

**The University of Auckland**

**Undergraduate Admissions and  
Equity Taskforce  
Report**

**31 March 2008**

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## **The University of Auckland**

### **Undergraduate Admissions and Equity Taskforce Report**

**The Undergraduate Admissions and Equity Taskforce was established by the University Council on the recommendation of the Senate in December 2007 to consider and report by March 2008 on the equity implications of extending limited entry to all undergraduate qualifications.**

#### **1 The University of Auckland commitment to equity**

The extension of limited entry to all the University's undergraduate degrees poses major challenges to the University, chief among them how to meet our dual commitment to excellence and equity.

The Taskforce report aims to assist all members of the University to understand the equity implications of limited entry and makes recommendations on how to mitigate adverse impacts.

The University is concerned about the issues of equity, equal opportunities and the participation and performance of under-represented groups.

At the same time, the University wishes to ensure that it has a high performing student body where each student reaches his or her full potential in an environment of academic excellence.

We have undertaken our work aware of the University's commitments to equity as evidenced in the following extracts from the University's Strategic Plan, Charter and current Profile.

The University of Auckland has made a commitment in its Strategic Plan, 2005-2012 to 'recruit and retain a high quality staff and student body, striving to create equal opportunities for all those of ability to succeed in a university of high international standing'.<sup>1</sup>

The University's Charter states that 'Māori and Pacific engagement in academic life confer much of the distinctive and special character of this University. The University recognizes the importance of engaging Māori and Pacific students in high level degree education that will provide the chance to enhance their potential and life choices and prepare them to participate fully in rewarding professional and knowledge based vocations.'<sup>2</sup> The Strategic Plan has also stated the commitment of the University to 'the mutual rights and obligations articulated by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, with particular emphasis on promoting Māori presence and participation in all aspects of University life ....'<sup>3</sup>

In its 2008-2010 Profile, approved by the Tertiary Education Commission, the University committed to maintaining 'admission policies and practices which recruit high performing students from a range of contributing schools and which promote a diverse student body consisting of students with the motivation and potential to succeed in the University.'<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The University of Auckland Strategic Plan 2005-2012, p.8

<sup>2</sup> The University of Auckland Charter, 2003, p.3

<sup>3</sup> Strategic Plan, p.6

<sup>4</sup> The University of Auckland Profile 2008-2010, p.23

## **2 Taskforce objectives and outcomes**

In December 2007, on the advice of the University Senate, the University Council resolved that

- (i) The University limit entry to its undergraduate qualifications from Summer School 2009
- (ii) The limited number and standard in each case be set through the 2008-9 limitation exercise
- (iii) Limited entry and the required subjects and credits for admission to a qualification, if any, be signaled in the 2009 Prospectus
- (iv) The University establish a cross-faculty taskforce, including the Pro Vice-Chancellors Māori and Equal Opportunities, to consider and report by March 2008 on the equity implications of extending limited entry to all undergraduate qualifications

The taskforce was established in December 2007 and has held eight meetings.

The taskforce set itself the following objectives and outcomes:

### *Objectives*

- An analysis and understanding of the equity implications of extending limited entry across all undergraduate programmes
- A clear understanding of the current mechanisms used to limit entry
- An understanding of the University's support structures that assist students from equity groups to be successful in their studies
- To make recommendations based on evidence
- To work in a transparent and consultative manner

### *Outcomes*

- A report that enables the University to understand the equity implications of limited entry
- A report that includes a description of benchmarked limited entry practices that best meet equity goals
- Recommendations for limited entry that will assist the University in achieving its equity goals
- Recommendations that will enable limited entry policies and practices to be monitored and evaluated

The Taskforce has examined literature on access and admissions, reviewed some benchmark admissions processes, and analysed a considerable amount of relevant data in the course of its work. It issued an information paper and called for feedback on 1 February 2008. This paper is at Appendix II. The submissions received in response to this call are discussed in Section 9. Members of the Taskforce attended two hui with Māori staff members and students and met with the Pacific Reference Group. The Chair met with the Executive of the Auckland University Students' Association and with the Equal Opportunities Committee. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori) has discussed the issues with the Runanga at two of its meetings.

While the Taskforce has been carrying out its role, Faculties which have previously not limited admission nor selected into their degrees, in the main the Faculties of Arts and Science and the School of Theology, have been considering the limits and selection criteria for new admissions in 2009, and the processes they will use for selection. The 2009 Undergraduate Prospectus has signaled the extension of limited entry. No additional subject or credit requirements have been set for those students applying to be admitted to degrees which will

introduce limited entry in 2009. The University will apply its current method of allocating rank scores to all applicants in 2009 and use these rank scores as one factor in selection.

The Taskforce aims to support the Faculties in their decision making by providing a report that enables the University as a whole to better understand the issues involved in a fair and equitable admissions system and making recommendations that will provide such a framework for the University's admissions.

### **3 Background to limited entry and selection**

The need to limit admission and to select students poses challenges to universities all over the world. There are few universities able to admit all the students who apply or are qualified for admission. Universities, and indeed whole countries, regularly debate access and selection to higher education, and seek fair admission processes. The issues are complex and no-one has found the ideal solution. Most universities limit their admissions in order to provide the best possible education to those students they do admit and to allow the pursuit of a range of goals relating to their mission.

A high quality student intake is one of the benchmarks of an international University and most universities see the academic merit of their student intake as one of their differentiating characteristics. At the same time most universities strive to admit a diverse student body, recognising the enormous academic and social benefits that come from diversity, and attempt to select students in ways that take into account academic achievement and other factors that indicate student potential and ability. Universities also recognise that there will be different admission standards and criteria applied to admission to different parts of the University.

The University of Auckland's Strategic Plan 2005-2012 states its commitment to remaining 'accessible to all those with the potential to succeed in a university of high international standing'. This is a commitment felt strongly by the University.

At the same time, the Strategic Plan aims to increase student numbers by an average of 1% a year and to shift the student profile over time so that 78% of students are undergraduates and 22% postgraduates. In 2007 the University had a roll of over 38,500 students and grew by significantly more than 1%. By international standards it is a large University.

