



Progression Rate for Māori (from Levels 1-4 to higher)

Māori qualification completions at the August SDR in 2020 have lifted to **49.9%**. This is their highest rate in the last five years and getting closer to the target of 52% for 2020, and is likely to rise further by end of 2020. This is a promising result that reflects the increase in Māori Student Satisfaction NPS score to +14 and improved overall Student Course Survey ratings by Māori, steadily rising from 7.8/10 in 2018 to 8.1/10 in Semester One 2020.



Māori Qualification Completion Rates latest data at August SDR

The August SDR rate of **49.9%** is also more consistent with small rises in 2016-2018 results, than with 2019's low rate of 42.1%. One contributor to the 2019 result is that

part-time Māori students gain qualifications at approximately half the rate of full-time students. A buoyant labour market in 2019 is likely to be a contributor to the 2019 result, and this requires further investigation.

The 2020 variance with non-Māori is consistent with a steady 8-9% over 2015-2018, although this is wider than the ITP sector benchmark for variance. Improving Māori learner outcomes by reducing these gaps in course and qualification completion is a top priority for Unitec and its goal of parity by 2022.

All colour coding is based off the 2022 institutional targets

>10% below target
 0-10% below target
 0-10% above target
 >10% above target

	Pacific	Successful Course Completion Rate	1st Year Retention Rate	Qualification Completion Rate	Progression % from Level 1-4 to higher
Pacific		72.1%	60.4%	47.1%	44.1%
Non-Pacific		85.0%	73.2%	55.0%	28.5%

Pacific course completions of 72.1% have been relatively steady since 2015, although they are slightly below the ITP sector benchmark. As with Māori course completions, those Schools at Unitec which have the most advanced and comprehensive pastoral and academic support systems are most likely to have consistently high course completions. The Schools of Healthcare and Social Practice, and Creative Industries are among these schools, and other Schools are learning from their practices.

The School of Trades and Services has among the lowest course completions, and large Māori and Pacific cohorts. Managed Apprenticeships are recognised as a contributor to this rate, due to a conflict between the SAC 3+ funding category and the often-late timing of on-job assessments. The resultant lag leads to missing grades and has a negative impact in the near term on course completion rates, although it is resolved in the longer term outcomes for learners. The improvement plans in place for the School of Trades through *Project Takohanga* and the *Māori Pacific Trades Training* initiative are a major focus in 2020.

The Progression rate for Pacific learners of 44.1% has been consistently higher than non-Pacific over the last five years. Unitec's Pacific graduates place a high value on progressing to further study.

Pacific learners' qualification completions were 47.1% in 2019, above the 2019 target of 46% and with a narrowing gap of 7.8% to non-Pacific. This variance remains larger than the ITP sector benchmark however.

As noted above the Schools of Creative Industries, Healthcare and Social Practice have very well-embedded plans for academic and pastoral support, and have the highest qualification completion rates for both Māori and Pacific learners.

Across Unitec, three major initiatives in 2019-2020, the *I See Me* project, *Hāpai Ō*, and the Learner Outreach project, are designed to address these issues and better embed

supports in all Schools. These projects represent a major commitment by Unitec and are described in later sections.

All colour coding is based off the 2022 institutional targets

>10% below target 0-10% below target 0-10% above target >10% above target

Under 25yrs	Successful Course Completion Rate	1st Year Retention Rate	Qualification Completion Rate	Progression % from Level 1-4 to higher
15-24yrs	80.0%	71.6%	48.4%	44.0%
25+yrs	86.2%	69.8%	60.6%	21.7%

Under 25s course completions of 80% are at a steady rate with a fairly consistent 6% gap below the rate shown by students aged 25 years and older since 2015. Rates for 2018 were below the ITP sector benchmark and 3% higher than Auckland partner subsidiary MIT.

First Year Retention for Under 25s has been just 1-3% below 25+ Years for the last five years. This variance is smaller than the ITP sector benchmark and MIT in Auckland.

Progression for Under 25s is well above target at 44%, and consistently above the rate shown by +25 Years over the last five years, and slightly above the ITP benchmark.

Qualification completions for Under 25s of 48.4% were above the ITP sector benchmark and partner subsidiary MIT in 2018. As noted however, excluding Shandong University students lifts the Under 25 rates each year. For 2019 the 'revised' QCR lifts from **48.4% to 54.1%**.

Under 25s have a high crossover with Māori and Pacific cohorts. This is particularly evident in the School of Trades & Services, where the increasingly high volume of 15-19 year olds, and apprenticeship completion times both negatively impact on outcomes. Addressing low completions in Trades & Services is the focus of significant effort through Project Takohanga, where barriers to completion are being identified and addressed.

All colour coding is based off the 2022 institutional targets

>10% below target 0-10% below target 0-10% above target >10% above target

International	Successful Course Completion Rate	1st Year Retention Rate	Qualification Completion Rate	Progression (all students)
International	92.0%	87.3%	56.2%	73.5%
Domestic	80.8%	67.2%	53.1%	31.9%

International learner course completions in 2019 were 92%. This is a good result, exceeding the Unitec target of 82% by 9.8%, and on par with results across the University and ITP sector. First Year Retention is similarly high at 87.3%, well above the

Unitec target of 75%, comparable to AUT and University of Auckland, and considerably higher than the ITP sector and MIT.

Qualification Completion rates of 56.3% dropped by 7.2% from 2018. As noted however, excluding Shandong University students lifts the International student rates each year. For 2019 the 'revised' QCR lifts from **56.3% to 78.5%**. This rate would be above both the university and ITP sectors.

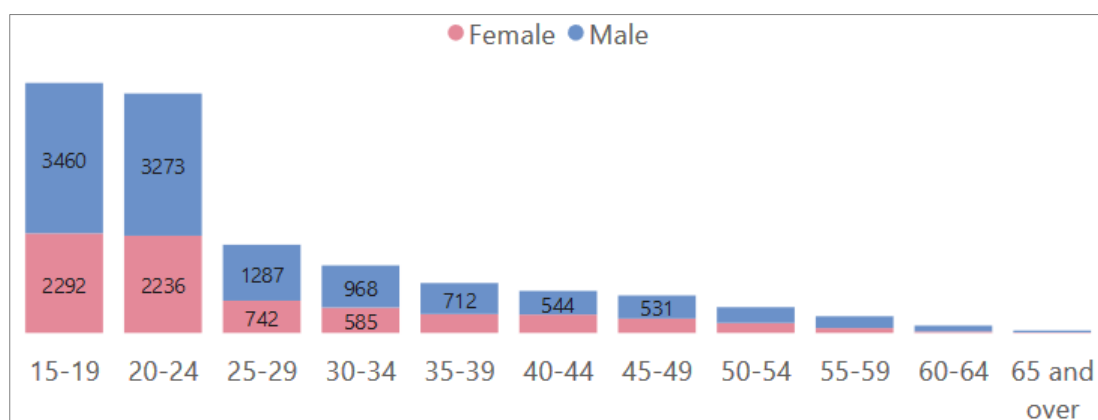
Unitec's commitment to supporting International learner success is very high. All staff are required to complete training on the International Code of Practice in 2020.

Improving understanding of non-completions

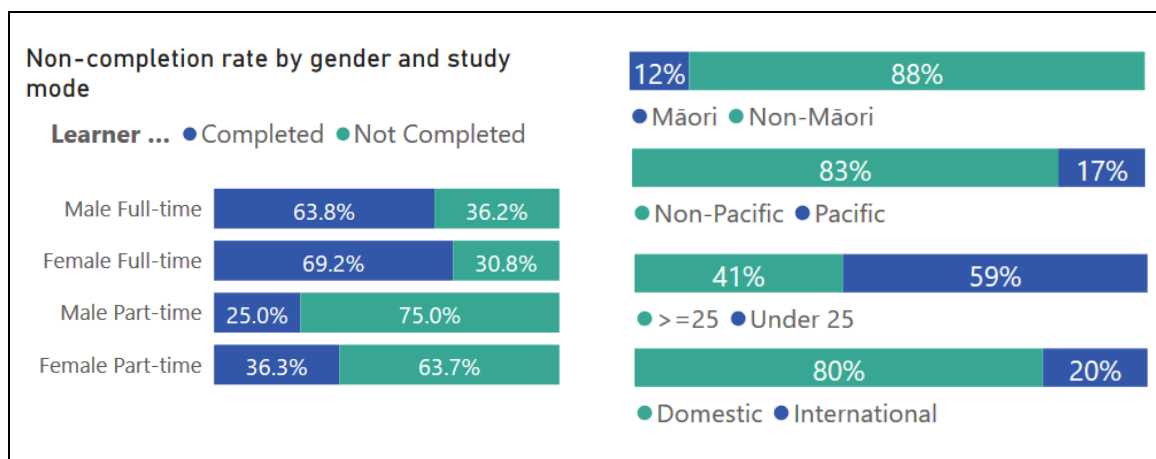
Reducing the gap between course completions and qualification completions remains a high priority for Unitec. It is positive that Unitec's Qualification Completion rates are beginning to trend upwards, with an August 2020 SDR rate of 58.2% and a rate for Māori learners of 49.9%. Projects such as the *Learner Outreach Project* and *I See Me*, which are underway in 2019-2020 will reduce the gap between course completions and qualification completions by ensuring learners are well-prepared for study, and courses are well-designed to support learner success, particularly in the crucial first weeks and months.

A common concern of all Schools in the past has been insufficient data and insights into non-completions. In 2020, a significant amount of data analysis has been undertaken. This is represented in the Power BI Non-Completions Dashboard that is available to all staff and is being used to design better interventions and to establish predictors of learners at-risk of non-completion.

Among the information now available, key points about Unitec's non-completing learners are summarised here.



2019 data on Non-Completions



- In 2019, 2328 non-completers (61%) were male, and 1473 (39%) were female.
- The median age of non-completers was 21 years, with 32.7% of non-completions between 15-19 years, and 29.6% between 20-24 years.
- Learners 55 years and over have higher rates of non-completion than other students. They comprise just 10% of all Unitec learners.
- Part-time students were much more likely to non-complete, both for male and female students.
- 47% of those coming from employment (7153 students) were non-completers, compared with the median of 44%.
- Female part-time learners have high non-completion in the Under 25 age group. Beyond 25 years they perform as well as full-time learners.
- As noted earlier, Under 25s, International and part-time students' completions have been negatively impacted by the reporting of Shandong University students.
- Other factors (e.g. financial reasons such as non-payment of fees preventing completion) require further investigation.

The typical profile of non-completers is of learners who pass most courses and stay for a year or less. Around 70% study for one year or less, while 63% pass more than half their courses, 15% pass fewer than half, and 22% pass none (often also attempting no assessments). This indicates that reasons for non-completion are less likely to relate to learner ability or course-level success than to wider factors, such as gaining employment or the stress of juggling part-time study with other commitments.

The Power BI Non-Completion dashboard has provided better insights into this data. In 2020, the Learner Outreach Project is adding to this data by gathering information on the pastoral and academic support needs of those students who are identified as at-risk.

Effective interventions for non-completion

Initiatives have been in place since late-2019 to reduce non-completions by better monitoring at-risk learners, and understanding and meeting their needs. A number of senior staff attended TEC's Oritetanga Conference in Auckland in 2019, and came away positive that much of the same approach was being adopted to varying degrees at Unitec. The important organisational and cultural work underway includes:

- Good collaboration occurs across Support Services and Schools, ensuring that a student-centric approach is taken. Information is shared effectively, allowing remedies to be implemented that address both students' academic and pastoral needs.
- The Learner Outreach Project (below) is a great example of joined-up activity by student supports, teaching teams, operational and data analysis teams, Priority Group teams and others.
- The commitment at Unitec to putting students at the heart of all activity is evident from the Executive Leadership Team down. As a result Student Satisfaction ratings and Student Course Survey results are the highest they have ever been, and most importantly, Qualification Completions are improving.

Case Study: The Learner Outreach Project

The '*Learner Outreach Project*' began in late 2019 as part of the drive to reduce non-completions. At time of writing, the resources allocated to this programme provide a full-time, trained Outreach Advisor for each of the ten Schools, embedded in the School and working alongside teachers in outreach and pastoral and academic supports for all learners. Its introduction has been timely, and during the COVID-19 lockdown the Learner Outreach Project proved an outstanding success, maintaining critical connections with all Unitec learners. This is evidenced in the Student NPS rating of +19 despite COVID-19 lockdown, and in the high number of positive comments from students relating to support during lockdown (more detail in the COVID-19 response case study relevant document 2o).

Dedicated Learner Outreach Advisors work from a strengths-based kaupapa to provide a centrally-managed, distributed service that is coordinated with Schools' teaching teams. Advisors maintain a database that brings together SEAtS attendance data, enrolment and grades information, School-specific data, and Advisors' outreach data. The database is also used by School staff to help make timely interventions for at-risk learners.

[During COVID-19 lockdown in Semester 1, the Outreach team was expanded to allow outreach to all learners.](#) Over 5000 outbound calls were made, reaching 87% of learners and identifying 1,307 who were at 'high-risk' and in need of support such as pastoral care, issues with online learning and access to digital devices. This critical service was very well-received, driving a lift during lockdown in Unitec's Student Satisfaction Ratings and course survey ratings.

Improving data and understanding

Across Unitec, various projects are underway that will provide improved data and better inform interventions to reduce the risk of non-completion.

In 2020, the *Non-Completion Project* has gathered and analysed data trends, initially from one School and then from across Unitec for the period 2015-2019. It is now able to predict those learners who are likely to be at risk with good levels of accuracy. Current estimates are that the probability of non-completion can be established *prior* to commencing study with **up to 83%** accuracy, depending on the School. This predictive capability is expected to be available at point of enrolment for 2021.

The modelling and prediction is achieved by identifying:

- Study mode (part/full-time)
- Age group
- Prior activity (work, study, etc. before enrolling at Unitec)
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Residency
- New to Unitec or returning
- Highest secondary school qualification
- Cumulative Successful Course Completion Rates (for a student in a particular programme)

Once attending Unitec, further data will be collected about learners from:

- SEAtS attendance data
- Moodle activity data
- The Learner Outreach Project, which identifies learners' pastoral and academic needs

By combining these data sources from enrolment and the early weeks of study, probability of non-completion will be established with even greater accuracy. The model allows for identifying those variables that are most important, and designing interventions to meet needs. Interventions can include addressing pre-enrolment suitability of applicants, and putting in place specific academic and pastoral supports.

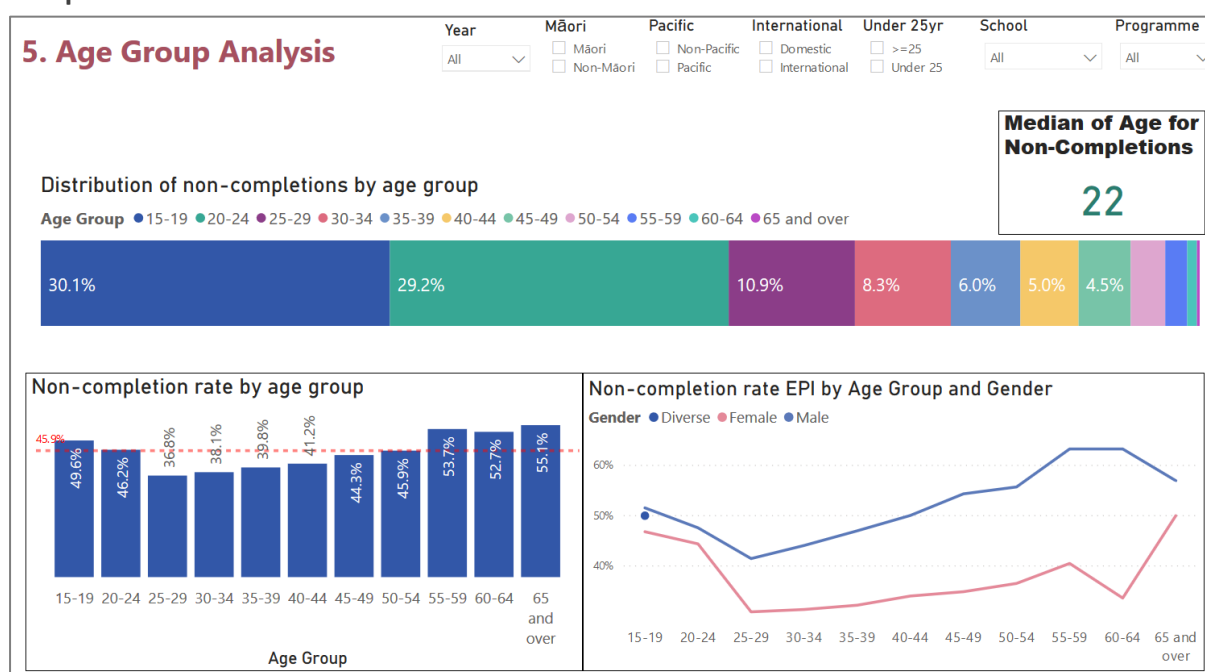
Beginning in 2020 all Schools are providing an '*Evaluative Commentary*' on their educational performance, using the results of their programme evaluations (related document 4b). Already, School evaluative commentaries are shedding light on systemic concerns. For example, they have presented a consistent and convincing narrative about the impact on Māori and Pacific learner success of a range of external factors such as

work, family, church and community commitments. This has further highlighted the importance of early identification and effective intervention to support Unitec's Māori and Pacific learners.

It is very clear from School Evaluative Commentaries that those programmes with consistent, well-designed and implemented plans of action for tactically applying student supports and addressing non-completions have the best qualification completion rates. They also have the least fluctuation in those rates. Good examples of this are the Schools of Creative Industries and Healthcare and Social Practice.

In combining data sources such as Evaluative Commentaries and predictions on non-completion, Unitec's goal is twofold: First, to be able to identify and support learners at-risk. Second, to identify best practices among Schools and design more effective interventions.

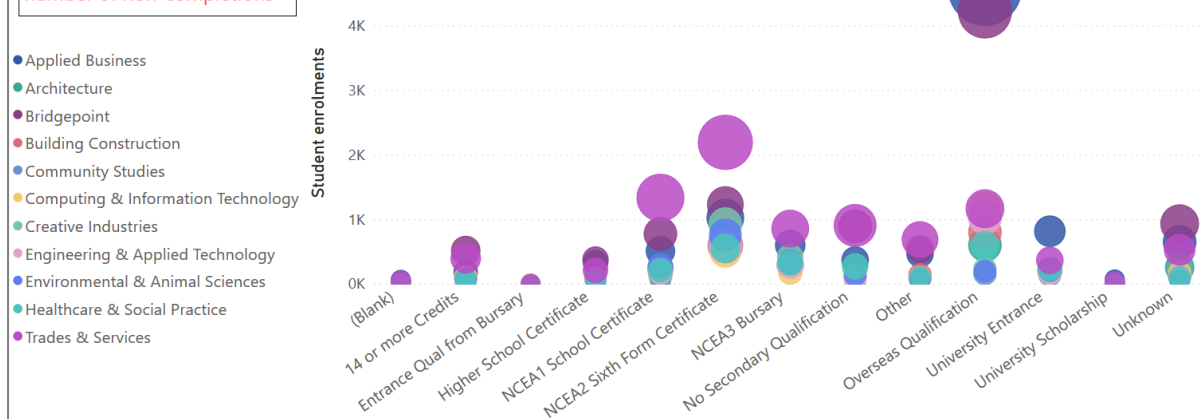
Below are screenshot examples of some of the data available in the Power BI Non-Completions Dashboard:



11. Highest Secondary Qualification by School

Student enrolments and non-completion rate by school

Size of balloon indicates the number of non-completions



Relevant documents

[4a Educational Performance Indicators Data SDR August 2020](#)

[4b Head of School Evaluative Commentary - example](#)

5. KEQ 2: What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

KEQ 2: What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

Unitec gathers and evaluates a range of information on the usefulness and benefit of learner outcomes to students and stakeholders. This includes direct industry engagement through staff/industry relationships, Alumni LinkedIn networks, Industry Advisory Committees for all programmes, annual Graduate Surveys, Alumni Surveys, and ongoing surveying of graduates in specific programmes across Unitec. Benchmarking of data is undertaken with comparable ITPs to support robust judgements about outcomes.

Graduate outcomes

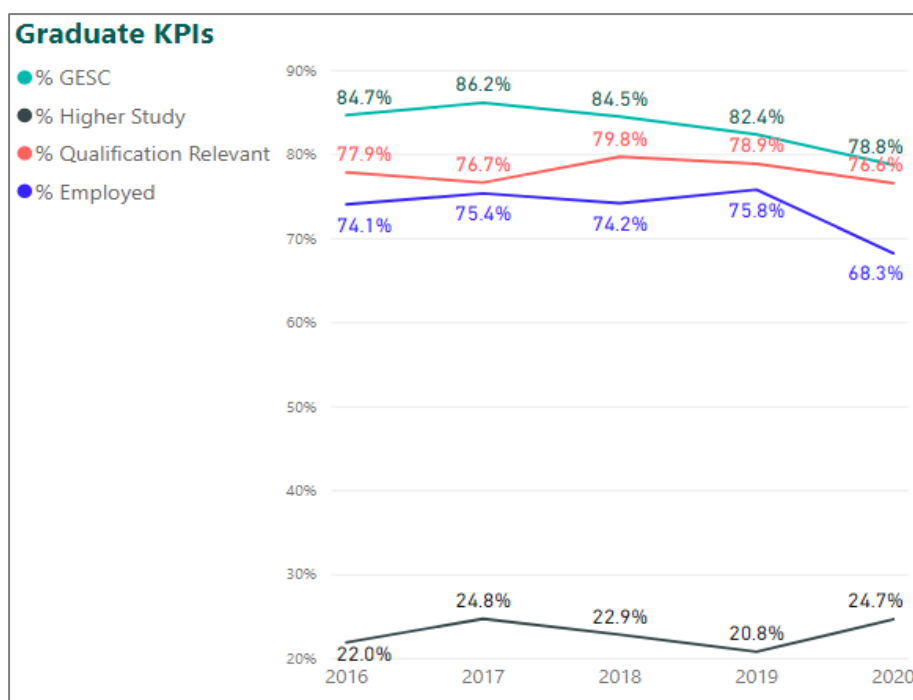
Unitec's Graduate Survey is conducted bi-annually in May and October. It collects data on graduates' employment and study status, their reflections on the Unitec learning experience, and on the alignment of their knowledge, skills and capabilities with Graduate Programme Outcomes. The 2020 results refer to the October 2019 and May 2020 surveys undertaken of 2019's Semester One and Two graduates respectively. The same survey pattern is repeated each year. The most recent response rate of 37.1% is up on the previous year's 36.4%, and is sufficient to provide assurance that survey insights are representative.

Graduates Employed, Studying or Combining (GESC) has been relatively stable over 2016-2018 at around 84-86%, and broadly comparable to other ITPs in 2018 (MIT 76%, Ara 87.2%, Otago Polytech 94%). Employed has also been steady at 74-76%.

GESC has dropped in the Semester One 2020 survey to 78.8%, likely due to COVID-19 impact on employment.

The 2018 Alumni Survey had a higher employment figure, with 75% of respondents in paid work and another 8% who had started their own businesses. The Alumni Survey was sent to 26,556 graduates who graduated between 2013-2018. It received 1,313 responses for a response rate of 5%. While informative, this lower rate reflects the time since graduating for many recipients.

Unitec's combined target for GESC is 85%. In setting this, Academic Board is mindful of the limited influence it has on the labour market and graduate decision making regarding further study. Academic Board has decided that following the 2020 Graduate Surveys it will review whether different targets for the value of our graduates should be set. This work is currently underway.



Every year two Graduate Surveys are conducted, then combined, to produce annual data. The results from the first survey in October 2019 showed a GESC of **83%**, with both Employed and Studying up 1% from the previous year. However, the result changed significantly following the May 2020 survey, which was conducted during the COVID-19 lockdown. The May results led to a 2020 annualised figure of **78.8%**. This was a 3.6% drop from 2019, based on 7.5% lower Employed, partly offset by a 3.9% increase in Studying, and probably due to the lower number of graduates finding employment during COVID-19 and instead choosing further study.

Responses to the question related to Qualification Relevance shows a rating of 76.6%, which is within the band of 76-80% over 2016-2020.

Employment

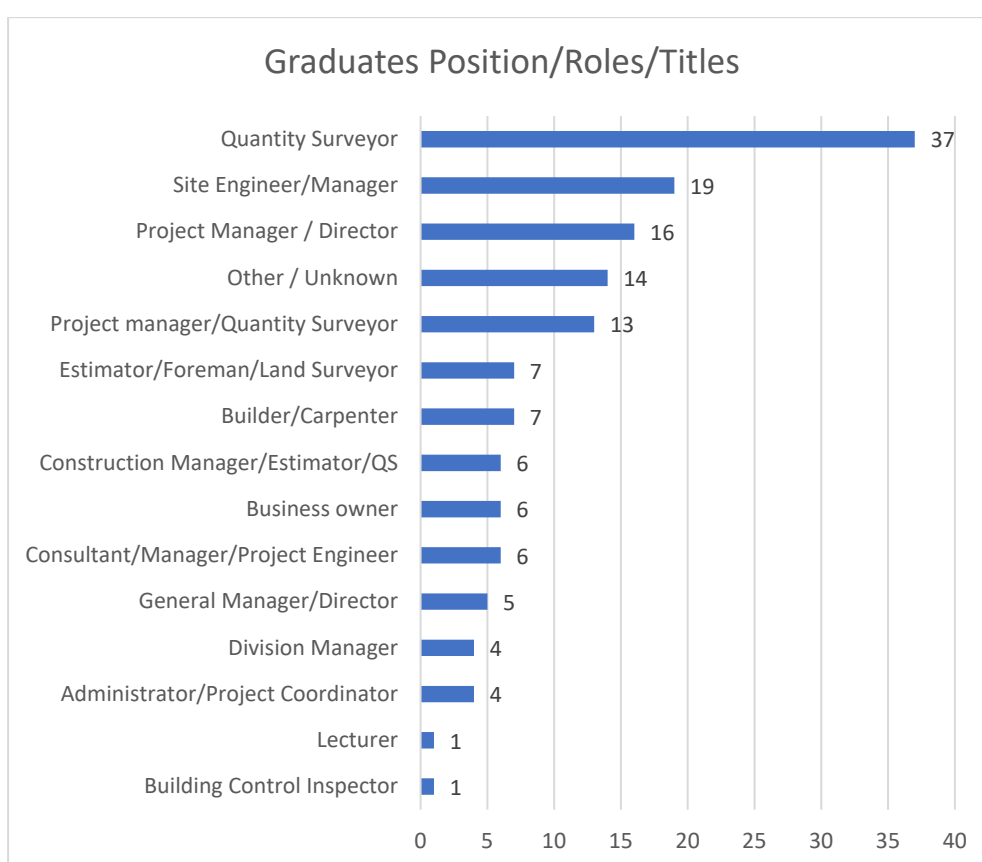
Unitec's 2019 GESC target of 85% was met in areas where strong employment demand is continuing during COVID-19, including the Schools of Nursing, Social Practice and Community Studies and Computing. Unitec graduates in discipline areas such as cybersecurity, engineering, construction management and nursing have a long history of being sought by employers, even during troughs in economic cycles. This reflects the collaboration between Unitec teams and industry to develop and deliver programmes in ways that meet the needs of students and employers. For example:

- Early Childhood Education students continue to work while studying.
- Cybersecurity students have internships with industry partners.
- Sport and Recreation students have placements with Auckland Council.

- The Diploma of Veterinary Nursing offers a fully blended delivery to enable students to begin internships while still studying.
- The Bachelor of Construction Management offers its 3rd year in block course format, allowing students to begin cadetships before graduation.

Graduate Destination Surveys were undertaken in all Pathways in 2018. They show that the majority of Unitec's graduates gain employment in small-medium size enterprises across Auckland.

Unitec has long established relationships with a number of larger employers who regularly recruit Unitec graduates, for example, in the construction and engineering sectors this includes Fulton Hogan, Tonkin and Taylor, and Dempsey Wood.



Example of Graduate Destination Report data, Bachelor of Construction Management, February 2019

Graduates in employment regularly achieve professional recognition and awards in discipline areas such as [Performing and Screen Arts](#), Construction Management, and Trades and Services. This recognition shows that Unitec graduates have a high level of capability in their professional disciplines.

Connecting learners, teachers and employers

Gaining high quality employer feedback on the value of graduate outcomes remains a challenge. In addition to surveying, Unitec maintains a range of 'Industry Connect' activities for students and employers. The 2019 Career Connect events hosted over 80 business with 680 students attending. During lockdown these have become 'Virtual Connect' events.

Employer engagement remains challenging because recruitment has slowed during COVID-19. At time of writing, a [3-day Virtual Careers Fair for employers and students](#) has just concluded, enabling over 900 students to meet 40+ employers. For example, Auckland Transport is accepting applications into its Graduate Programme, and Datacom is recruiting for new entrant roles.

EMPLOYER EVENTS (Virtual Events)		
DATE	TIME	EVENT
29 July 2020	12 pm	Ministry of Education Summer Internship & Graduate Programme Recruitment Session
31 July 2020	11.30 am - 12.30 pm	Vodafone Employer Presentation and Live Q & A
6 August 2020	12.00 pm - 1.00 pm	KiwiRail Internship Programme Presentation

Industry and community-partnered research is a fundamental part of Unitec's approach to applied learning. There has been a 185% increase in industry-funded research projects since 2015.

All disciplines have active Industry Advisory Committees that meet regularly to maintain the relevance of Unitec's offerings and to gain feedback on the workplace competencies that are needed. In addition, Unitec is rolling out a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, enabling staff to log their engagements. Together with Industry Advisory Committees, these logs provide industry feedback to inform programme design and review.

Industry Connect Events 2020 (Virtual Career Fairs)

DATE	TIME	EVENT
17 August 2020	11.00 am to 1.00 pm	Business Connect
	4.00 pm to 6.00 pm	EAS Connect
18 August 2020	11.00 am to 1.00 pm	Trades Connect
	4.00 pm to 6.00 pm	Construction Connect
19 August 2020	11.00 am to 1.00 pm	Computing Connect
	4.00 pm to 6.00 pm	Engineering Connect

Unitec Mt Albert Campus, 139 Carrington Road, Mt Albert, Auckland
Register at industry@unitec.ac.nz



Under COVID-19, organised industry engagement events have mostly gone online.

Feedback from industry is crucial to the quality of consistency reviews and the continuous improvement of academic offerings. Consistency review outcomes have been good with 17 out of 18 reviews being “Sufficient”. As Unitec’s academic quality team Te Korowai Kahurangi has gained greater understanding of the expectations and requirements of consistency reviews, it is developing a more comprehensive approach to graduate data collection. Surveys now include specific questions on graduate outcomes for all qualifications. Further improvements will gather more detailed feedback from graduates and employers to better inform programme improvements.

Unitec’s Industry Engagement Strategic Framework

A new Industry Engagement Framework has been established to provide oversight of School engagement (5b). It identifies evidence to be collected and reported by Schools, with agreed accountabilities. It also feeds into Unitec’s academic risk register to ensure risks are identified and mitigations are in place.

Engagement with industry has been variable across Unitec Schools in the past. It is very clear that those schools with a robust Industry Engagement Plan are most likely to have programmes well-aligned to industry needs. Plans should include strong placement / internship programmes (where applicable), a high level of staff professional currency, and good data on graduate competencies. The School of Environmental and Animal Sciences Industry Engagement Report 2019 is provided as a good example of the evidence available to inform improvements to programme design and delivery (5c).

Graduate outcomes for Priority Groups

Based on the Graduate Survey, Māori graduates are the only Unitec group who meet the GESC target of 85%. Māori graduates out-perform non-Māori and all other priority groups on % Employed, and are second-highest on % Studying after Under 25s. The strong Employed outcome is partly attributable to the high number of Māori graduates in areas with high employment demand, including Nursing, Social Practice and Community Studies.

The 2020 Graduate Survey received 1158 responses in total. Responses from Priority Groups were Maori (74), Pacific (173), Under 25 (437) and International (144).