The Strategic Plan is impacted by the Government's new tertiary education policy which came into effect on 1 January 2008. The policy aims at differentiating tertiary education institutions, bringing them into a 'network' of educational provision, and funding them through a system that encourages quality of education rather than the enrolment of the maximum number of students. The University of Auckland has welcomed these changes.

The new system of funding for tertiary education allows the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) to fund tertiary institutions only for an agreed number of students, thereby giving the TEC a mechanism for managing growth in student numbers, encouraging differentiation of purpose and activities of institutions, and the 'network' of provision. These goals fit well with the University's Strategic Plan. Attaining them requires the University to retain the current size of the undergraduate student population and to promote growth in its postgraduate enrolments.

Negotiations between the TEC and the University throughout 2007 were part of the implementation of the new system. These negotiations produced an Investment Plan or Profile which agreed the plans of the University for the period 2008 to 2010 and approved its government funding for 2008. As part of these negotiations, the University was required to project its student numbers and the tuition subsidies required to support these students from 2008-2010.

Although limits will be set for all new admissions to undergraduate programmes from 2009, the development of University selection criteria and processes will be subject to on-going discussion and development. The University of Auckland must base its response to the changing environment on sound principles and fair and equitable processes. It will be important to establish a mechanism for monitoring the impact of the changes put in place in 2009.

#### **4 The New Zealand and Auckland context**

New Zealand universities admit students from schools mainly on the basis of the common entrance standard.<sup>5</sup> Prior to 1985 University Entrance was awarded on the basis of accrediting by secondary schools or through the University Entrance examination. From 1985 it was awarded on the basis of a 'bursary' examination usually sat in Form 7 (Year 13) and from 2005 on the basis of credits achieved at Level 3 in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee also recognizes other examination systems, for instance, the Cambridge International Examinations and the International Baccalaureate, as qualifications which may be used in admitting students to universities. The majority of domestic students at universities in New Zealand are admitted directly from a secondary school.

In addition, New Zealand has provided for students above a certain age to attend university even if they do not hold an admission qualification. Until 1990 this age was 21. The Education Act 1989 lowered the age to 20. Such students are admitted to universities under Special Admission.

The admission provisions in New Zealand have been liberal but not all students can take the programme or subjects they wish. At The University of Auckland there have been restrictions on admission to the medical degree since it began in the late 1960s; restrictions on admission to Law soon followed; and subsequently restrictions have been placed on the number of students entering Commerce, Engineering and most other professional and high resource qualifications.

From the 1970s, the University has been concerned about the impact of restricted entry on under-represented groups in the community. Most concern has focused on the educational opportunities and the achievements of Māori and Pacific students who are concentrated in low decile schools. These students are under-represented in the university sector and under achieve at school relative to other demographic groups. There are also significant issues for students from low socio-economic backgrounds and those with disabilities. The data relating to these groups are insufficient for a full understanding of these impacts and this report focuses mainly on Māori and Pacific students, with some attention paid to students from low decile schools.<sup>6</sup>

New Zealand has entered a period of demographic change which has significant implications for the tertiary education sector. The major feature is that most of

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<sup>5</sup> The Common Entrance Standard is set by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and is based on achievement in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement.

<sup>6</sup> The decile school attribution is as at 2006/2007.

the population growth over the next five to forty years is expected to occur in Auckland and will be strong among the Māori and Pacific population groups. The continuation of growth among Māori and Pacific populations is an important opportunity for the University as it seeks to recruit students with the potential to succeed from populations which it has not previously admitted and graduated in large numbers.

The University of Auckland has been a leader in research on educational performance. It is currently the home to the *Starpath* Partnership for Excellence research project that is working with schools throughout Auckland and Northland to identify the barriers preventing Māori and Pacific students and students from low decile schools moving up the educational ladder. Members of the Faculty of Education have been engaged in major research projects on literacy, numeracy, assessment and leadership in our schools. The University has also taken a role in lifting aspirations and performance in low decile schools. In conjunction with Great Potentials, it operates the Mentoring and Tutoring Education Scheme (MATES) in which University students mentor school students in 12 decile 1-4 schools in the Auckland area. Other homework and mentoring schemes operate for particular schools and groups of students. There has been recent discussion about how to expand these programmes into additional schools and across a wider geographical spread.

Nevertheless, the pattern of under achievement continues and causes significant concern. There is an abundance of evidence to show that Māori and Pacific students are disproportionately concentrated in low decile schools, leave school with a lower level of achievement than students from other demographic groups, and are under-represented among those school leavers gaining a University Entrance qualification and entering a university. For instance, of 2006 school leavers, 37% of Pākehā/European students had gained a University Entrance qualification but only 12% of Māori and 12% of Pacific students.<sup>7</sup>

The University of Auckland admits a high proportion of Māori and Pacific students who gain University Entrance. Around 17% of Māori students who gained University Entrance in 2006 across the country were admitted to The University of Auckland in 2007 and around 47% of those Pacific students.

Despite this, neither New Zealand nor The University of Auckland can stand by and let the current pattern of school achievement and subsequent access to university education continue. In Auckland the demographic projections alone make it imperative that more students from disadvantaged or under-represented groups gain access to higher education. These are the most rapidly growing demographic groups and it is the interest of universities and the community to ensure that access is widened.

As a recent report from the United Kingdom on Fair Admissions to Higher Education has stated

'It is not the task of higher education admissions to compensate for educational or social disadvantage. But identifying latent talent and potential, which may not be fully demonstrated by examination results, is a legitimate aim for universities

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<sup>7</sup> Data management Unit, Ministry of Education, available on Education Counts website ([http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/maori\\_education/schooling/school\\_leavers/school\\_leavers\\_2006](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/maori_education/schooling/school_leavers/school_leavers_2006))

and colleges which seek to recruit the best possible students regardless of background.’<sup>8</sup>

These are challenges faced not only by the University but by the country.