All colour coding is based off the 2022 institutional targets

>10% below target 0-10% below target 0-10% above target >10% above target

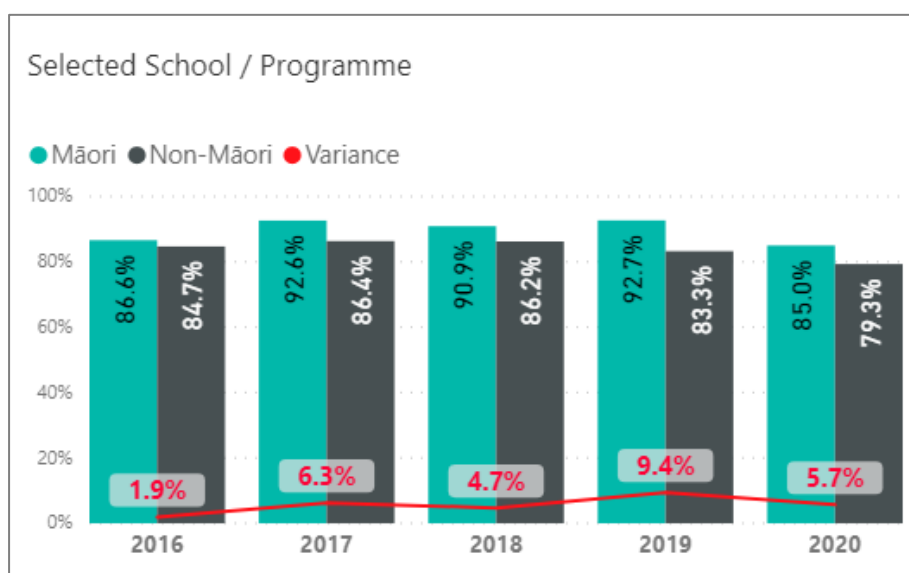
Priority Groups

Māori ▲	% Employed	% Higher Study	% GESC	% Qualification Relevant
Māori	73.8%	30.0%	85.0%	77.3%
Non-Māori	69.3%	24.3%	79.3%	77.1%

Pacific ▼	% Employed	% Higher Study	% GESC	% Qualification Relevant
Pacific	72.5%	27.0%	82.4%	75.7%
Non-Pacific	69.1%	24.2%	79.2%	77.4%

Under 25yrs FLAG ▲	% Employed	% Higher Study	% GESC	% Qualification Relevant
15-24yrs	61.5%	33.2%	77.8%	70.7%
25+yrs	74.4%	19.4%	80.8%	80.3%

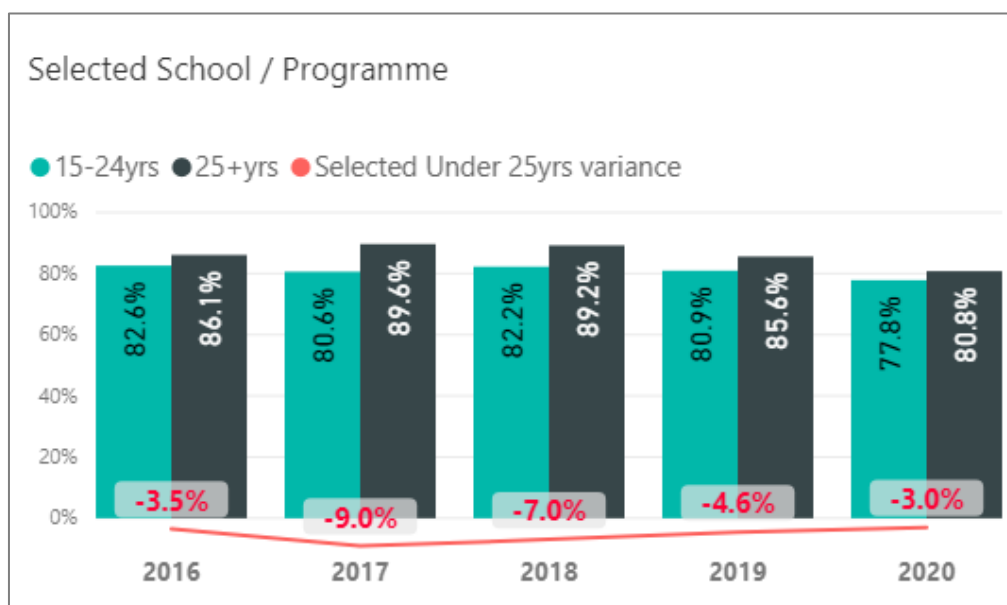
International Flag ▲	% Employed	% Higher Study	% GESC	% Qualification Relevant
Domestic	71.5%	25.6%	81.6%	76.1%
International	55.7%	17.8%	65.3%	86.2%



Graduates Employed, Studying or Combining Rates

There has been a positive GESC variance for Māori graduates (74 respondents in 2020) over non-Māori in recent years in all age groups other than 15-19 years. This variance occurs both for female and male graduates.

Pacific graduates (173 respondents) have a similar pattern, with smaller variances ranging from +7.4 in 2016 to +3.3% in 2020. Under-25 Pacific graduates (437 respondents) have consistently poorer GESC than 25+ years, with variances ranging from -3.5% in 2016 to -3.0% in 2020. Work is currently underway with the Unitec Career Development team focussed on targeted opportunities for Under-25s for placements, internships and jobs as part of the Under-25s Success Strategy.



Graduates Employed, Studying or Combining Rates

Under 25s overall have lower GESC outcomes than 25+ over 2016-2020. Within this there are two stories: Under 25s have maintained a positive variance of 14-15% in Higher Study compared with 25+, and a corresponding negative variance of 13-17% Employed compared with 25+. Overall, Under 25s rate their qualifications as less directly relevant to employment outcomes than do older graduates.

Progression into study as a learner outcome

Within Unitec, Bridging Education programmes have the aim of helping learners prepare for further study. The school's overall Progression rate is 74.3%. For the Study and Career Preparation suite, the rate is 82.9%. Those latter programmes are notable for working closely with 'destination' programme partners, and using feedback from graduates and internal stakeholders, to ensure they provide learners with the skills they need for future study success. Progression for Pacific learners in these programmes sits at 81%. For Māori it is 71.8% and the School is working hard to improve this.

Case Study: Unitec Pathways College

The number of 15-19 year olds (school leavers) transitioning from secondary school into tertiary study at Unitec has grown greatly in the last few years, with over 1000 EFTS enrolling in 2019. This is largely due to significant effort put into improving secondary-

tertiary partnerships, and the successful establishment of the Unitec Pathways College (UPC) in 2016.

Unitec Pathways College develops courses in partnership with 22 secondary schools and kura (39 in 2021) to bridge the gap to tertiary study and provide learning pathways that lead to improved employment outcomes for learners and their families/whānau. While at school, students can now select Unitec study as part of their subject selection, and gain NCEA-aligned unit/achievement standards in areas such as carpentry, automotive, creative and design, health and computer science.

In 2019, 64.4% of Unitec Pathways College students completed all their unit/achievement standards, making this form of study a critical 'hook' to keeping young people engaged in school and into further study, with the support of their whānau. Targeted, learner-centred pastoral care from the highly enthusiastic and dedicated UPC team is a critical part of its success.

Some of the indicators of success for UPC and its learners are:

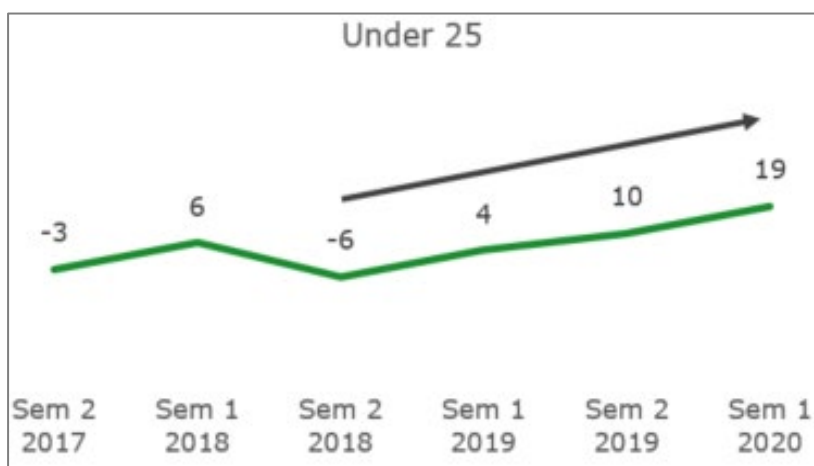
- Between 26-35% of NCEA Level 3 students have progressed into Unitec annually for tertiary study post engagement with UPC programmes since 2017.
- Over 75% of NCEA Level 2 students who have studied in a UPC course have then returned to their respective secondary school or kura for Year 13 – meaning that they are retained in study.
- 15-20% of NCEA Level 2 students that studied in a UPC programme, have returned to Unitec for an NCEA Level 3 programme.
- Many UPC students return to school to complete Year 13 and then return to Unitec again after completing secondary school study.

Through UPC, Unitec has seen a resurgence of valued relationships with Kura Kaupapa Māori and Rumaki Reo providers, from which many young rangatahi now transition to Unitec. In 2020, 38% of UPC students are Pacific and 26% are Māori.

During COVID-19, UPC has been showcased by the Ministry of Education's Trades Academy as an example of a best practice response. Te Rina Leonard, Deputy Chief Executive, Learning Delivery, Huarahi Trade Academy has provided this feedback:

"We appreciate the way that you have quickly enabled the delivery of services to students remotely, either via telecommunication and/or digital platforms... We are thankful for the continued opportunity to work together to overcome difficulties in the delivery of STP programmes to Huarahi Trade Academy students as New Zealand moves between Alert Levels so that together we ensure the safety of our learning community."

The 15-19 year old group is the only priority group with steadily increasing participation rates at Unitec. Under 25s are increasingly likely to promote study at Unitec, reflecting the value of their study experience and UPC's contribution.



Student Net Promoter Score

Learner Engagement with research and higher study

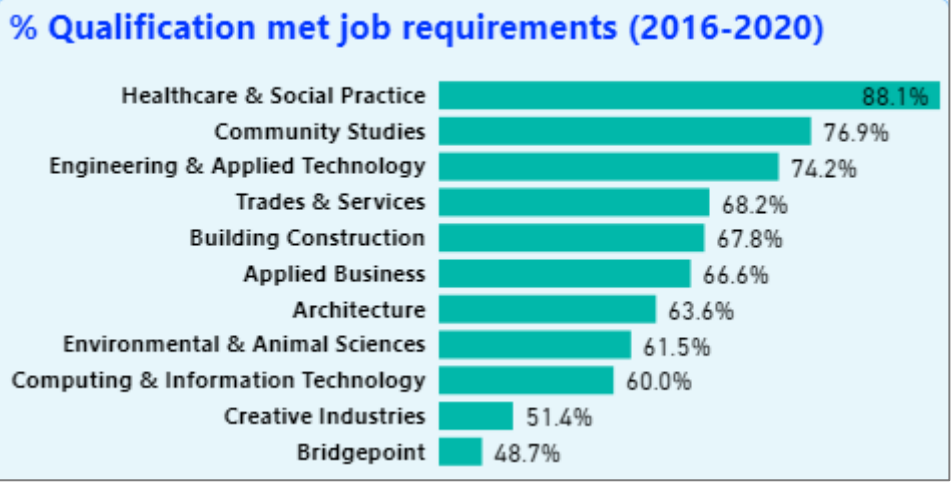
Unitec's Research Strategy focuses on strongly partnered industry and community research and student-integrated research. These two drivers combine to help students gain relevant employment and to engage successfully with further study. Student integrated research has grown strongly at Unitec and is a significant point of difference to other NZIST subsidiaries that has benefits for students, teaching and learning.

A notable example is [cybersecurity, which has been a Strategic Research Focus](#) at Unitec for seven years. This focus has led to the development and approval of the [Diploma in Cybersecurity](#), which is attracting strong interest from industry. For example, NZ Defence visited in July 2020 to find out more about the diploma.

Value to learners of skills acquired

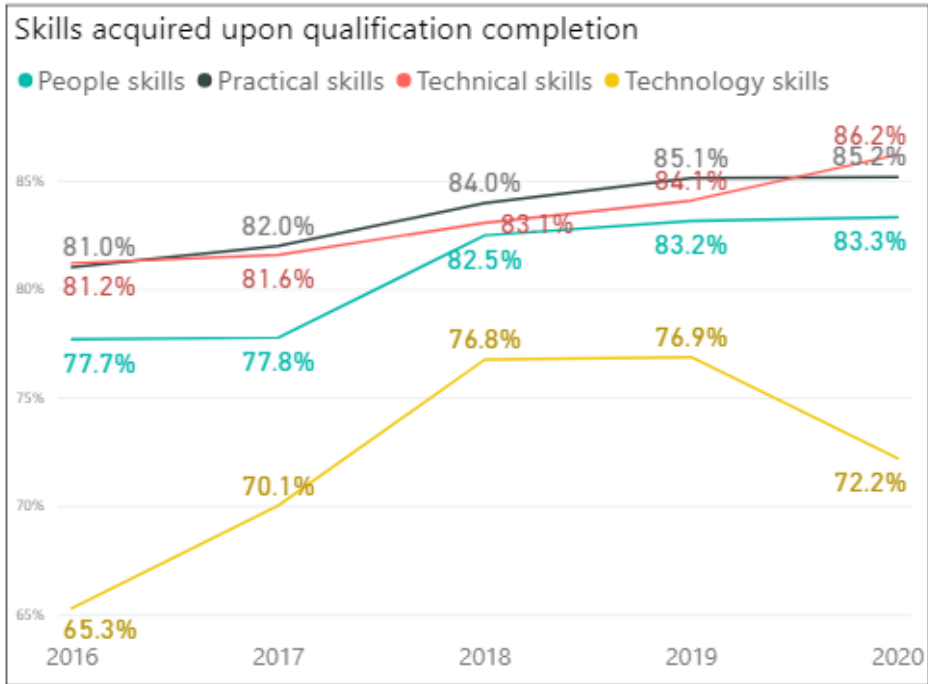
Unitec's 'Net Promoter Score' measures whether graduates would recommend Unitec's programmes to others. The NPS in 2020 stands at +19, and has risen from -2 in 2017. This rating shows that Unitec students value their study experience at Unitec and the opportunities it provides them for employment, further study and other outcomes.

In 2020, 87.2% of Unitec Graduate Survey respondents said that their "learning needs were met". 64.1% rate their qualification as "worth the investment", while 68.8% said that their qualification "met job requirements". All three measures have variances of less than 3% over 2016-2020. This shows that Unitec education and qualifications are highly valued.



Graduates of Healthcare and Social Practice, and Community Studies rate their qualifications highest consistently over 2016-2020. Engineering, Trades and Construction qualifications are also seen as highly relevant. These students are in high demand, to the extent that qualification completions are negatively impacted by the number of students choosing to take job opportunities before completing their study.

An important challenge for Unitec is to support these students through part-time completions alongside employment. Part-time study increases the risks of non-completion, requiring further support. For this reason the Bachelor of Construction offers its 3rd year in block course mode to allow students to begin industry-sponsored cadetships before graduation. The School also maintains a comprehensive industry engagement log with over 350 employers, allowing it to keep in touch with students and promote the importance of completing qualifications.



All students at Unitec – skills acquired

Overall, graduates have reported a steady increase in the value of Unitec programmes in providing both employment and higher-order skills over 2016-2020. Between 83-85% reported a Very Successful or Somewhat Successful rating on Practical, Technical and People skills acquisition in 2020, indicating that programmes are well-aligned to industry and stakeholder needs.

During study, Unitec students are also acquiring highly valuable academic, professional and higher-order skills from Academic Support Services. Students make heavy use of Career Workshops with 1912 students attending in 2019 and 881 to-date in 2020. A further 498 students have had individualised CV writing sessions in the same period. Overall, students who engaged with Academic Support Services at least once in 2019 were 35% more likely to return and complete their programme than those not accessing the service at all.

Value of outcomes to Māori and Pacific stakeholders

Unitec maintains very high levels of support for graduate outcomes from its Māori Advisory Rūnanga and Pacific Advisory Fono Fauautua. This ongoing support is essential to ensuring the best pathways for Māori and Pacific graduates. Both the Rūnanga and Fono were involved in the development and endorsement of their respective Unitec Success Strategies. Both advisory groups fully support the 2022 Parity targets. Māori and Pacific educational performance and progress towards strategic outcomes are regularly reported to both groups, who meet 4-5 times per year to scrutinise performance outcomes. Rūnanga attends key Māori events each year, such as Māori staff hui and Kahurangi (graduation).

Pacific graduates maintain notably strong, positive connections to Unitec. They are more likely to recommend Unitec for study than are non-Pacific graduates, and value their qualifications more highly. Nearly a third of the current Pacific staff at Unitec are themselves graduates of Unitec, remaining strong supporters of the educational experience that Unitec offers.

At all levels of study, the contribution of Unitec students is valued by their Māori and Pacific communities. A particularly notable example is in the postgraduate and research space through the work of Ngā Wai a te Tūi, Unitec's Māori and Indigenous Research Centre, and the involvement of postgraduate students in its community-focused projects.

Case study: Ngā Wai a te Tūi



Led by Professor Jenny Lee-Morgan (Waikato-Tainui, Ngāti Mahuta), Director of Ngā Wai a te Tūi (NWATT) has the mission “to lead innovative kaupapa Māori research that contributes to te puna mātauranga and supports flourishing whānau, hapū, iwi, marae and Māori communities”. Since opening in February 2019, all the projects undertaken by NWATT work with and for communities for new knowledge creations, development and advancement. <http://www.mai.ac.nz/mai/mai-ki-wairaka>

Currently NWATT has 12 significant, externally funded Kaupapa Māori projects underway, many with postgraduate student involvement and all in collaboration with Māori communities.

The first project, [Te Manaaki o te Marae](#), partnered with Te Puea Memorial Marae in Māngere to better understand the response of the marae to homelessness in the Auckland housing crisis and to develop strategies for scaling this success. Project outputs were co-produced with the Manaaki Tangata team of Te Puea Memorial Marae and with Unitec Masters students.

A follow-on project [Marae Ora Kainga Ora \(MOKO\)](#), is a \$4.5m Endeavour Research Programme in partnership with five South Auckland Marae. This kaupapa Māori research investigates the evolution of marae and the development of kāinga ora for whānau and community wellbeing, in South Auckland and all over New Zealand.

Professor Lee-Morgan says that this project “... will effect transformative, inter-generational change for whānau and the wider community... Marae-led interventions bring an added value as a unique, culturally-based network with deep reach into community, across country and even overseas”.

Ngā Wai a te Tūi is a good example Unitec’s student-integrated, applied learning and research model. It aligns with institutional values, is a genuine collaboration of community, students and teachers/researchers, and benefits the wider Unitec community.

Relevant documents

[5a Graduate Survey 2020](#)

[5b Industry Engagement Framework 2020](#)

[5c Industry Engagement Report Example 2019 - Environmental and Animal Sciences](#)

[5d Alumni Survey 2018](#)

[5e Graduate Destination Report Example 2019 - BCONS](#)

[5f Student Net Promoter Score Survey Semester One 2020](#)

[5g Unitec Research Strategy 2015-2020](#) (note: new strategy in approval process)

[5h Research Annual Report 2019](#)

6. KEQ 3: How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of learners and other relevant stakeholders?

KEQ 3: How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of learners and other relevant stakeholders?

Over the last three years, a huge effort has gone into continuous improvements to Unitec's academic offerings and learning and teaching practices. Unitec's approach to academic quality is that it must be fully aligned to strategic direction, consistently applied, and continuously evaluated. Unitec is confident that its suite of programmes have robust, contemporary designs and delivery that meet all quality requirements, and that its teachers are highly competent.

The Learning & Teaching Strategy and Te Tīpare

Unitec's Learning and Teaching Strategy has been recently updated. The strategy (6a) supports Manaakitia te Rito, and was developed alongside Te Tīpare, Unitec's framework for embedding mātauranga Māori (6b).

The Strategy establishes principles for learning and teaching that cascade through policies, guidelines, activities and resources to ensure consistency of academic quality and direction. It is supported by Te Puna Ako, Unitec's team responsible for the quality of teaching and learning; and by Te Korowai Kahurangi, the team responsible for academic quality assurance. All academic offerings must align with this strategy.

High quality academic support for Māori learners is a top priority at Unitec. Te Tīpare guides teachers in approaches that support the target of parity, and ensures the needs of Māori learners are taken into account. During 2020, all teachers are undertaking professional development to build their competency to work with Māori learners. All staff are required to gain the Living Te Noho Kotahitanga capability development 'badge' or another of the badges specific to supporting Māori or Pacific learners.



In 2020, Yo Heta-Lensen (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Hine), a teacher in the Early Childhood Education team, has been named as one of [New Zealand's top tertiary teachers by Ako Aotearoa](#). Yo is Unitec's first winner in the Kaupapa Māori category. The Unitec whānau are very proud of Yo's achievement, coming at a time when Unitec is making a deep commitment to the principles of Te Noho Kotahitanga and the embedding of mātauranga Māori and Kaupapa Māori in teaching practices.

Case Study: Teacher Capability Development

Having highly competent teachers is a top priority at Unitec. All teachers must regularly show evidence of effective teaching and demonstrate their professionalism as educators through alignment with Unitec's Teaching Competencies.

Unitec's Teaching Competency Framework



Achievement of Teaching Competencies by all teachers ensures a consistently high standard of teaching practices, based on self-evaluation and robust evidence and assessment.

Competence is evidenced via a suite of approximately 30 Unitec-developed digital micro-credentials or 'badges'. Teachers self-evaluate to identify areas for development. They can then gain badges by providing evidence of their existing skills, practices and qualifications, or they can engage in the professional development that is available with each badge. All badges require evidence of reflection and an improvement in practice, and can be awarded at three levels:

1. Mauri Oho / Emerging
2. Mauri Tū / Demonstrating
3. Mauri Ora / Modelling

The awarded 'badge' is in the form of a digital micro-credential that belongs to the teacher and can be displayed in online portfolios and sites such as LinkedIn.

Among the most recently-developed badges is one that recognises the advances many teachers are making in online learning and teaching during COVID-19 lockdown.

Badges for Living Te Noho Kotahitanga and Designing Group Assessments



The Teaching Competency Framework sits alongside other evaluative practices for teachers such as peer observation and student course evaluations. It is gradually being embedded in recruitment and promotion processes so that standard criteria are applied to teacher capability across all Unitec processes.

Since its inception in late 2018, 935 badges have been awarded to Unitec teachers and it has become a well-established and accepted part of each teacher's toolkit. The framework and badging process have also attracted interest in their wider application from Ako Aotearoa and a number of NZIST subsidiaries.

The current list of available badges and number of each badge issued to Unitec staff since 2019:

- Living Te Noho Kotahitanga (224)
- Te Tipare – Embedding Mātauranga Māori (5)
- Working with International Learners (14)
- Teaching Pacific Learners (74)
- Design Collaborative Learning (36)
- Design Group Assessments (5)
- Moodle Standards (100)
- Moodle – Learning Design Basics (52)
- Moodle – Design a Learning Sequence (3)
- Work Integrated Learning – Strategy Design and Selection (10)
- Design Summative Assessment (18)
- Improve Summative Assessment (36)
- Communicate Effectively with Learners (51)
- Embed Active Learning (face to face) (7)
- Echo 360 Classroom Engagement (5)

- Literacy Learning Strategies – Writing (0)
- Literacy Learning Strategies – Reading (0)
- Moodle for Assessment (19)
- Moderation Policy and Procedures (143)
- Pre-Moderate Assessment Materials (24)
- Post-Moderate Assessor Decisions (7)
- Peer Teacher Observations (58)
- Making the Transition to Remote Learning (27)
- Academic Integrity (19)
- Working with Graduate Profiles
- Evaluating Graduate Profiles (6)
- Pacific Learners – Success and Retention (7)
- New Teacher Induction (23)

An early evaluation of the Teacher Capability Development approach was undertaken in mid-2019. At that time, 27% of badges had been achieved at Mauri Oho (Demonstrating) level, and 22% at Mauri Ora (Modelling) level. Te Puna Ako concluded that this was good evidence of behavioural and practice improvements as a result of capability development. 61% of teachers rated this approach to capability development an improvement on previous offerings.

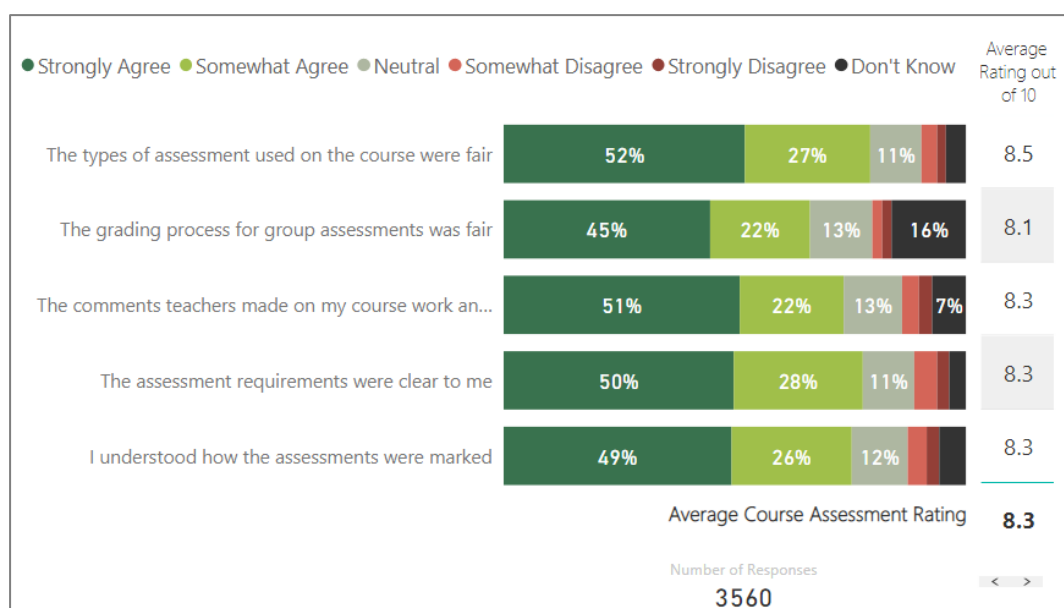
There has now been sufficient time since the introduction of badges to see impact on learner outcomes, so further evaluation will be undertaken.

Assessment

Unitec is confident it is maintaining pedagogically sound assessment practices and has robust processes in place to support teacher capability in assessment. Te Puna Ako supports teaching staff in assessment design and moderation, with eight badges from the teacher capability suite relating to moderation and assessment. There have been 221 assessment-related badges issued over the past 18 months, with some including the Unit Standard 11551 Quality Assure Assessment. High quality assessment is critically important to learner success, and these efforts in upskilling are key to effective assessment design.

Te Puna Ako provides tailored support for assessment design where it is needed. For example, the 2019 NZQA Monitor's report for the NZ Diploma in Business (Level 5) raised concerns about the quality of assessment and moderation. Te Puna Ako worked closely with the Applied Business School to review and amend assessment activities and moderate all summative assessments. A Progress Report was submitted to NZQA on 30 June 2020, indicating that all improvements relating to assessment and moderation were in place by Semester 2 2020.

Unitec's course evaluation survey shows high levels of student satisfaction with assessments. Performance is consistent across the past five semesters for all assessment statements.



Course Assessment Statements – Semester 1 2020 – Total Unitec

Internal and external moderation plans are maintained by Programme Academic Quality Committees. All moderation must be completed on the basis of the agreed moderation plan and reported through Course and Programme level evaluations. Internal moderation is peer-to-peer and increasingly undertaken in clusters.

Unitec's National External Moderation from NZQA has been "Satisfactory" for the last four years. The last "Not Satisfactory" result was in February 2017.

In 2019 there were nine Student Grade Appeals submitted across Unitec. Of these, just two were upheld. Across an organisation as large as Unitec, with high volumes of assessment, this is a good indicator of high quality assessment practices. Further improvements to the Academic Appeals process now require students to seek informal resolution with the Student Support team prior to submitting a Grade appeal. To date in 2020, there have been just three appeals with one upheld.

Assessment of postgraduate research

Level 9 and 10 research projects are assessed by both internal and external examiners approved independently of the supervisors. Examiners operate blind of one another in most cases. Examiners' assessment reports form a critical part of the learning process, providing the opportunity for high level expertise to inform the postgraduate student's writing practices and their research.

Supervisors who work with students on responses to assessment reports must be on the Supervision Register, the criteria for which includes both regular professional

development and research engagement; the register is audited biannually. Oversight sits with the Postgraduate Research and Scholarship Committee.

The learning environment and activities

Unitec's physical and virtual learning environments are designed to a high standard, using specifications that are research informed. All new spaces are well-equipped and are reviewed using staff and student feedback to ensure they meet learner needs and industry best practice.

Creating student-centred learning is a key part of the teacher capability suite, which includes two badges on creating learner-centred environments and eight badges on effective learning design. The learning environment is guided by Unitec's Principles for Learning & Teaching, to ensure it:

- is learner-centred
- is an active process, balancing independent and collaborative learning
- values and embeds mātauranga Māori
- is based on respectful, reciprocal relationships between people, places and contexts

The quality of learning and teaching is consistently the top scoring item in Unitec's Student Net Promoter Score (NPS) Satisfaction Survey (6d). Student course evaluation surveys (6e) similarly demonstrate a high level of approval of course content with continued strong ratings across course content and structure which are key drivers of student satisfaction.

Unitec is committed to high academic standards and Integrity for all students and staff. Academic integrity is promoted through the Student Academic Integrity Moodle course and quiz. Students are strongly encouraged to understand Unitec's expectations, their role as students, and the consequences in cases of misconduct. 7974 attempts have been made at the Academic Integrity Quiz.

For staff, an Academic Integrity badge is available as part of the Teacher Capability Development process.

Research

Unitec is the ITP sector leader in research and was highly successful in the last PBRF round. Unitec's Research Strategy states that teaching, learning and research are interdependent and that teaching is informed by applied research which is industry engaged.

Unitec has been offering degree-level programmes for 25 years, and postgraduate degrees for 20 years. It has eight masters programmes and one doctoral programme, and has produced 1559 masters graduates and 13 doctoral graduates. Professional and vocational education are core characteristics of all these programmes. This is

underscored by Unitec's commitment to outstanding teaching that is responsive and emphasises the significance of practice.

Postgraduate programmes are developed in response to needs identified in communities and industries. For example, the Masters and the Doctor of Computing are focused on innovation in computer science and applied projects around cyber security, robotics and 3D Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping. Doctoral projects are often financed through partnerships with organisations such as NIWA, MPI and Callaghan Innovation. In 2019, IBM funded five industry scholarships for level 9 students undertaking research in partnership with industry or community organisations.

Each postgraduate programme has the support of a Programme Academic Quality Committee and a Proposals Committee where Level 9 and 10 proposals are developed and candidacy is approved. The Postgraduate Research and Scholarship Committee has oversight of the postgraduate study and assessment journey.

Tūāpapa Rangahau, led by the Director of Research and Enterprise, administers all aspects of postgraduate programmes, facilitates professional development, and provides extensive postgraduate student study support. Unitec also has a Health Research Council accredited ethics committee, which processes around 100 student and staff applications annually.

All staff and student research at Unitec, including theses, is stored in a digital repository 'Research Bank', making them available worldwide. Unitec's ePress provides quality-assured, open access publications by Unitec students and staff. Two examples are [this piece on carbon accounting](#) and another on the [Hihiaua Studio Landscape/Architecture project in Whangarei](#).

A highlight on the Unitec calendar is the *3 Minute Thesis* competition that occurs within the annual Unitec Research Symposium. The competition challenges postgraduate students to answer the question "What are you researching?" in a presentation of no more than three minutes. The fast-paced presentation to the Symposium audience is about getting students to consolidate their ideas and convey their research discoveries.

Unitec's strength and scale in applied and community-focused research has major benefits for learners and communities. Regardless of the programme level, School staff are actively engaged in research that informs courses, and often that involves learners as partners in the research itself. Unitec students collaborate with external stakeholders in research that makes a difference to the lives and wellbeing of whānau, communities and industry. Often, this collaboration leads to employment opportunities for graduates.

Programme development, review and improvement

Unitec programmes are regularly reviewed and updated to meet the needs of students and stakeholders on a five year cycle. The key teams supporting programmes in this work are Te Korowai Kahurangi, Unitec's academic quality team, and Te Puna Ako, the learning and teaching capability team. While timeframes can sometimes slip for

programme reviews, the processes and outcomes are robust and of high quality and improving all the time.

Programme developments require a 'business case' and Executive Leadership Team approval, and an institution-wide planning approach that allows internal stakeholders to feed into the design and delivery. External stakeholders such as employers, accreditation boards, industry advisory partners and communities also have established consultation processes.

The recently submitted Master of Applied Business and Master of Professional Accounting are good examples of programme developments that have been well-conducted, with robust, effective stakeholder engagement and input, and high quality programme documentation. A slightly older, but also high quality example is the Bachelor of Veterinary Nursing, approved for delivery in mid-2019.

All Programme Academic Quality Committees (PAQCs) have a Programme Development Group with responsibility for overseeing proposed changes, including new developments.

The Academic Approvals Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Board. It assesses all programme applications against NZQA approval and accreditation criteria and Unitec's own internal criteria. This approach has been highly successful and in 2019 all submissions for approval, accreditation and Type 2 changes were approved by NZQA.

Programme improvement and review are an important part of Unitec's commitment to ensure that programmes maintain relevance and credibility. All programmes are reviewed regularly to ensure that stakeholders' needs are being met. A yearly Programme Evaluation and Planning process (PEP) captures improvement actions that are monitored through programme committees. The Āta Kōrero process (described later in this section) supports this. Further evidence to support self-evaluation and review depends on the level of the programme, and includes stakeholder feedback, consistency reviews, monitoring, and programme five-yearly reviews.

Registration body accreditations are critically important to academic quality and learner outcomes. As an example, Unitec's Nursing team has a highly productive and proactive relationship with the Nursing Council of New Zealand. Council members visit each semester to speak to the graduating year students. All lecturers have current practising certificates and all Registered Nurses have competency. Lecturing staff contribute to the NCNZ Disciplinary Hearings Committee and the NCNZ pool for the Accreditation for Nursing Programmes across Aotearoa.

Case Study: Project Takohanga

A recommendation from the 2018 EER that related to a single Plumbing programme ultimately led to a full-scale review of the activities of the School of Trades & Services, from which *Project Takohanga* was launched.

Project Takohanga was initiated to address significant School-wide issues of academic quality, staff culture and student outcomes. It is an exemplary case study of Unitec's robust approach to academic review and improvement. The review was undertaken by an external consultant, and the new Head of School, Lee Baglow, has embraced the review findings and driven the wholesale implementation of its recommendations in 2019-2020.

Project Takohanga made 16 recommendations relating to areas such as leadership, staff engagement, management of academic processes, and the programme portfolio. From these, 101 actions were identified by the Head of School and the Takohanga Project Steering Group.

Less than a year later, the early impacts of this evaluation and improvement can be seen in a highly-engaged staff team who are building capability and refining academic quality processes. Student and stakeholder relationships have benefited greatly, and the project is on track, with learnings and improvements that are soon to be applied to other parts of Unitec.