**Recommendation 1: That the University continue to bring the disparities in educational performance to the attention of government and educational agencies; to participate actively in developing increased understanding of and information about these disparities and their impact on New Zealand; and to participate in programmes to address the disparities.**

**Recommendation 2: That the University carry out further work on its evidence base to ensure that the information and data needed to support research and initiatives on participation, retention and achievement of students from low socio-economic backgrounds and students with disabilities are available.**

## **5 Principles for The University of Auckland admission system**

The admission<sup>9</sup> system of the University must be set within the legislative framework established by Parliament and the University. The Education Act 1989 and the Statutes of the University provide this framework.

Admission to the University is governed by the **Education Act 1989**. This Act states:

‘PART XVI 224 (2) Subject to this section, a person is eligible to be enrolled as a student at any institution in a course of study or training provided by the institution if, and only, if

- (a) One of the following subparagraphs applies:
    - (i) The person is a domestic student;
    - (ii) The person is an exempt student;
    - (iii) The Council of the institution consents; and
  - (b) The person holds the minimum entry qualifications for the course determined by the Council; and
  - (c) The person has attained -
    - (i) If the institution has fixed a minimum age for enrolment at the institution, the age so fixed; and
    - (ii) If the institution has fixed a minimum age for enrolment in the course, the age so fixed
- (3) Paragraphs (b) and (c) of the subsection (2) of this section do not apply to a person if -
- (a) The person has attained the age of 20 years; or
  - (b) The Council of the institution is satisfied that the person is capable of undertaking the course of study or training concerned.

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<sup>8</sup> ‘Fair admissions to higher education: recommendations for good practice’, Admissions to Higher Education Steering Group, 2004, p.5

<sup>9</sup> Admission is the process by which a student applies, and is approved for entry to the University and a University qualification. See ‘Glossary’, *The University of Auckland 2008 Calendar*, p.808. Once a student is admitted to the University and a qualification he or she can then enrol in courses for that qualification. Admission and enrolment have become two consecutive steps as Universities have moved to on-line admission and enrolment systems. This is provided for in the Funding Information issued by the Tertiary Education Commission.

(4) Where an eligible person applies for enrolment in a course of study or training at an institution, the person, is subject to this section, entitled to be enrolled in that course.

(5) Where the Council of an institution is satisfied that it is necessary to do so because of insufficiency of staff, accommodation, or equipment, the Council may determine the maximum number of students who may be enrolled in a particular course of study or training at the institution in a particular year.'

In applying these sections of the Act, the University Council adopted the **Limitation of Entry Statute 1991** providing for it to determine the maximum number of students that might be enrolled for a programme or course where the conditions stipulated in 224 (5) apply. Under this Statute, the Council, on the recommendation of the University Senate, prescribes academic standards to be achieved as a prerequisite for enrolment for limited entry courses and qualifications and prescribes criteria for the selection of students into such courses and qualifications. The limits for courses and qualifications are approved each year by the University Council and are published in the University Calendar.

The Tertiary Education sets out rules around the application of the framework each year in its Funding Information.

The Education Act 1989 also requires the Council, when performing its duties and exercising its powers,

- '(a) To strive to ensure that the institution attains the highest standards of excellence in education, training and research;
- (b) To acknowledge the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi;
- (c) To encourage the greatest possible participation by the communities served by the institution so as to maximize the educational potential of all members of those communities with particular emphasis on those groups in those communities that are under-represented among the students of the institution;
- (d) To ensure that the institution does not discriminate unfairly against any person;
- (e) To ensure that the institution operates in a financially responsible manner that ensures the efficient use of resources and maintains the institution's long-term viability;
- (f) To ensure that the proper standards of integrity, conduct and concern for –
  - (i) The public interest; and
  - (ii) The wellbeing of students attending the institution-are maintained.'

These requirements impose on the Council manifold challenging, and sometimes competing, obligations to strive for excellence, to acknowledge the Treaty, to encourage participation, to exercise due care with the finances of the University, and to protect the public interest and the wellbeing of students. They well sum up the dilemmas faced by universities world-wide in the pursuit of many goals.

The University's commitments to access have focused on the provision of 'equal opportunities to all who have the potential to succeed in a university of high international standing'. Open entry to some qualifications has meant that the University has not been tested in regard to this commitment because gaining a University Entrance qualification (including Special Admission gained through reaching the age of 20) has been accepted as evidence of the potential to succeed in at least those remaining open entry qualifications. However the University's strategic goals and the new funding environment require the

University to become better at assessing the potential to succeed and at providing those students who are admitted with the learning environment which enables them to succeed.

The Taskforce has examined the principles that underlie a number of systems used for admitting students. In doing this, it has been very aware that the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi and its specification in the Education Act, 1989 makes New Zealand very different from other countries.

In the New Zealand and The University of Auckland context a primary principle of the admission system stems from the statutory and Strategic Plan commitments to the Treaty of Waitangi. The Council has a statutory requirement, when performing its duties and exercising its powers to 'acknowledge the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi'. The Strategic Plan recognizes the commitment of the University to 'the mutual rights and obligations articulated by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, with particular emphasis on promoting Māori presence and participation in all aspects of University life....'.

The unique New Zealand principle then must be:

**i. The admissions system must recognise the University's commitments to and obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi.**

Of the international literature it reviewed, the Taskforce found the 2004 report from the United Kingdom, 'Fair Admission to higher education: recommendations for good practice' the most useful.<sup>10</sup> The review group that produced this Report was tasked with the development of a statement of high level principles about admission to all English higher education institutions. It focused in particular on the role played by admission processes in the under-representation of certain groups in higher education, while recognizing that admission processes are only one factor affecting participation.

The Report defined a fair admissions process as one that:

Provides equal opportunity for all individuals, regardless of background, to gain admission to a course suited to their ability and aspirations.<sup>11</sup>

It further stated that

Everyone agrees that applicants should be chosen on merit: the problem arises when we try to define it. Merit could mean admitting applicants with the highest examination marks, or it could mean taking a wider view about each applicant's achievements and potential.<sup>12</sup>

The Taskforce recognizes that while prior educational achievement is regarded as the best single indicator of success at the undergraduate level, it does not necessarily reflect potential and talent. Factors influencing prior educational achievement include early childhood experiences, home environments, opportunities and the quality of educational experience, often impacted by the decile rating of the school, other family and community responsibilities, low expectations and health problems.

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<sup>10</sup> 'Fair admissions to higher education: recommendations for good practice', Admissions to Higher Education Steering Group, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p.5

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

Therefore, following the 'Fair Admissions' Report, it is suggested that the other principles for a fair and equitable admissions process are as follows:

**ii. A fair and equitable admissions process should be transparent.**

The University should provide all of the information that an applicant requires to make an informed choice about the University and the programmes he or she might apply for. The basis and criteria for admission should be communicated clearly, analysis of admissions data should be public and unsuccessful applicants should be provided with feedback on request.

**iii. A fair and equitable admissions process for our University should result in the admission of students who are judged by both their achievements and their potential to be capable of succeeding in a university of high international standing.**

There is a significant literature which attempts to predict student success factors in higher education. In the international literature reviewed by the Taskforce there was a consensus that secondary school grades are a valid predictor of success in higher education, but that there are limitations to using these results. Research carried out by the *Starpeth* Project at The University has referred to the weak relationship between norm-referenced school examination systems and first year GPAs at University. This research concluded that a standards based assessment, such as the National Certificate of Educational Achievement now used in New Zealand, had a stronger predictive capacity than norm referenced systems.<sup>13</sup>

The University may assess the potential of students to succeed in their programme by taking into account prior academic study and examination results but may also include other factors, such as the educational context in which the student has achieved or additional testing or assessment (for instance the Undergraduate Medical Admissions Test used by the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences or uniTEST recently introduced in Australia) and an individual applicant's experiences and relevant skills. The United Kingdom Fair Admissions report recognized that such multi-faceted admission systems present challenges in establishing, resourcing and implementing a reliable selection method which this University will also have to recognize.

**iv. A fair and equitable admissions system should strive to use assessment methods that are reliable and valid.**

The University should regularly review its admissions processes and selection criteria and methods to ensure that they remain reliable, that is, good predictors of performance, and valid, that is, appropriate to University study in general and the planned study of the applicant in particular.

**v. A fair and equitable admissions scheme should seek to minimise barriers for applicants.**

The University should seek to minimise barriers likely to discourage or prevent able students from applying for admission to the University or from completing all admission processes. Such barriers could include restricted or delayed access to admission information, lack of advisory or support services available to

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<sup>13</sup> Boaz Shulruf, John Hattie, Sarah Tumen, 'The Predictability of Enrolment and First Year University results from Secondary School Performance', unpublished paper, nd, The University of Auckland, pp.4, 15.

applicants, lack of access to online admission and enrolment processes, inability to complete on-time applications, unfair fees for application processing etc.

- vi. A fair and equitable admissions system should be professional in every respect and be underpinned by appropriate institutional structures and processes.**

The University should ensure that its admissions processes are efficient, consistent, well resourced, and that staff involved are well trained to meet the needs of a diverse applicant pool.

**Recommendation 3: That the University adopt the following principles to guide it in the development and application of a fair and equitable admission system and that Faculties be required to develop their selection criteria and processes that align with these principles.**

- i. The admissions system must recognise the University's commitments to and obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi;**
- ii. A fair and equitable admissions process should be transparent;**
- iii. A fair and equitable admissions process for our University should result in the admission of students who are judged by both their achievements and their potential to be capable of succeeding in a university of high international standing;**
- iv. A fair and equitable admissions system should strive to use assessment methods that are reliable and valid;**
- v. A fair and equitable admissions scheme should seek to minimise barriers for applicants;**
- vi. A fair and equitable admissions system should be professional in every respect and be underpinned by appropriate institutional structures and processes.**

## **6 Benchmarking admission systems**

The Taskforce considered that it should survey admission processes and any associated equity programmes at international benchmark universities. A number of American, Canadian, Australian and British University web sites were reviewed for information. Whereas it was relatively easy to source information on admission processes and equity programmes, reliable outcome data from such processes and programmes was difficult to source from published information.

There are significant differences between New Zealand and other countries which make benchmarking difficult. Open entry to at least some programmes on the basis of a common entrance standard is a New Zealand practice not known in many other countries. In most countries there is a well-established system of tertiary or higher education which clearly identifies different kinds of tertiary institutions and the pathways between them. Most countries maintain a central admissions system to which students apply, stating the institutions to which they wish to be admitted in order of preference. It is usual for universities, and particularly first and second tier universities, to set admission standards and criteria and to select students into all qualifications. All universities select school leaver students on the basis of academic merit but diversity and equity considerations may lead to an applicant gaining a place ahead of a student with higher academic grades. Some US universities have experimented with offering places to students within the top 4-5% of their secondary schools, regardless of the level of academic achievement. A recent review of this approach has,

however, concluded that these plans have not been successful in maintaining diverse campuses.<sup>14</sup>

Although other educational jurisdictions have special schemes which provide for second chance higher education for mature students (usually regarded as over 25), the New Zealand system of Special Admission for applicants over the age of 20 who do not have an admission qualification appears to be highly unusual. Most second chance admission schemes require preparatory courses to be taken prior to admission to degree study.

**Differentiated higher education systems:** Differentiated higher education systems provide a means of matching student abilities and potential to programmes and institutions. The best known example of a differentiated higher education system that also provides pathways for students between institutions is the California tertiary system. This system is comprised of a number of different kinds of institution, each of which strives to be the best of its kind. Research universities such as the University of California at Berkeley and the University of California at Los Angeles select highly qualified students largely on the basis of academic merit. The California State universities provide for bachelors and masters degrees. Community Colleges offering two year associate degrees either provide a complete education in vocational areas or a pathway for high achieving students to move into a university. Recently the United Kingdom has introduced a system of two year foundation degrees from which students might move into full degree programmes but these have not yet been fully established.

**Central admission systems:** In the UK, Australia and the US, most admissions are handled through a state or national central application process. Students apply listing their institutions and programmes of choice and are offered a place in one of these institutions. This means that students being considered by an institution of choice will almost certainly enrol at that institution if offered a place but that many students do not get an offer from their preferred institution. These processes try to match students to programmes and institutions where they are most likely to succeed and the more prestigious institutions are highly selective in their offers of places.