Unitec continues to lead the way in gas-fitting training by offering new short course



Approach to Self-Assessment

Strong performance follows strong self-assessment

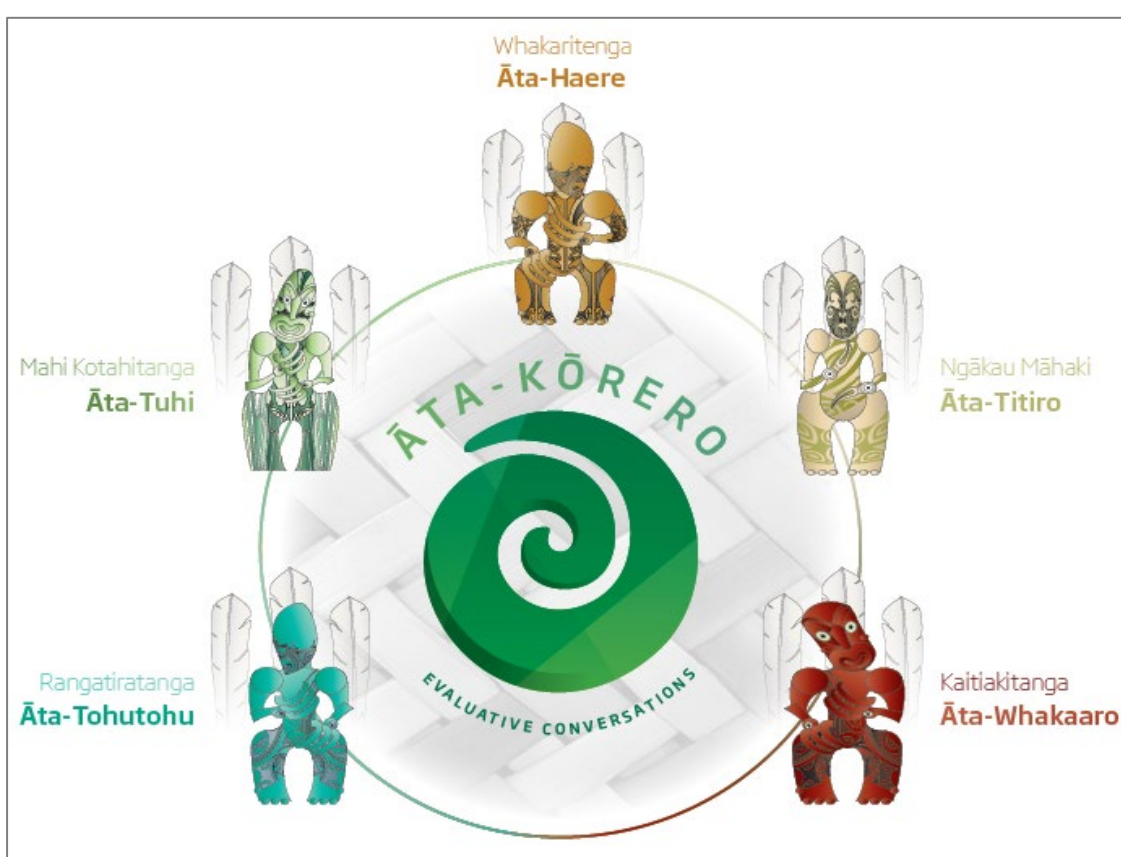
Self-assessment has been an area of exemplary development since the last EER. Processes such as external benchmarking and revamped programme evaluation that were in their early stages of development in 2018 are now well-formed and maturing, providing comprehensive, effective self-assessment that is built on growing evaluative capability.

Based on its strong self-assessment, Unitec is able to clearly identify important areas for improvement and to refine existing practices.

Case Study: Āta Kōrero

Led by Te Korowai Kahurangi and team member Rosemary Dewerse, Unitec introduced the Āta Kōrero framework for Programme Evaluation & Planning (PEP) in early 2019.

Post-2018 EER, it was apparent that Unitec's self-assessment capability was lacking in a number of areas, including evidence gathering, analysis, goal-setting and self-rating. Working with Unitec's Kaihautū, an evaluative framework for Programme Evaluation & Planning was developed, based on *Āta*, a mātauranga Māori concept that invites practitioners into careful paying of attention, and practising deep thoughtfulness, mindful of relationships.



Āta Kōrero has five components that weave it into the programme evaluation process:

- Āta-haere: Preparation for a conversation
- Āta-titiro: Looking over the landscape / reading your evidence
- Āta-whakaaro: Interpreting your evidence / reflecting
- Āta-tohutohu: Setting SMART goals for continuing improvement
- Āta-tuhi: Reporting on (a point of accountability)

Course Evaluation & Planning (CEPs) sit alongside programme evaluations as a standardised process for evaluation and reflection of courses. CEPs are required for all courses. An online tool is used to support their evaluation as a continuous practice, rather than simply a summative event. The form includes reflective questioning split into Pre-Delivery, During, and Post-Delivery, and addresses issues such as compliance, moderation and learning hours.

Āta Kōrero is in its fourth iteration at the time of writing, with clear evidence of evaluative capability building across Unitec. Refinements are underway, so that all programme and course evaluations are now carefully templated. Te Korowai Kahurangi staff pre-populate templates with data and provide guidance notes and information on evidence sources, rubrics and clear criteria for judgements and ratings, based on NZQA criteria, and advice on how to establish SMART goals. The next step is for teams to establish their own targets and performance levels and put these into programme evaluations.

The impact of Āta Kōrero is readily evident in the improved quality of evaluative practices and action planning that is seen by Te Korowai Kahurangi. This is also leading to improvements in programme delivery. Programme teams are highly involved in evaluation now, and have a greatly improved sense of ownership of the process. Their understanding of learner achievement is much-improved, as is their contribution to identifying and implementing improvements.

Heads of School 'Evaluative Commentaries'

At Academic Board's request, Heads of School now provide a twice-yearly 'Evaluative Commentary' on outcomes at the level of School and discipline. This is a new part of the reporting regime in 2020, and 'rolls-up' from Programme Evaluation and Planning and adding a Head of School perspective.

Evaluative Commentaries sit between the more granular course and programme evaluations and action plans, and institution-wide review and reporting. They support School leadership to consider outcomes and progress towards goals at discipline level, using the same structure as for programme evaluations, based in KEQs.

Heads of Schools must consult with Priority Group Directors and Te Puna Ako in reaching their final judgements. In their first iteration of Evaluative Commentaries in early 2020, Heads of Schools have demonstrated a fine-grained, accurate understanding of the needs of their learners, particularly Māori and Pacific cohorts. They have also identified areas where data for making judgements is lacking and more is required (examples of Evaluative Commentaries included in Relevant Documents 6h & 6i).

Relevant documents

[6a Learning and Teaching Strategy 2020](#)

[6b Te Tipare Framework 2020](#)

[6c Online – Blended Learning Guidelines \(Draft\) September 2020](#)

[6d Student Net Promoter Score Survey Semester One 2020](#)

[6e Student Course Surveys Semester One 2020](#)

[6f Project Takohanga overview](#)

[6g Research Annual Report 2019](#)

[6h Programme Evaluation and Planning document – example](#)

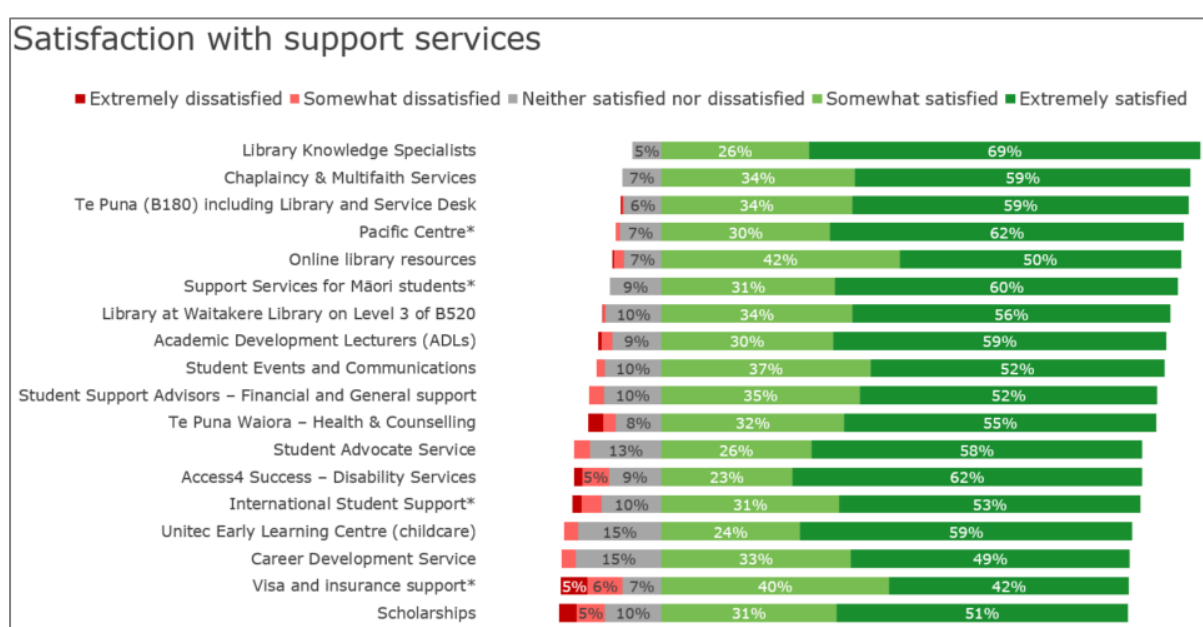
[6i Head of School Evaluative Commentaries – example](#)

7. KEQ 4: How effectively are learners supported and involved in their learning?

KEQ 4: How effectively are learners supported and involved in their learning?

Pastoral and academic support

The learning and well-being needs of Unitec students are met by an outstanding assembly of support services, staffed by dedicated teams of advisors, counsellors, chaplains, advocates, subject matter experts and others, and ably-led by the Director Student Success. Support services include a childcare centre, a sports centre and gym, Te Puna Waiora the health and medical centre, shuttle buses between campuses, an ALLY Network, and career development services. The vast majority of services are highly-rated by students, as shown below.



2020 Semester One Student Survey NPS

Among the Student Success services, these are a few examples of note:

- Learning Advisors provide academic supports to all learners. Workshops at all study levels cover academic skills such as critical thinking and essay writing, and wider skills such as time-management. 18% of learners used these services in Semester One 2020, despite the COVID lockdown. Student satisfaction with Learning Advisors services is extremely high at 90%, and as noted, students who access these services at least once also have a 34% higher chance of progression or completion than non-service users.
- A Peer-Assisted Study Support scheme (PASS) has been operating at Unitec for many years. In Semester One 2020, 27 senior students were employed as PASS Leaders in seven discipline areas, focusing on mentoring in those courses with lower success rates, and in known challenging areas such as science and engineering. PASS Leaders

held 61 regularly weekly study sessions in Semester One, while also supporting students one-on-one and in lectures and tutorials. During lockdown, PASS sessions moved to Zoom. In engineering programmes, for example, the PASS scheme has significantly lifted student success in targeted courses.

- A specialist Coordinator of Learning Development for postgraduate students ensures that the needs of research students are well-catered for, including of students with English as an additional language.
- Unitec offers \$250,000 worth of Level 9 scholarships, including \$40,000 Māori Scholarships, and \$40,000 Pacific Scholarships, which are distributed in collaboration with the Directors Māori and Pacific Success. Unitec also actively supports applications for scholarships from government and private sources such as Callaghan Innovation, Men's Health Trust, Todd Foundation Awards and the Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia.



In 2019, Unitec captured the success of six [Unitec students in short videos](#). Click the link to see the stories of Synab, Maggie, Nate, Kalesita, Kane and Shuba.

The Student Success Strategy

A newly-approved Student Success Strategy sets out principles that align with Manaakitia te Rito and put learners at the heart of everything that Unitec does. The Strategy aligns with Priority Group Success Strategies, and incorporates the International and Domestic Codes of Practice for Pastoral Care.

The Student Charter ensures a strong partnership with Unitec's Student Council Te Kaunihera Akonga o Wairaka. The Council and Unitec Student Advocate have recently relocated into Te Puna, Unitec's student central building making them highly visible and accessible to students. Paid student representatives sit on most academic committees, including Programme Academic Quality Committees, to ensure the student voice is heard in decision-making. Collectively, these initiatives reflect the value Unitec places on a strong student voice and effective representation.

Student complaints are handled by Student Support and Advocacy services. A focus on 'de-escalation' and informal resolution of complaints has led to a 50% reduction in

formal complaints in 2019 compared to 2018, and a further 40% to-date in 2020 compared with 2019. This means that most student concerns are being addressed satisfactorily without a long and potentially difficult process for the student. It has the added benefit of allowing more investigative attention to resolving the remaining complaints.



Mātātupu the Māori Student Union has recently been re-established as a group bringing Māori students together across the institute. This is a *'by Māori student, for Māori student'* initiative that is supported by Unitec's Taharangi, and the Student Success team.

Under-25 and International Success Strategies

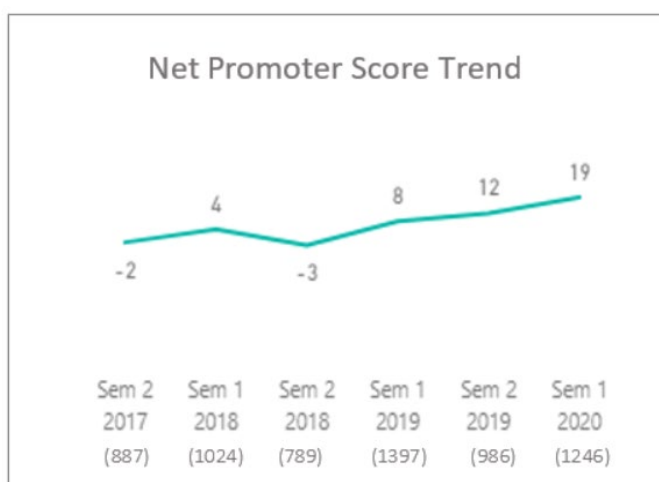
The Director International Success Tracy Chapman and Director Under-25s Success Andrea Thumath were appointed in early 2019. Both have overseen the approval and operationalisation of their respective Success Strategies in the same year. Their achievements include a sustained programme to embed the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice, and the formation of a hugely successful and vibrant Unitec Pathways College for secondary-tertiary transition.

All Schools Under-25 and International Success Champions are drawn from among School staff, with responsibility to embed and support activity in Schools.

The Under 25 and International Success Strategies have fully-developed and approved operational plans, including achievement of Parity Targets. Progress against actions and towards outcomes are reported at Academic Board and Executive, and to Unitec's Board every two months.

Learner satisfaction

Unitec's Student Net Promoter Score (NPS) has been gathered by survey twice yearly since 2017. It asks students to rate twelve elements of the student experience, and the reasons why students give the score they do, and includes verbatim comments. Over time the survey has become an important and well-understood barometer of how students find their study experience. It also allows Unitec to assess the impact of events such as the COVID lockdown.

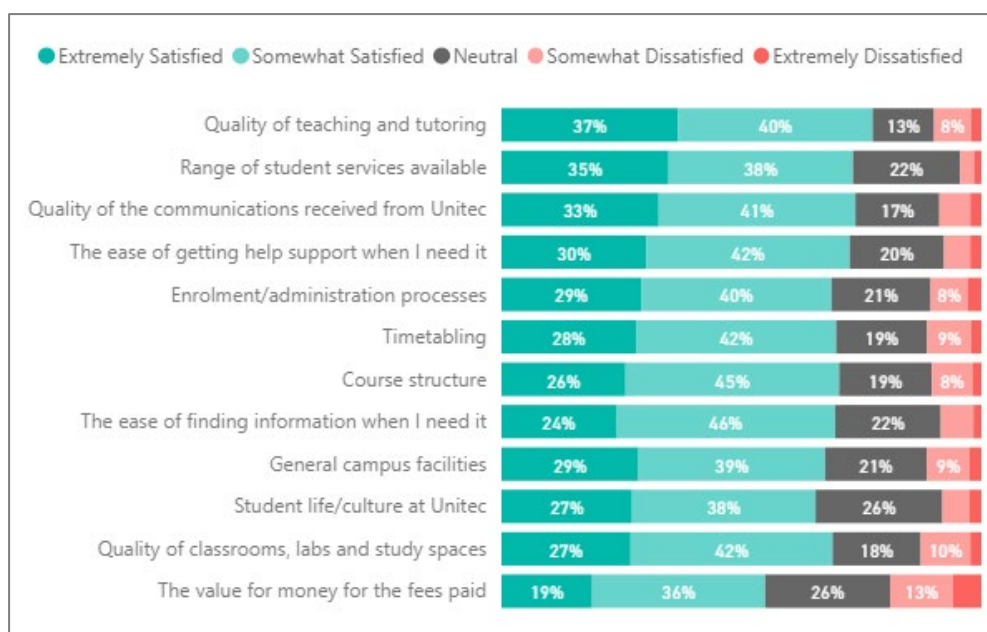


Bottom line is sample size

In 2020, the Student Net Promoter Score (NPS) has continued its upward trend with a score of +19. This is the highest NPS score ever gained and indicates that students are increasingly satisfied with Unitec's strategic direction and their study experiences. This improved score has come at a time of significant cost-cutting, reflecting the strength of institution-wide commitment to putting students at the centre of all activity.

The 2020 Net Promoter survey was taken in late Semester One, towards the end of the COVID lockdown, and recorded a high level of satisfaction with the academic and pastoral support provided and the overall transition to online learning. The survey revealed a high number of learners asking for all formal online learning to be recorded for their subsequent viewing and review. This is a good example of how feedback is used, and has now been implemented.