**Admission requirements:** the students selected into most universities in any one year reflect the number of places available, the number of students who apply for these places and the quality of the applicant pool in that particular year. Most universities publish an indicative entry score and some guarantee places to applicants who achieve at a certain level. Applicants deemed to have the capacity to succeed in university studies but who do not reach the indicative score might be reviewed individually and other factors may then be taken into account in determining admission. This is usually done through special access schemes, for example, for mature age entry, for indigenous or First Nation students, for students from rural or isolated regions, for students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, for students with a disability or long term medical conditions, for students from non-English speaking backgrounds, for elite athletes, for first in the family at University.

The case of the University of British Columbia's First Nations programme was cited in a submission to the Taskforce. In this case Canadian Aboriginal applicants who meet minimum entrance standards but who do not meet the cut-off point will be considered if they meet a lower cut-off point.

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<sup>14</sup> Rebecca Zwick, 'College Admission in Twenty-First-Century America: The Role of Grades, Tests, and Games of Chance', *Harvard Educational Review*, Winter 2007, 77,4, pp.419-429.

American universities have developed the most comprehensive admission systems. Most students apply on the Common Application Form and many universities have a supplementary application form providing additional information about the student's background. Some elite institutions in the US, for instance Princeton and Stanford, do not set minimum academic standards and select on the student's whole record and curriculum vitae. They do, however, publish the admission statistics from previous years based on the grade point average or SAT score achieved by the applicants who have been admitted.

**Foundation Programmes:** A number of universities run Foundation Programmes to help students achieve minimum admission standards. For example, the University of Glasgow offers a 10 week pre-university Summer School which can provide a qualification for admission to some programmes. These programmes are similar to the University of Auckland Tertiary Foundation Certificate. Mature applicants are also frequently required to attend access courses. The University of Auckland New Start Programme is an example of this kind of course.

## **7 What are the goals that the University should set itself for the admission of Māori and Pacific students?**

The Taskforce asked what are appropriate goals for the University to set itself in widening access and participation? With the current state of knowledge about student performance, the current databases and the participant groups targeted by the Tertiary Education Strategy, these goals need to focus on Māori and Pacific students. There are currently inadequate data to set goals and monitor access, participation and success for students from low socio-economic backgrounds and students with disabilities.

In setting targets for the number, retention and completion rates of Māori and Pacific students, the University has traditionally taken the current number and rates and aimed to improve these over time.

There are other ways of setting targets. The taskforce considered whether the targets should be to:

- a) match the proportion of Māori and Pacific students in the University to the proportion of Māori and Pacific in the New Zealand or Auckland regional population over 15, or
- b) match the proportion of Māori and Pacific students in the University to those in the New Zealand or Auckland regional population who achieve a University Entrance, or
- c) match the proportion of Māori and Pacific school leaver entrants to the University to the proportion of school leavers with University Entrance from each school decile, or
- d) lead New Zealand universities in the proportion of enrolled Māori and Pacific students.

Nine percent of the Auckland and 11% of the New Zealand population over 15 is Māori; 11% of the Auckland and 5% of the New Zealand population over 15 is Pacific. If Northland and Auckland are combined, the regional population over 15 is 10% for both Māori and Pacific.<sup>15</sup> Māori students currently make up 7% and Pacific students 9% of the domestic equivalent full-time student population in the

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<sup>15</sup> *New Zealand Census, 2006.*

University. The University is therefore some way from reflecting the ethnic composition of its regional population.

In 2006 7% of the school leavers who gained University Entrance nationally were Māori and 3% were of Pacific ethnicity. In that year, Māori students made up 5% of school leaver entrants to the University and Pacific students made up 7% of school leaver entrants. Further analysis of these figures needs to be undertaken to take account of regional demography.

A third analysis considered successful University Entrance candidates in 2006 by school decile and the proportion of students who were subsequently admitted to the University by school decile for the whole of New Zealand and for Auckland. These proportions mapped on to each other relatively closely. Whereas 1% of students who achieved university entrance throughout New Zealand came from decile 1 schools this was 2% from the Auckland region. Two percent of school leavers who enrolled at the University of Auckland in 2007 came from decile 1 schools. The proportion of Auckland students gaining University Entrance and the proportion of school leavers who enrolled at the University maps exactly for decile 1, 2, and 3, schools. There is a proportionate over-enrolment by students from decile 4, 5, 9 and private schools and a proportionate under-enrolment from decile 6, 7, 8 and 10 schools. This suggests that as long as students in low decile schools gain a University Entrance they are very likely to enrol at The University of Auckland. The finding accords with that of the Ministry of Education in relation to 2004 school leavers that 'When school leavers from low decile schools achieved school qualifications of the same level as school leavers from high-decile schools, they transitioned into tertiary education at very similar rates.'<sup>16</sup> The issue here is the number of school leavers from low decile schools who gain University Entrance.

The University of Auckland is the largest provider of university education for both Māori and Pacific students. 19% of Māori and 42% of Pacific University students were enrolled at The University of Auckland in 2006. However as a percentage of the total equivalent full time students at the University, Māori enrolments lagged behind Waikato, Massey, Victoria, Otago and AUT. Waikato University had the highest percentage of Māori, 17%, among its students. The next highest was Massey with 9%. In 2006, Pacific students made up 8% of the student body at both The University of Auckland and AUT; the next highest percentage was 4% at Victoria.

The following recommendation proposes two stages of targets for the Māori and Pacific student body at the University. In addition, the University should aim over time to have the highest proportion of Māori and Pacific students of any University in the country.

**Recommendation 4: That the University set targets for Māori and Pacific student numbers in two stages. The first stage should be to match the proportion of Māori and Pacific school leavers admitted to the University with the proportions of such students in the Auckland and Northland region gaining University Entrance, while retaining current numbers of Special Admission students. The second stage should be to match the proportion of enrolled Māori and Pacific students with the proportion of Māori and Pacific people over 15 in the University's regional population within five years.**

**Recommendation 5: That the University develop its Māori and Pacific student recruitment strategy and admission processes in an inclusive**

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<sup>16</sup> Tertiary education choices of school leavers, Ministry of Education, November 2007.

**manner to support the achievement of its enrolment targets and a case management approach to target groups.**

**Recommendation 6: That the Senate retain the Taskforce for a period of three years to monitor and evaluate the impact of limited entry and then review the process for ongoing monitoring and evaluation.**

## **8 University support structures for under-represented groups**

The University currently provides a number of support structures for students from under-represented groups. Those for Māori and Pacific students are detailed in Appendix V and VI. The University also provides extensive support for students with disabilities, including those students with specific learning disabilities, through its Disabilities Office and associated programmes of learning and other support.

**Recommendation 7: That the University retain and enhance its learning and other support structures for students so that their chances of successful academic performance are maximized.**

## **9 Submissions**

The Taskforce received twenty submissions. A list of these is appended at Appendix III.

The Taskforce asked for feedback on several specific issues and this section of the report is organized according to those issues. It should be said that a number of submissions criticised the way in which the decision to limit entry had been taken and the lack of consultation. The prior consultation and the reasons for the timing of the Senate recommendation and Council decision have been discussed in other places and it is not the Taskforce's purpose to engage in this debate. We however note the strong expression of these concerns.

### **Which groups will be most affected by limited entry?**

The Taskforce had identified equity groups it was concerned with as:

- Māori
- Pacific
- Men and women in disciplines and occupational groups where there are barriers to their undertaking study and entering careers
- Students with disabilities
- Students from low socio-economic backgrounds

The feedback showed the main concern was for Māori and Pacific students who were identified as coming from low socio-economic backgrounds and disproportionately in attendance at low decile schools. Other groups which were singled out in feedback were

- Mature students
- Students with a low grade point equivalent as assessed at the point of admission
- Men who reach academic maturity late
- Applicants who submit late applications
- Students entering through a foundation or bridging programme
- Rural students

It was noted in some submissions that there are students, for instance, Pacific students who come disproportionately from low decile schools and who have basic admission qualifications, who have multiple disadvantages.

### **Will limited entry have unintended consequences and what might these be?**

Some submitters considered that limited entry could bring positive unintended consequences but most considered that unintended consequences would be negative.

Some positive consequences suggested were:

- An improved admissions process
- A decrease in the number of students who do not complete their courses, who do not sit their exams or who do not make satisfactory progress

Possible unintended and adverse consequences seen by submitters included:

- Creation of a competitive environment in secondary schools
- Pressure on secondary schools to align their senior school curriculum to University Entrance requirements
- An impression that the University is an elitist institution which may lead students to consider that they cannot aspire to admission
- The intensification of current disadvantage
- The further commodification of higher education
- A possible closure of the route that some students have used to start in an open entry qualification and then move into a limited entry qualification on the basis of grades gained
- Pressure to close foundation programmes so that more students can be taken into degree programmes.

Most submitters considered that unintended consequences would in the main result from a potential decline in the admission rate of Māori and Pacific students. The following possible consequences were suggested:

- A negative impact on the relationship between the University and those communities whose students might be most affected
- A decline in the fostering of Māori academic and research endeavours because the number of Māori students might decline
- A decline in the development of Māoritanga
- A negative impact on some curriculum areas which are of interest to Māori and Pacific students
- A reduction in the ability to build Māori and Pacific capacity in the professions.

### **What are the fairest selection criteria for limited entry?**

The responses to this question were mixed. Some submissions considered that admission should be based on academic merit alone and the same standard be applied to every applicant. Most of the submitters, however, considered that academic merit needed to be considered alongside other considerations which would take account of prior disadvantage and potential to succeed.

A number of the submissions focused on the ranking system currently used to assist in selecting students for limited entry programmes and what were seen as disadvantages to already disadvantaged students in the way rank scores are calculated and applied. There was a clear call for a review of this system. This issue is further dealt with in the section on ranking.

Interviews and application essays as supplementary material for admission selection were not favoured by submitters.

There was some support for an admission system that took into account motivation, aptitude tests, extracurricular activities, and the placing of students in their school cohort.

**Should students who are not admitted to the university be encouraged to study at another tertiary institution and to re-apply to the University on the basis of their results of that tertiary study?**

Some submitters took this to refer to a foundation programme at a separate tertiary institution while other took it to be prior degree study.

Submissions generally favoured a route into the University through other tertiary institutions as long as a clear pathway was identified and that some credit could be given for prior study.

Some concern was expressed that students who started at another institution would not wish to move to the University.

**How should mature students who do not have a university entrance qualification be assessed for entry to University?**

Fewer than half the submissions commented on this issue. Some submissions considered that interviews and entrance tests should be applied to such applicants. One or two considered that mature students should be required to undertake a preparation programme and should be compulsorily mentored and monitored in their first year.

**What are the benchmarks for best practice in limited entry schemes that ensure equity outcomes that you recommend the taskforce to consider?**

Five submissions addressed this issue. The University of British Columbia's First Nations admission programme and California State University were the only two universities mentioned as having schemes that might be examined.

**Comments on the strengths and weaknesses of current limited entry selection procedures at the University of Auckland.**

Seven submissions commented on this issue.

Strengths were seen as:

- A relatively easily understood ranking system that is well known in the schools
- A rapid decision making process carried out by an affordable number of staff
- The procedures help regulate supply in the labour market.

Weaknesses were seen as:

- Disadvantage to students from low decile schools which don't offer five approved subjects (this relates to the ranking system)
- Lack of clarity about the ranking system
- Interviews are not a good predictor of success
- Inadequate evaluation of the procedures.

## **Other comments relating to equity implications**

Among the other comments made by submitters that seem particularly relevant to the work of the Taskforce were the following:

- There is a need to provide further scholarships and pre-entry training courses to increase enrolments of students from minority groups
- The University needs to develop communication and marketing campaigns to attract students from under-represented groups
- The University needs to provide clearer information about admission to potential applicants
- Concern that quotas for under-represented groups make quota students second class students
- The University needs to improve its support programmes for under-represented groups of students.

## **10 The major issues relevant to a fair and equitable admissions system**

Having considered a selection of the literature relevant to its purpose, a very considerable amount of data that relates to the access, participation, retention and achievement, the submissions it received and the views expressed in the meetings it had, the Taskforce has focused on a number of major issues as follows.