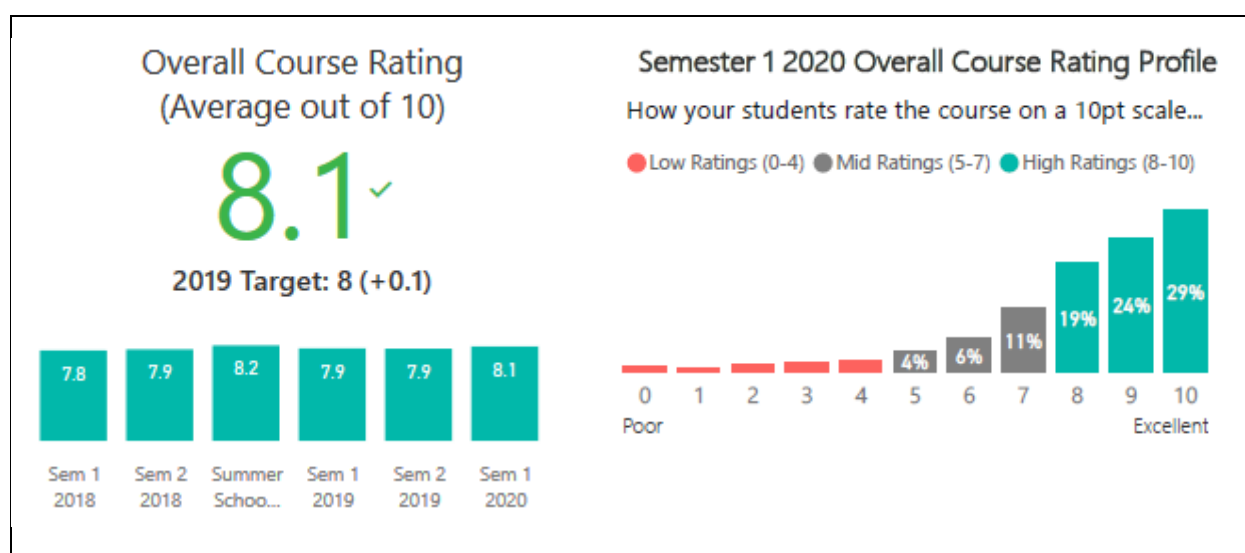
NPS scores for priority groups have all increased, with Māori learners at +14, Pacific at +48, Under 25s at 19, and International at +22, further indicating Unitec's success initiatives working.



Source - Student NPS Survey 2020

When asked why students gave the NPS survey scores they did, **teaching quality** has been a top reason every year. Support services, course structure and organisation, and communication are consistently among the other most-cited reasons.

In addition to NPS, all courses are surveyed for student feedback on the course and teaching, using a standard question bank. Compulsory surveys have been in place since 2018 after a number of years out of use. They sit alongside other evaluation methods used by teachers, and allow both triangulation of findings, and a longitudinal record of trends.



The overall course rating for 2020 Semester One was 8.1, the highest score ever gained in this survey. The two top scoring statements in the 2020 Semester One survey across all courses were:

Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach – average rating of 9.1
Teachers created a culture of respect for all students – average rating of 9.2

As with NPS, course surveys were undertaken well-into the COVID lockdown period and this has had an impact on the response rate of 23% compared with an average over previous surveys of 32%. Nevertheless, both the student NPS score and overall student course evaluation ratings have clearly increased at a time of significant disruption with COVID, and this is supported by verbatim comments in both surveys. This is evidence that the huge effort put into the COVID response by the Unitec community has been rewarded with learners remaining well-engaged.

Applied learning

All Unitec learners from pre-degree to postgraduate have continuous opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in a variety of practical contexts. Work-based or work-integrated learning occurs in all programmes, informed by strong industry engagement and learner feedback.

Some examples of Unitec's high quality applied learning:

- At degree and postgraduate levels, student-integrated research is used as a performance indicator for Unitec's Research Strategy, and is prioritised in internal research funding and in PBRF support.
- The Diploma in CyberSecurity Level 6 is the first of its type in New Zealand. Developed in partnership with Datacom, it offers work-based projects for students with industry leaders such as Datacom, Spark and CCL.
- Approximately 50% of Nursing students' study time is in the clinical environment. Students stay with the same provider/DHB for their whole of their degree. The Nursing team report that students on placement often progress immediately into longer-term employment with that provider. Unitec graduates are described as "work ready". As an illustration, a clinical teacher recently recounted the story of a Unitec student who stood out by advocating on behalf of a Māori patient and his whānau. The patient had requested no further active treatment and had completed the necessary documentation with his family to halt further medical interventions. Despite this, medical staff were ordering more tests and medical interventions. The student drew on what they had learned about cultural safety and working in partnership with patients. She alerted her Registered Nurse preceptor and the situation was reviewed and active management ceased. The patient and their family were very thankful.
- The School of Environmental and Animal Science has a strong tradition of staff/student research collaboration through to publication. The applied nature of the study and the research makes [Unitec graduates highly employable with organisations such as Auckland Council](#).

- The School of Architecture runs credit bearing, applied research projects as part of their courses, exposing students to industry partners. [Here is an example with lecturer Min Hall's Strawbale Insulation Project.](#)



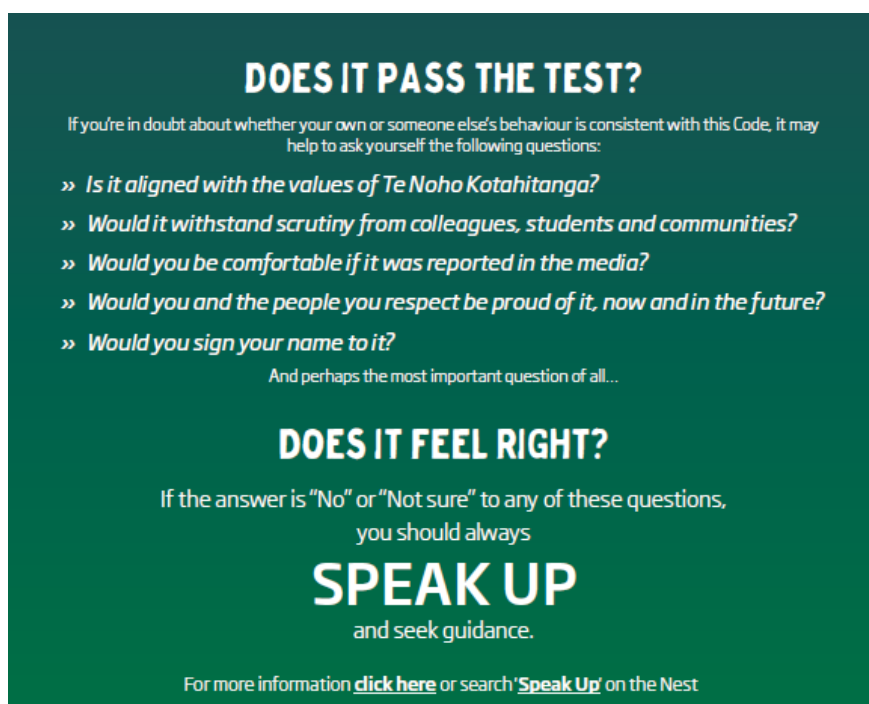
The learning environment is inclusive

Unitec's learning environment has been redeveloped to be inclusive of all students and staff. A number of important joint student and staff facing initiatives are in place, including the ALLY Network (LGBTQ), Countering Harassment and Bullying workshops, Engaging with Religious Diversity workshops, and the *I See Me* project.

Unitec's physical learning environment is also changing. Over 2018-2020 the Mount Albert campus has consolidated into a small number of purpose-built buildings at the 'Southern end', and focused around 'Te Puna', the Student Central building. A highlight has been the relocation of the Supported Learning Team staff and learners from a distant 'pre-fab' to the heart of campus. Unitec's supported learners are now well-connected to centralised services and are an active, highly visible part of the fabric of student life.

The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2022, and the Code of Conduct and 'Speak Up' Process for staff reflect Unitec's commitment to a safe, inclusive environment.





Case Study: "I See Me"

"I See Me initiatives are what we do to make all learners feel welcome, supported and part of the Unitec whānau. It is a holistic approach to manaakitanga that ensures our learners see themselves reflected in the organisation and in familiar learning environments that contribute to more successful learning outcomes. I See Me initiatives are the way we ensure Unitec achieves the step change required for parity of our priority groups, and are a key part of our Renewal Strategy Manaakitia te Rito and specifically, the strategic priority around the success of our learners."

Unitec has taken decisive action under the *I See Me* banner to resource the following activities in five key, research-informed areas, beginning in 2020 onwards:

Focus Area 1: Onboarding, transition and the first six weeks comprising five activities:

- All new to Unitec students are welcomed by School staff with an orientation pōhiri
- A half-day wānanga is provided for all new to Unitec students, including a hikoi of the whenua and whakawhanaungatanga activities with School staff, within the first six weeks of semester.
- Whānau/Fanau evenings for all Māori and Pacific learners and their whānau, around week four of semester, with teaching and support staff.
- Tuākana/Tēina weekly mentoring to support Māori and Pacific students in targeted courses, based on the PASS model.
- Early 'low-stakes' assessments in first year courses, with a focus on formative feedback and early success where possible.

Focus Area 2: The *Learner Outreach Project* and student monitoring and tracking

Focus Area 3: Embedding Māori and Pacific content in all courses, so that students see their culture reflected in the curriculum; and all teachers use learning and teaching practices that are familiar to Māori and Pacific learners.

Focus Area 4: Building staff capability by having all staff undertake capability development and earn a 'badge' related to parity targets and supporting Māori and Pacific learners.

Focus Area 5: Ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities under the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice.

At time of writing, 100% of pōhiri and 80% of wānanga had been completed for 2020, despite the COVID lockdown. A total of 1354 learners and whānau had registered for attendance at Whānau/Fanau evenings and 177 badges had been awarded for staff capability development for *I See Me*. Progress on staff capability with the International Code of Practice sat at 75%. The impact of these activities is already seen in increased Student Satisfaction scores and Course Survey scores, and the rise in Māori Qualification Completions. This is expected to filter through to improved course and qualification completions for Pacific learners.

A 'Phase Two' of *I See Me* is now underway. The *Hāpai Ō* project targets 17 programmes with low performance in relation to Māori and Pacific learners that require more direct interventions and improvements. These courses include the first year of several degree programmes and the remainder at lower levels, particularly in the Trades and Services area where there is a high Māori participation rate. *Hāpai Ō* is expected to improve success and retention in these programmes by ensuring they are culturally familiar and supportive of the needs of Māori and Pacific learners. Specific interventions include:

- Teacher capability development through either *Te Tīpare* or *Talanoa* badges
- Embedding Mātauranga Māori and Pacific knowledge in curriculum
- Study plans for individual students
- Teacher peer observations
- Student focus groups to gather feedback on learner needs
- Establishing Tūakana / Tēina peer mentoring systems
- In some cases, specific changes to courses and delivery methods to better meet students' needs

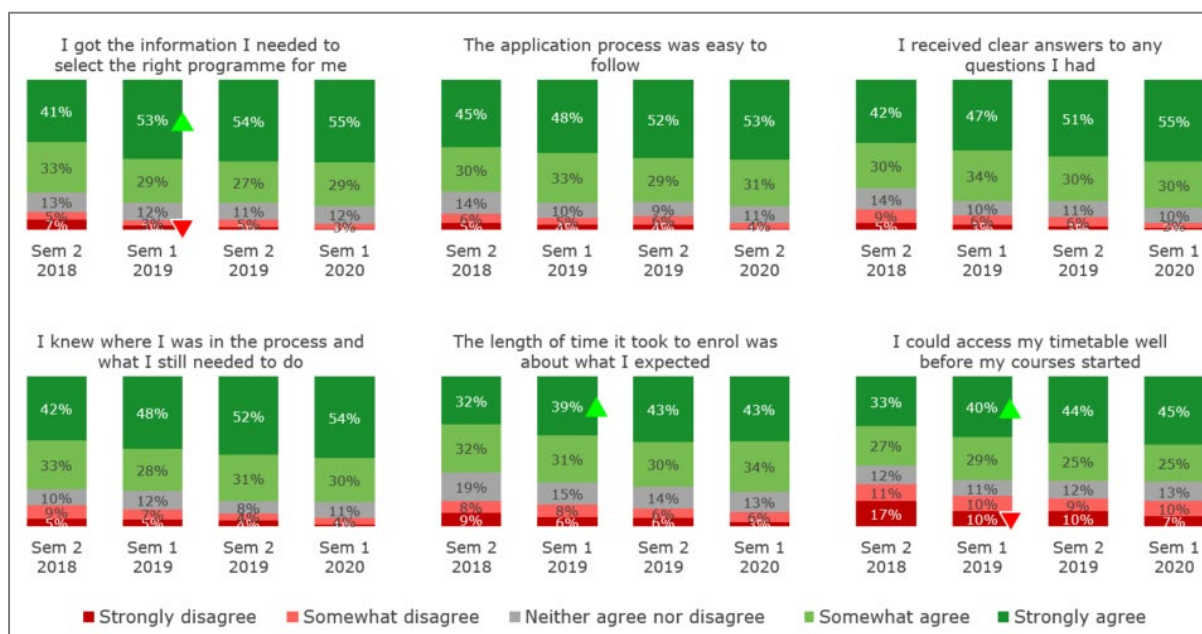
Unitec is now seeing the early benefits of *I See Me* in a significant lift in learner engagement and satisfaction, particularly for Māori learners (Net Promoter Score up from -5 in 2017 to +14 in 2020) and Pacific learners (Net Promoter Score up from +34 in 2017 to +48 in 2020).

The August 2020 SDR shows an increase in Māori Qualification Completion to 49.9%. It is critically important for Unitec that this improved success and retention continues towards the goal of parity. All *I See Me* initiatives will be carefully evaluated and continuously improved in support of that goal.

Understanding and meeting student needs

Support areas such as enrolments, marketing and provision of study information are the subject of continuous improvement. Administration staff have an excellent understanding of student needs, and work hard to minimise barriers to learning. For example, the Operations team's assiduous Quality Assurance 'spot-checks' show an error rate by staff over 1459 tasks to-date in 2020 of just 1%!

The 2020 Student NPS shows fewer and fewer unsatisfactory student experiences on almost all metrics.



Student NPS Semester One 2020

Relevant documents

[7a Student Success Strategy](#)

[7b Student Charter](#)

[7c Student Net Promoter Score Survey Semester One 2020](#)

[7d Student Course Survey Report Semester One 2020](#)

8. KEQ 5: How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

KEQ 5: How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

Organisational academic leadership is effective

Unitec has a clear organisational purpose and direction in 2020, set by its Executive Leadership Team and Academic Board, and approved by the Unitec Commissioner, and more recently the Unitec Board. *Manaakitia te Rito* is cascaded effectively throughout the organisation. Staff are committed to the organisation's direction and understand their role and contribution to student success.

Relationships between the Executive Leadership Team, Academic Board, 'Extended' Leadership Team and Unitec whānau are strong, founded in the shared values of *Te Noho Kotahitanga*. This strength allows the organisation to respond effectively and cohesively to challenges. The Unitec community is resilient and remains high-performing in a continuously changing sector.

Unitec's Rūnanga and Fono were involved in the shaping of *Manaakitia te Rito*, and Unitec leadership has their full, active support for its direction.

The Executive Leadership Team has strengthened its focus on academic quality and student success with the appointment of two new members – Nick Sheppard, Executive Director Schools and Performance and Simon Nash, Executive Director Ako.

Unitec's academic governance in 2020 is informed, focused and responsive, and exercises its mandate to intervene where necessary in support of academic quality and student success. A smoothly-functioning system of academic governance committees have effective oversight of all aspects of academic quality. Those individuals and teams with delegated responsibilities report regularly via an established system of reporting and registers.

Academic Board and its sub-committees maintain a high quality relationship with the Executive Leadership Team, the (then) Commissioner and his Advisory Group, and are now building good relationships with the recently appointed joint Unitec-MIT Board.

The Renewal Strategy

Under *Manaakitia te Rito* - the Renewal Strategy 2019-2022, Unitec has moved from a focus on rebuilding and consolidation, to being a forward-looking organisation that plans for innovation and anticipates and responds effectively to change:

- Unitec leadership has adopted a business model that is sustainable and adapts to the changing needs of the sector under NZIST and the various pressures of COVID. The business model is well-aligned to the organisation's educational purpose and ensures sufficient resources are allocated to support high quality learning and teaching.

- The Unitec Pathways College is a thriving initiative supporting secondary – tertiary transitions, and growing particularly strongly among Kura.
- Unitec’s Research Strategy is both an applied model with significant benefits for communities, and a successful recipient of major grants and of almost all PBRF income to NZIST subsidiaries.
- *I See Me* reflects the best of current thinking from TEC’s Oritetanga initiatives, and is beginning to see results in improved learner outcomes.
- The COVID response has been swift, decisive, and beneficial to learners.

At a time of significant financial constraint, Unitec has ring-fenced critical resourcing for teaching and support in key areas:

- A team of Priority Group Directors, Kaihautū and Pacific Navigators has been established and strengthened in support of Unitec’s parity stretch targets and Priority Group learner success.
- In 2020, Unitec’s Portfolio Leadership Group has identified and supported strategic programme and short course developments that will meet the needs of the Auckland region and support collaborative opportunities across NZIST.
- The highly successful new Mataaho Trades facility is operating successfully
- The Henderson campus has been refurbished with Te Kakatai dedicated teaching spaces and staff, and a new Student Central area, reflecting its importance to West Auckland.
- Unitec’s ‘Workload Model’ enables teaching requirements to be carefully and efficiently matched to enrolments and staff FTE, and to flex as required.