### **10.1 The ranking system**

A number of the submissions discussed the rank score and GPE that are allocated to all applicants for admission to the University. It was argued in some submissions that the calculation of the rank score disadvantages school leaver applicants from low decile and rural schools who may not have the same opportunity to take approved subjects or credits in as many standards as students from higher decile schools. Students in these schools also take more unit standards which are not awarded with merit or excellence and so carry less weight in the ranking system.

The introduction of NCEA as the national University Entrance qualification from 2005 meant that the University no longer had a single mark derived from Bursary or Scholarship examinations to use in selecting students into its limited entry programmes. As admission decisions need to be made as soon as possible after the receipt of the NCEA results from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, an automated system was developed to assist with selection of students into a number of programmes.

This system involved the development of bands of marks derived from the number of credits and the level of achievement attained by students in the NCEA Level 3 standards. A similar system was developed for students who took Cambridge International Examinations. The bands were then allocated a Grade Point Equivalent (GPE) which has over time been tested against the Grade Point Average (GPA) achieved by students in their first year at University in order to ascertain its reliability as a predictor of first year GPAs.

All school leaver applicants for admission are allocated a rank score after the University receives their school examination results. The University also assigns a rank score to Special Admission applicants based on any tertiary qualifications, secondary school qualifications, work and other experience, such as family and travel, and motivation.

The rank score and the GPE derived from it are a factor in the selection of students into limited entry programmes. Their use across the University however is complex and different Faculties use rank scores in combination with other selection methods.

Some limited entry qualifications, for instance the Bachelor of Commerce and the Bachelor of Engineering, make a first round of offers based on the rank score. They then interview or individually review the applications of students in the next band to determine a second round of offers.

However there are limited entry qualifications (for instance the Bachelor of Fine Arts) where the basic university entrance is accepted as the minimum entrance standard and other factors, in this case a portfolio of work, are also taken into account in making admission decisions. The Bachelor of Education (Teaching) is usually seen as an open entry qualification as there is no limit on numbers and the basic university entrance is adequate for consideration for admission, but students are selected after an interview to assess suitability for teaching and for meeting the requirements of the New Zealand Teachers Council.

The ranking system is therefore used in different ways by both limited and open entry qualifications.

The ranking system has been criticised in submissions as disadvantageous to Māori and Pacific students and to students from low decile and rural schools. The argument has been made that the rank score is itself composed in a way that disadvantages these groups.

The following observations relate to school leavers with NCEA results as the number applying for admission with other examination results is still comparatively low.

The rank score is derived from 80 credits gained by NCEA students over a maximum of five approved subjects. The 80 best credits are taken if an applicant has achieved more than 80 credits. If an applicant has achieved fewer than 80 credits, all achieved credits in the maximum of five approved subjects are used in the calculation.

The criticisms of this method of deriving the score are as follows

- Students who do not take five approved subjects are disadvantaged
- Students who do not take or achieve 80 credits are disadvantaged
- Students who take unit standards which do not have level of achievement awarded are disadvantaged
- The rank score is not aligned to the NCEA University Entrance which requires students to achieve 14 credits in two approved subjects at Level 3 and an additional 14 credits at Level 3 across no more than two domains (a domain is a broad area of learning) and a prescribed standard of literacy and numeracy. The third group of 14 credits may be derived from approved subjects but does not have to be. In low decile schools it is more common for students to take fewer than 5 approved subjects and fewer than 80 credits.

These criticisms are correct to a greater or lesser degree. The Taskforce has analysed the subjects and credits achieved by the 5609 applicants for admission to The University of Auckland in Semester I 2007 who had attempted NCEA University Entrance. Of these applicants, 4,628 (82%) gained University Entrance. 1853 (90%) of Pākehā/European applicants, 1949 (81%) of Asian

applicants, 254 (80%) of Māori and 324 (63%) of Pacific applicants gained University Entrance. The percentage of applicants who gained University Entrance ranged from 65% of the applicants from decile 1 schools to 86% of the applicants from decile 6 schools. 94% of the applicants from private schools, which are not allocated a decile rating, gained University Entrance. It should be noted that not all students who gain a University Entrance from a school will apply to come to The University of Auckland and these percentages do not represent all the students at their decile schools who gain University Entrance.

**Unit standards:** Students who achieve unit standards find it difficult to attain a high rank score because there is no level above 'achieve' to be factored into the calculation. The University has always encouraged students to take achievement standards for University Entrance for this reason and has few applicants who rely on unit standards for admission purposes. This may be because such students are deterred from application. However applicants for open entry qualifications predominantly take achievement standards, when they would be admitted on the basis of unit standards, so it seems that schools are encouraging potential university students to take achievement standards.

**A maximum of five approved subjects:** Most applicants who gain a University Entrance have achieved credits in five or more approved subjects. Overall, 78% of applicants in Semester 1 2007 who gained University Entrance, achieved credits in 5 or more approved subjects. 80% of Pākehā/European, 73% of Māori, 77% of Asian and 70% of Pacific applicants with University Entrance achieved credits in five or more approved subjects. The composition of the rank score, based on a maximum of five approved subjects, therefore adversely affects a relatively small proportion and number of students who gain University Entrance with credits in fewer than five approved subjects.

Of the 22% of students who gained credits in fewer than 5 approved subjects and who gained University Entrance, the vast majority had credits in four approved subjects. It was possible for these students to achieve a high rank score depending on the level of their achievement in each standard and many did this.

However if one shifts to look at all applicants rather than applicants who gain a University Entrance the picture becomes less positive. Of all applicants, 31% achieve credits in fewer than 5 approved subjects and there is considerably wider disparity among these students. Pacific applicants are most likely to have gained credits in fewer than five approved subjects, followed by Māori, then Asian and Pākehā/European applicants. Applicants from low decile schools are also less likely to have credits in five approved subjects than those from higher decile schools.