Case Study: Staff engagement and satisfaction

“Radical transparency and relentless communication”

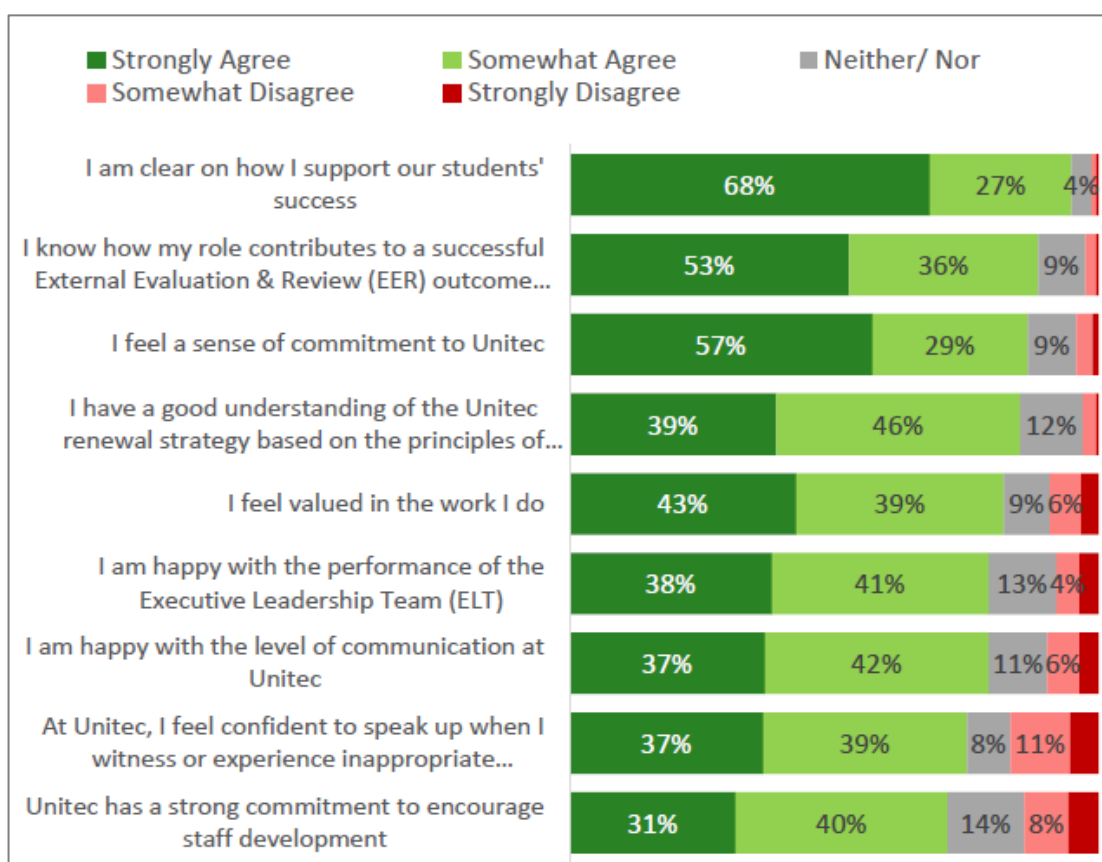
Despite financial pressure and rebuilding, the support of the Unitec community for organisational direction has continued to strengthen. Under the leadership of Interim Chief Executive Merran Davis, operating with a mantra of *“radical transparency and relentless communication”*, staff feel valued and staff satisfaction has risen consistently.

A key element referred to by the Internal Evaluation & Review team in May 2020, is the high level of staff understanding and commitment to Manaakitia te Rito. The IER commented repeatedly on the shared strategic direction, evident throughout all teams via a powerful alignment of strategy, takitahi, team action plans and individual staff plans.

The cultural shift occurring at Unitec is hard to over-emphasise. An environment of transparency and communication, operating as a single team including the Executive, and aligned in purpose, are central to Unitec’s regeneration. This is illustrated by initiatives such as a popular Monday morning Karakia for all staff, a weekly ‘Extended Leadership Team’ meeting for all managers, the central relocation of Executive Leadership into open plan office space alongside Support Teams, and the establishment of the Staff Advisory Rōpu ‘STAR’ and the Diversity & Inclusion Rōpu.

Between May 2018 and May 2020, results from five Staff Engagement Surveys show that ratings on key cultural aspects have risen significantly. This is a very pleasing result and shows that staff are highly-engaged. Among these indicators, role clarity has risen from 78% to 89%; commitment to Unitec from 74% to 87%, understanding of strategy from 57% to 85%, and happiness with the level of communication from 54% to 79%.

Satisfaction with the performance of the Executive Leadership Team has risen from 37% in 2018 to 79% in 2020. This huge lift reflects the effectiveness of Unitec leadership, and its impact on rising staff engagement across the organisation. That staff engagement, in turn, has a direct impact on student satisfaction and improved educational outcomes.



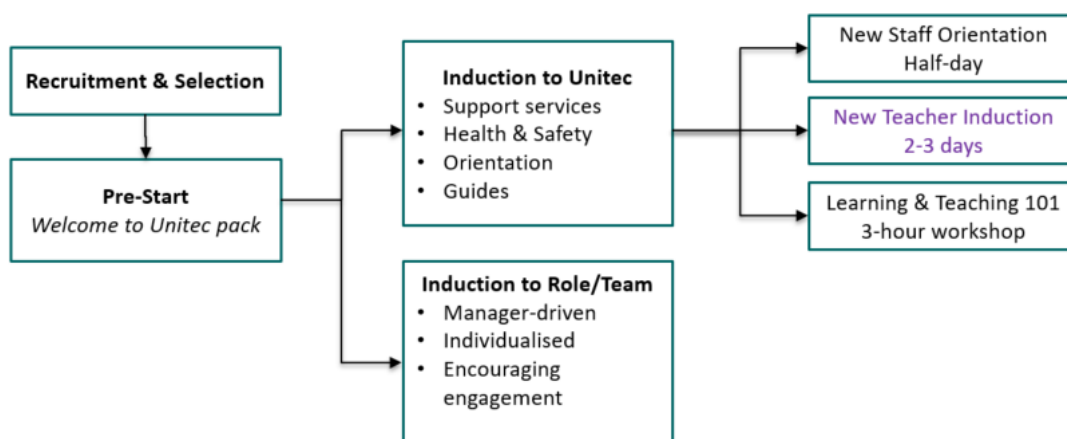
Working at Unitec Statements, Staff Pulse Survey May 2020

Performance Partnering

Achieve – Develop – Enjoy - Partner

An important contributor to staff feeling valued is Unitec's 'Performance Partnering' process. All staff, including the Executive Leadership Team, engage in Performance Partnering to ensure they understand their role, and their contribution to *Manaakitia te Rito* and the success of Unitec's learners and communities.

Unitec operates an 'end-to-end' staff induction process as follows:

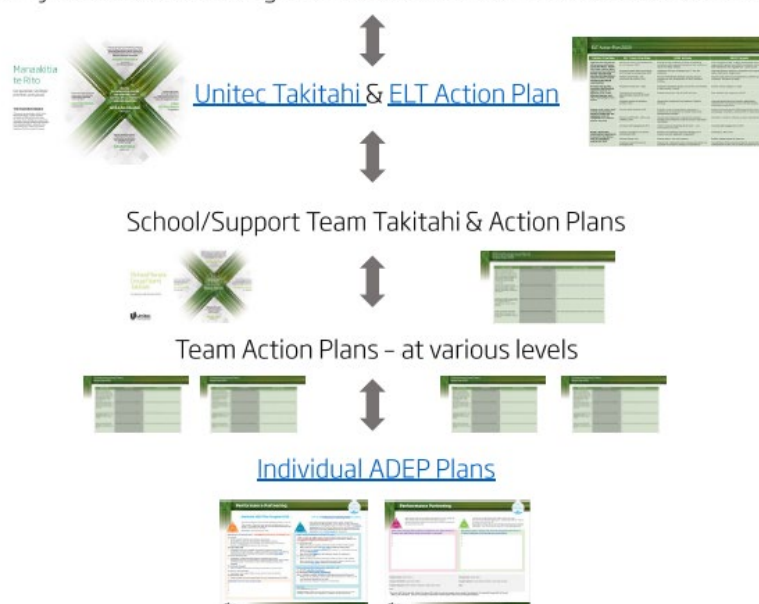


Each team has its own '*Takitahi*' or weave, and a supporting Action Plan. Individual staff work with managers to review the past year and set their 'ADEP' plans (*Achieve, Develop, Enjoy, Partner*) and their goals for the year ahead. Staff identify targeted professional development in areas such as lifting Priority Group learner outcomes and embedding Mātauranga Māori. Individual goals are included in team members' ADEPs, and must align with Unitec's goals in *Manaakitia te Rito*. ADEP 'check-ins' occur through the year, allowing for changes to plans as the year unfolds.

The Performance Cascade Aligning Unitec, team and individual contributions towards achieving Our Purpose

Manaakitia te Rito: The Unitec Renewal Strategy 2019-2022

Our Purpose: Led by Te Noho Kotahitanga we manaaki the success of our learners and communities



Effective use of data

Concentrated effort over the past few years has gone into the provision of high quality data and its effective use to inform decision-making. Robust data analysis and insights are now a core part of all areas of operations, and are continuously improved and extended. Some of the main developments over 2018-2020 are:

- Access for all academic governance committees and leadership teams to comprehensive, timely data on academic quality and student success, used for regular oversight and decision-making.
- Consistent, longitudinal Student Net Promoter surveys, Staff Satisfaction surveys, Graduate Surveys, and compulsory Student Course Surveys – all run twice-yearly since 2018. These provide trend data and show the importance of engagement to improved educational outcomes.
- Weekly updates to all internal stakeholders on applications, enrolments and processing, with predictive analysis and programme and course level detail that provides staff with a good understanding of demand and growth areas.
- Real-time tracking and monitoring of learner engagement, attendance, pastoral and academic support needs, assessment outcomes, and identification of at-risk learners allow timely, effective responses to learner needs.
- Portfolio development decisions based on detailed metrics for student success, employer and market demand and 'brand health' ensure that the portfolio is relevant and meeting stakeholder needs.

Key challenges that remain for Unitec to resolve in 2020-2021 are to further simplify quite complex data, and in some areas to gain better data to measure performance and support decision-making. Work is already underway in these areas:

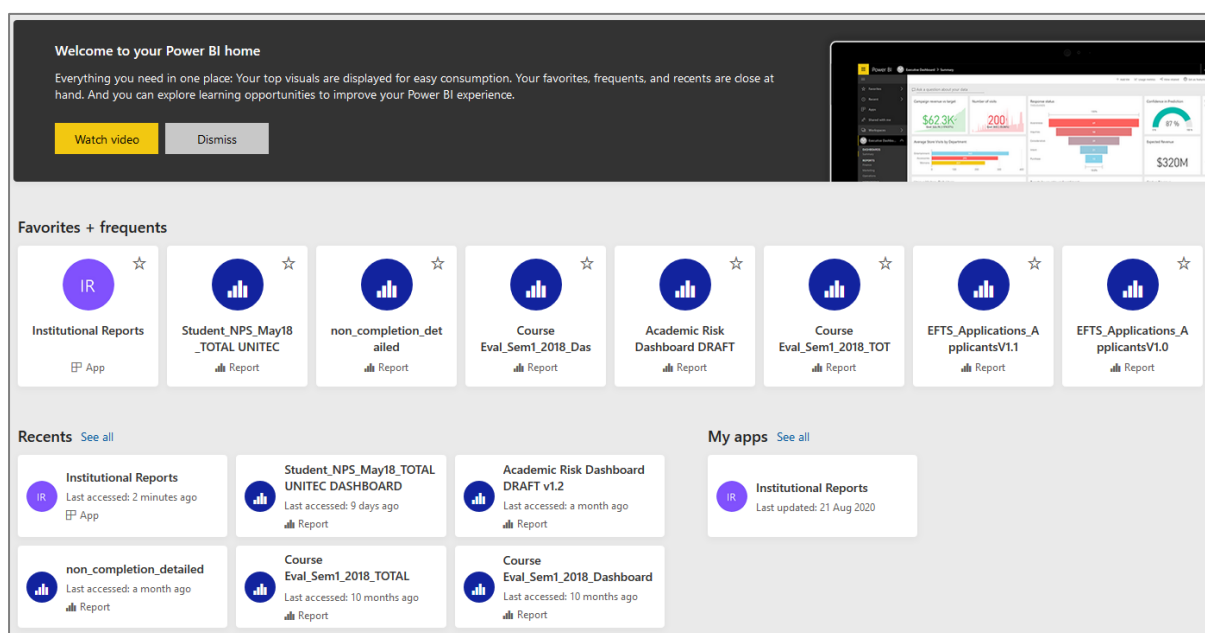
- More comprehensive understanding of the reasons for learner retention and progression, and non-completion, including predictive analysis.
- Better understanding of why some applicants withdraw or are unsuccessful in relation to the quality of the on-boarding experience.
- More systematic collection and analysis of employer feedback on graduate outcomes to inform programme improvements.

Case Study: Power BI: "The Single Source of Truth"

In 2018 Unitec adopted Microsoft Power BI as its main business analytics and data visualisation tool. Since then, with the introduction of 'dashboards' on a range of educational and business metrics, Power BI has become a powerful single source of truth for Unitec staff.

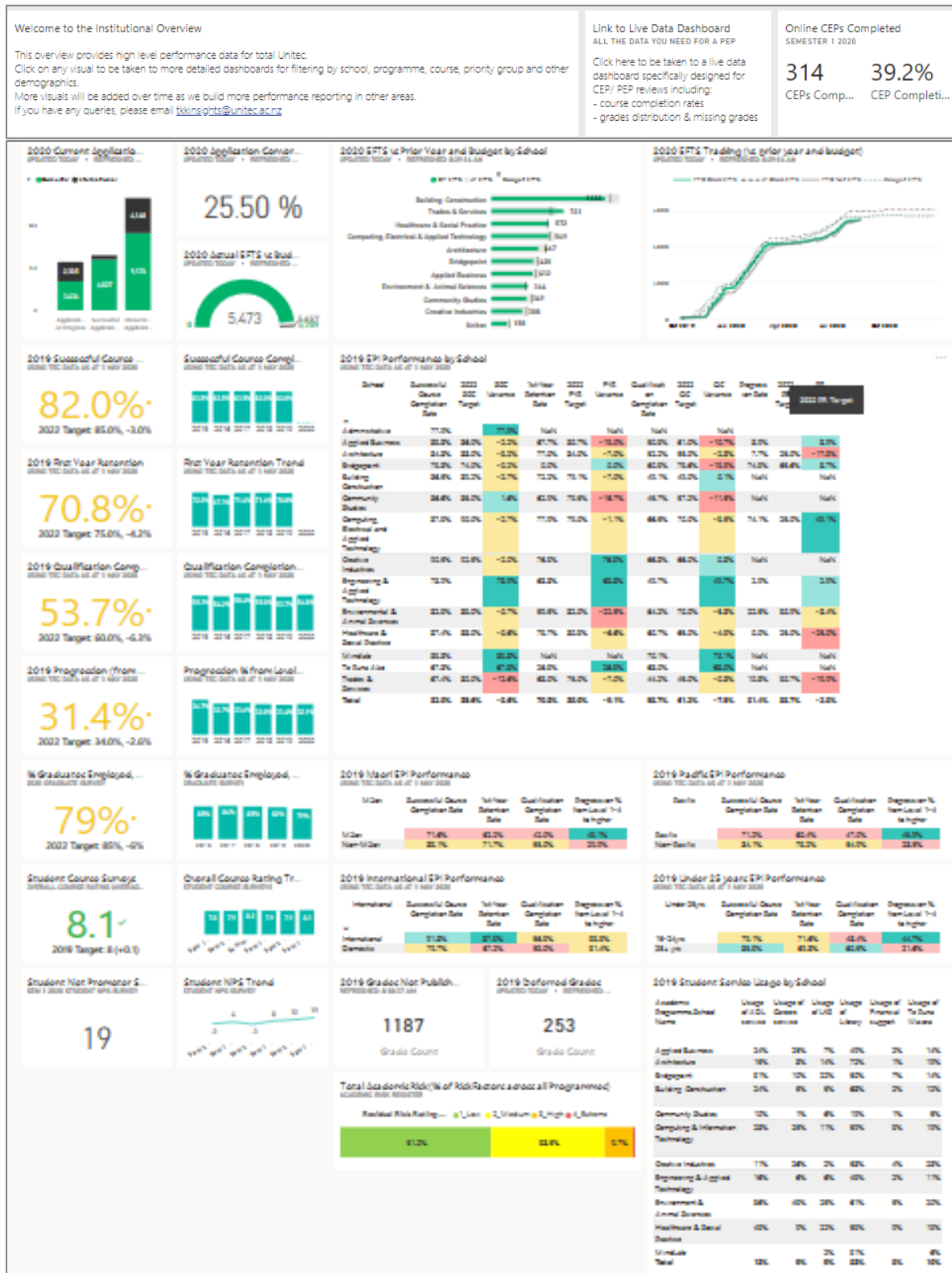
One impact of Power BI is that staff have moved from having a lack of confidence in data, and often a limited understanding of it, to being able to use data insights in support of evaluation and decision-making. This is particularly evident with student performance data and reporting. Unitec's first Educational Performance Indicator

dashboard was introduced in February 2019, followed by dashboards for enrolments and applications, academic risk, student service usage, graduate outcomes, research, non-completion, and many others.



In early 2020, Power BI licences were extended to most academic and key support services staff. Training was provided to ensure that staff can use Power BI effectively for evaluation and planning. Additions to Power BI dashboards are underway all the time.

Screenshot of Power BI page. (Image shown for illustrative purposes)



Relevant documents

[8a Unitec Organisational Chart](#)

[8b Academic Governance Committee organisational chart](#)

[8c ADEP template example](#)

[8d Staff Engagement Survey November 2019](#)

[8e Staff Pulse Survey May 2020](#)

[8f People Strategy 2019-2022](#)

9. KEQ 6: How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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Academic Quality Assurance

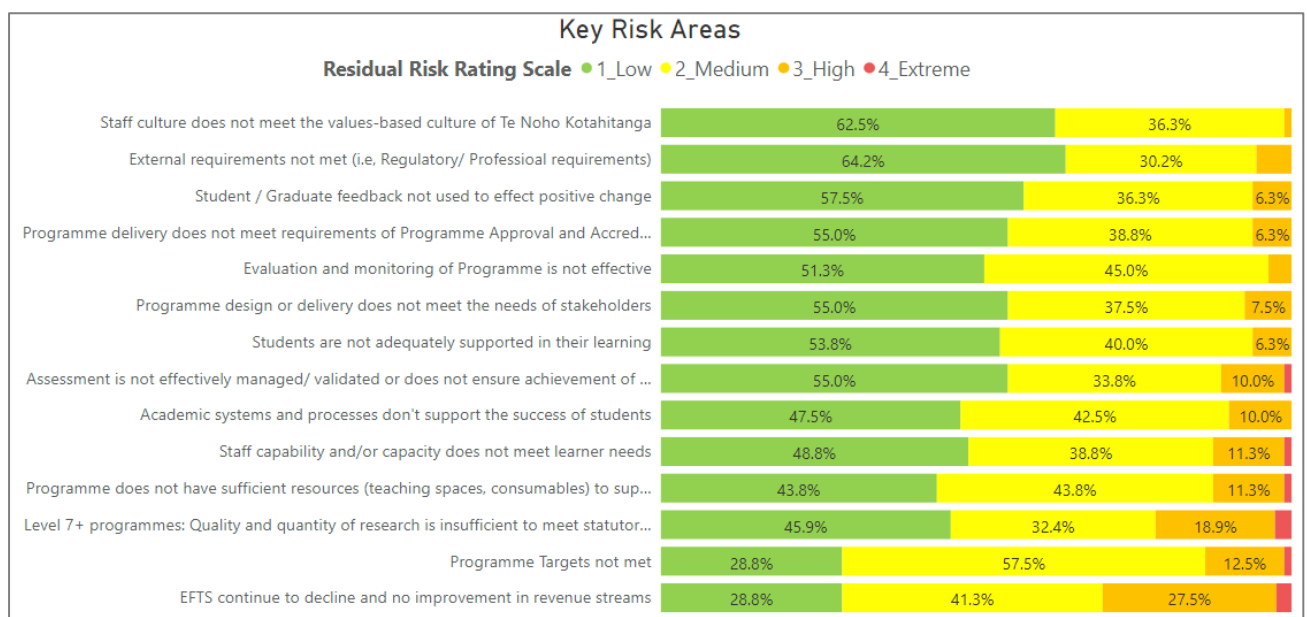
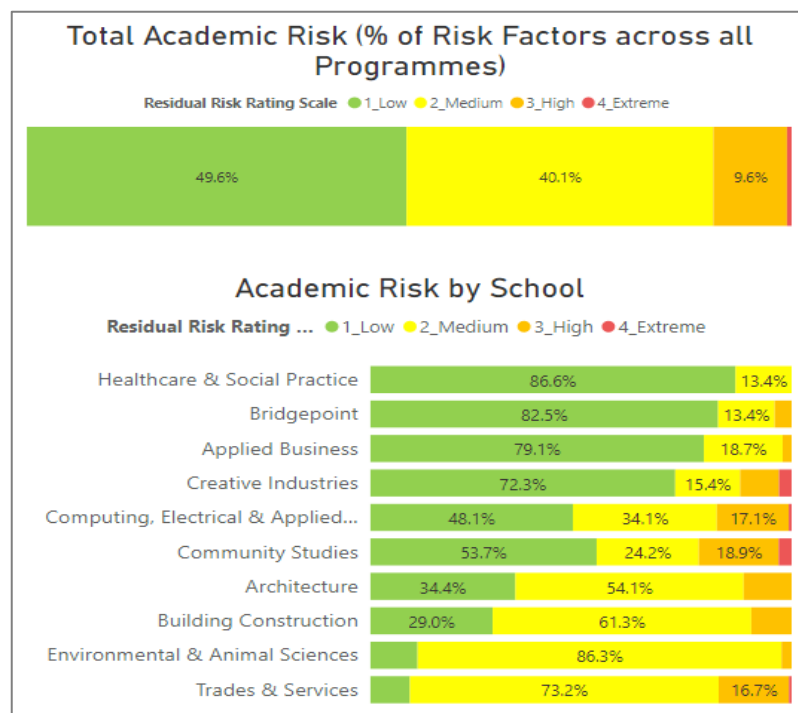
The Quality Management Framework

Academic quality at Unitec is supported by a comprehensive Quality Management Framework that provides line-of-sight to all matters related to student success and academic quality. The Quality Management Framework is overseen by Te Poara Mātauranga Academic Board and its sub-committees, and administered by Te Korowai Kahurangi, the academic quality team. Important compliance accountabilities are now well-understood and continuously managed across Unitec.

Following the 2019 EER report, a comprehensive stocktake of the Quality Management Framework was undertaken. The following key actions have been completed:

- A Unitec Risk Register was established by the Executive Leadership Team in 2019 to provide real-time oversight of risks and mitigations and to support Executive decision-making.
- An Academic Risk Register was established in 2019, overseen by Academic Board and aligned to the Unitec Risk Register.
- In 2020 the Academic Risk Register was extended to use by Programme Academic Quality Committees who assess and report monthly on risks and mitigations. Programme teams are now better able to identify and address risks and mitigations at their level in good time.
- Programme-level risks are 'rolled-up' to an Academic Risk Working Group, who look for patterns and priorities, and report upwards to the Quality Alignment Board and then Academic Board. With this reporting system, Academic Board are able to assess institutional risks with a high level of confidence in their oversight.
- Delegations and authority for all aspects of the Quality Management System Stocktake were identified and published (9h).
- A full set of academic committee work plans was established.
- Academic reporting structures for Schools and Support Teams were revamped, comprising regular monthly or bi-monthly 'RAG' status reports against targets, and twice-yearly evaluations and qualitative commentaries of progress against targets. This reporting includes status updates on actions and progress towards Unitec's Priority Group Success Strategies and parity targets.
- Programme Academic Quality Committees (re-established in early 2018) began reporting every quarter to the Quality Alignment Board on any significant and unresolved matters. These issues are tracked and resolved.
- 'Programme Evaluation & Planning' processes have been comprehensively revamped using the Āta Kōrero framework.

Power BI Academic Risk Dashboard – August 2020

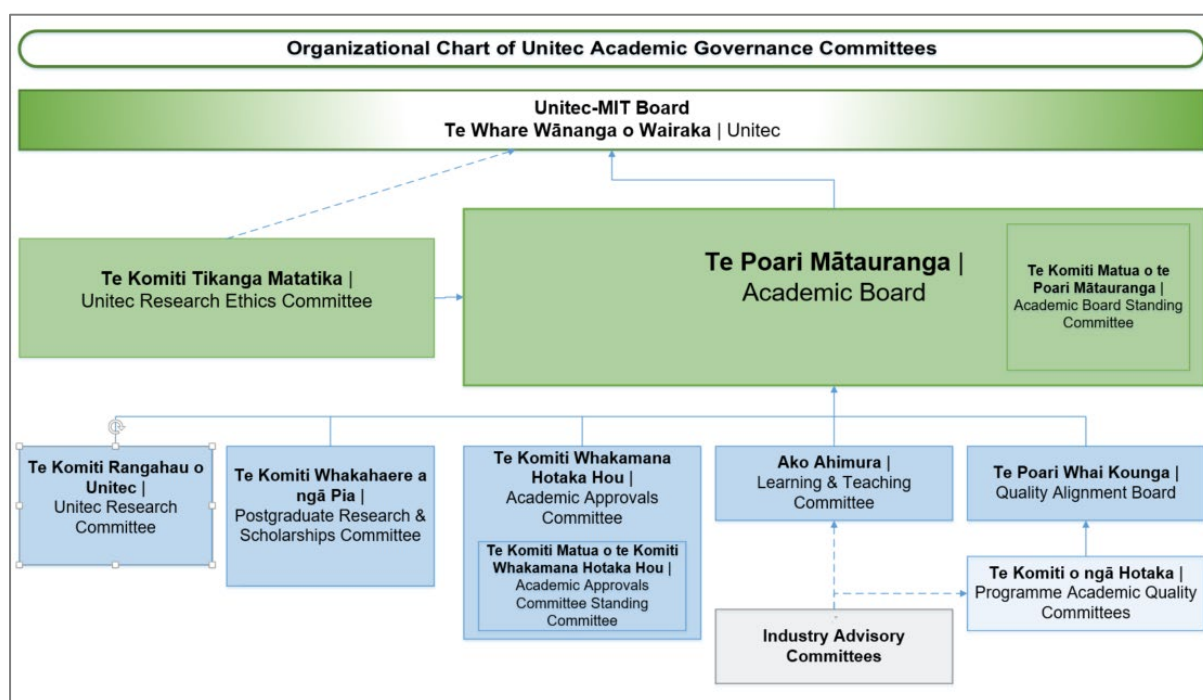


The result of this activity is a vastly expanded level of oversight of academic quality and educational performance across the organisation. Individual teaching teams understand their role in quality assurance and reporting and its importance. They can act quickly to address risks, and are closely connected to Programme Academic Quality Committees for support and decision-making.

Governance committees share the responsibility for oversight at their appropriate levels, e.g. programme-level issues are dealt with by Programme Academic Quality Committees, but oversight of their risk registers is by the Risk Working Group, ensuring that common themes are identified and communicated. Reporting to the Quality Alignment Board also ensures that there is an avenue for more significant issues to be escalated.

Academic Board functions effectively as the highest governance committee, confident that all aspects of the Quality Management System are being attended to. Members know that matters are being dealt with at the right level of the organisation, and that reporting on actions and risks will alert Academic Board to important issues. Line-of-sight right down to individual courses and students is available if needed.

Cross-membership of Academic Board with the Executive Leadership team means that both the formal and 'soft' relationships are strong. Monthly reporting to the Unitec Board supports that relationship.



Effective Compliance Management Processes

Academic compliance

Unitec is currently undertaking work to ensure its student management system reporting in the Single Data Return (SDR) to TEC is compliant. The project is running in stages, with TEC direction and input, with the goal of ensuring all inputs to reporting are accurate, and that staff are upskilled to avoid this issue in future.

Issues with course durations were identified in 2019 that related to incomplete programme documentation, inconsistent data between Unitec, NZQA and TEC, and

some courses not set up to ensure programmes were being taught over approved durations (these issues only impacted some Unitec programmes). The '*Programme Refresh Project*' was launched to address these issues, including:

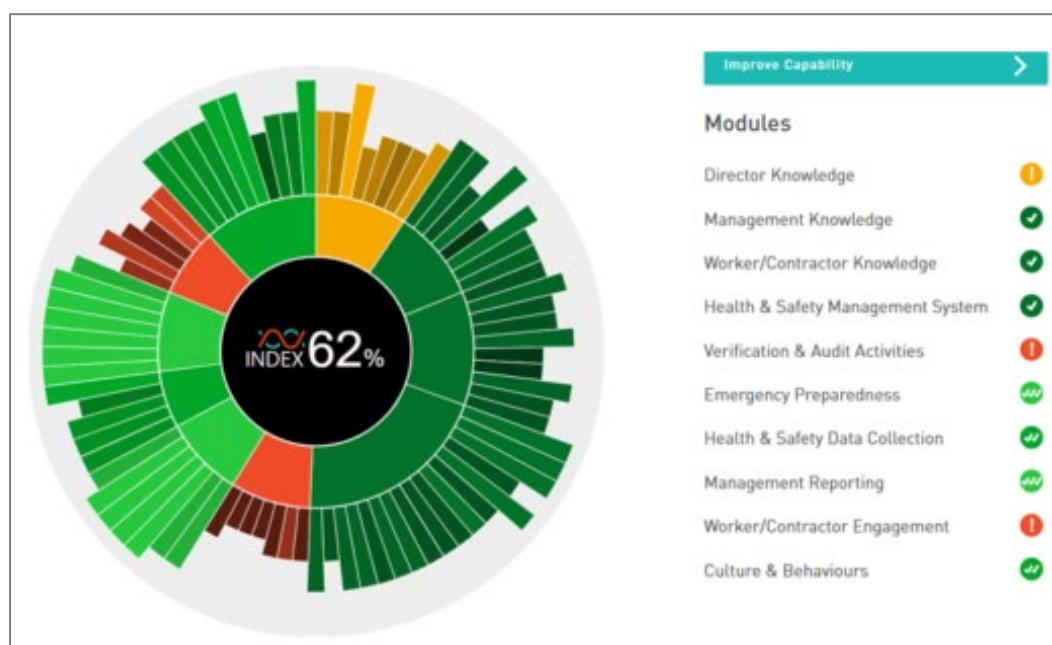
- Reviewing and updating programme documentation and making necessary applications to NZQA and TEC to ensure programme delivery matches what is approved. To-date, 43 of Unitec's 83 programmes have been updated or confirmed as correct.
- Analysing the learning hours in all courses, via the Course Evaluation and Planning process. This work has been done and is now being reviewed.

A review of modes of delivery for all Unitec programmes has been completed in 2020. Programme changes have been made where required and internal approvals gained. The details will shortly be provided to NZQA.

The annual NZQA Statutory Declaration provided by the Chief Executive is Unitec's annual attestation of academic quality and compliance.

Health and Safety

Unitec's exemplary occupational health and safety management system is more advanced than what has been seen in other ITPs to-date. Continuous improvement is undertaken and monitored through the *Safe365* health and Safety compliance measurement tool since 2017 (see below).



Unitec Aggregated Starburst at end of Q2 in 2020

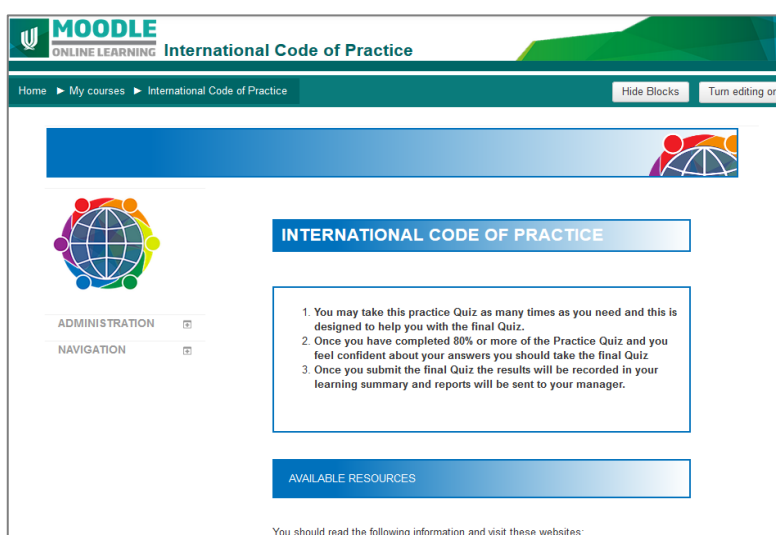
Unitec's injury rates are at half the level of Australian ITPs. Unitec is sitting at 65% on *Safe365* and has a target of meeting 70% of its goals in 2020. To the best of Unitec's knowledge, all other ITPs and similar organisations using *Safe365* sit around 54%.

International and Domestic Codes of Practice



Unitec's student centric approach is to manaaki all students, both International and Domestic. This begins with a pōhiri for all arriving students, and includes orientation and a health and safety briefing. It extends throughout a student's time with Unitec via an extensive system of pastoral and academic care, undertaken by a highly-committed team.

Compliance with the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 is well established. Evidence and evaluation is gathered from both students and staff. All staff are required to undertake capability development on the International Code and to provide evidence of their understanding via badging. This has been a very effective strategy for achieving a shared institution-wide understanding of the International Code and its expectations.



Compliance with the Domestic Code replicates the International Code and will extend to capability development.

Screenshot of International Code of Practice Moodle site

Legal compliance

Legal compliance is managed through Unitec's Legal Counsel, who ensures that senior leadership are made aware of any issues to be managed, and any significant legislative changes and related reviews of Unitec policies and procedures. This process will change as the new Unitec Board appoints its Audit and Risk Committee.

A register of responsible managers is maintained by the Legal Counsel. All managers monitor compliance continuously, and confirm compliance annually through the legislative compliance sign-off process.

Key to strong compliance is effective working relationships, strong communication and transparency. Unitec's open plan consolidation of leadership and Support Teams into one building has greatly enhanced accessibility and issue elevation.

Relevant documents

[9a Health & Safety Strategy 2019-2022](#)

[9b Health Safety & Wellbeing Report July 2020](#)

[9c Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2022](#)

[9d Academic Risk Register – Power BI Dashboard](#)

[9d Academic Risk Register – Report Example](#)

[9d Academic Risk Register – Staff Intranet Resources](#)

[9e Unitec Risk Register](#)

[9f Project Takohanga Overview](#)

[9g Quality Management System Stocktake](#)

[9h Academic Governance Committees Organisational Chart](#)