The point here is that a student who gains credits in fewer than five approved subjects has a lower chance of gaining a University Entrance. The lack of a University Entrance prevents them from being admitted to the University. They will not have a rank score assigned to them as they have not achieved the basic University Entrance. The need is to determine how the range of approved subjects taught in lower decile schools can be expanded so that students can be in a better position to gain a University Entrance qualification or for the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and the universities to reconsider the place of approved subjects in the NCEA.

**80 best credits:** The University takes a student's 80 best credits in approved subjects into the calculation of a rank score. If a student has taken fewer than 80 credits all credits are taken into account. Students who do not take or gain 80 credits in approved subjects are not necessarily disadvantaged if they gain a

number of achievement standards with merit or excellence. This however is demanding for students. A higher proportion of Māori and Pacific students take fewer than 80 credits in approved subjects.

Overall 64% of applicants in Semester I 2007 who were awarded University Entrance, achieved 80 credits or more in approved subjects at Level 3. 67% of Pākehā/European, 66% of Asian, 51% of Māori and 38% of Pacific applicants with University Entrance achieved 80 or more credits in approved subjects. The number of credits taken into the rank score therefore impacts more students in all ethnic categories than does the number of approved subjects and there is a greater impact on Māori and Pacific students than on Pākehā/European and Asian students.

Of the 36% of applicants in Semester I 2007 who were awarded University Entrance and who achieved fewer than 80 credits in approved subjects, 24% achieved between 60 and 79 credits, and a further 8% gained between 50 and 59. 99% of applicants who were awarded a University Entrance gained 42 or more credits in approved subjects.

56, or 1% of applicants who took fewer than 42 credits in approved subjects were awarded University Entrance. These are students who have availed themselves of the full extent of credits in non-approved subjects. 38 of these students were Pākehā/European and Asian, 10 were Pacific and 5 were Māori and 3 were classified as other. As only the 28 credits achieved in approved subjects would have been taken into the rank score calculation of these students, they would have been disadvantaged, especially if the non-approved subjects in their University entrance had been gained at high levels of achievement.

There needs to be more work done on the patterns of student credit achievement. It is clear that students from low decile schools gain University Entrance with fewer credits in approved subjects than do students from higher decile schools. In the time available we have been unable to ascertain whether this is because fewer such credits are attempted or because fewer of those attempted are achieved. It is likely that both factors operate.

In setting the standard for selection in 2009, Faculties need to consider the pattern of credits achieved by students and set a rank score for admission that will not discriminate unfairly against those students whose educational context has disadvantaged them. Rank scores for admission may be adjusted to take into account equity goals as in the University of British Columbia admissions process described above. Another such example comes from St George's Medical School at the University of London where students from schools with low examination results are admitted if they can show that their grades are 60% better than the average for their school.

It has also been argued in submissions that there is evidence of advantage in the ranking system to students taking Cambridge International Examinations in that the calibration of rank scores to CIE results are inaccurate and weight such results too highly given the subsequent performance of such students at University. The Taskforce is unable to comment on these claims noting that the University regularly checks that the rank scores and the associated GPEs are reliably related to performance in the University and will need to maintain these checks.

**Recommendation 8: That the University continue to use a single ranking system as a measure of academic achievement. Admission systems should include other factors such as interviews, portfolios, auditions,**

**differential rank scores and equity principles, where these are required to mediate the selection of students with the potential for success and to achieve the University's equity goals.**

**Recommendation 9: That the University regularly review the ranking system, its components (ie the number of credits and the number of subjects), its bands and associated GPEs to ensure that the system is reliable and does not systematically discriminate against any group of students with the potential to succeed at the University.**

**Recommendation 10: That Education Committee initiate the first review of the ranking system to be carried out in time for the printing of the 2010 Prospectus and admissions in 2010.**

**Recommendation 11: That the University publish annually indicative minimum rank scores for admission to each undergraduate qualification.**

**Recommendation 12: That the Taskforce monitor the application and the review of the ranking system.**

## **10.2 Students with low rank scores**

A number of submissions expressed concern about students who have low rank scores and the impact on such students of limited entry and selection.

The taskforce has looked at school leavers who were admitted into an undergraduate programme in 2006 with a low rank score and the associated GPE of 0. A GPE of 0 is matched to a rank score band of 0-139.

In 2006 314 students assigned a low rank score were admitted to the University. These 314 students made up 4% of all new undergraduate students enrolled at the University in 2006. 37% of these students were Asian, 35% Pākehā/European, 16% Pacific, 6% Māori and 6% other ethnicities. 298 students had taken NCEA and 16 had taken CIE. All students were admitted to programmes which required only a basic University Entrance, i.e. mainly BA, BSc, BMus and BEd(Tchg).

In their University studies in 2006, 77% of the students gained a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 1 or higher. 23% maintained a GPA of 0. 15% failed all their courses and 47% failed at least half of their course load. 24% of the students passed all the courses they had enrolled in.

56 of the students did not return to the University in 2007. Of the students who had a GPA of 0 in 2006, 41 or 57% re-enrolled in 2007. 23 of these received a GPA of 0 in 2007.

A further analysis of a sample of students who were admitted with a low rank score shows that a student in this category is most likely to succeed if he or she is in a performance based degree (for instance, Music or Fine Arts) or if they take subjects at University which they have studied at school and in which they gained a degree of success. A student is most likely to fail if he or she takes subjects at University which they have either not studied at school or which they have studied and in which they have done poorly.

**Recommendation 13: That applications from students with a low rank score be carefully reviewed and, where necessary, applicants be**

**interviewed, to ensure that they have the necessary preparation for their intended programme of study.**

**Recommendation 14: That students admitted with a low rank score be required to participate in appropriate learning support programmes and their performance be monitored.**

### **10.3 Special Admission**

During discussions and through the submissions a concern had been expressed about the impact of limited entry on Special Admission students.

Special Admission is an admission category that enables New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who are over the age of 20 to be admitted to the University without holding, or without providing evidence of holding, a University Entrance qualification. It is provided for in section 224 (3) (a) of the Education Act. Special Admission students can currently gain automatic admission to open entry qualifications or entry to limited entry qualifications if they meet the selection criteria. Although other jurisdictions have programmes that admit mature students, the automatic admission of students over 20 to University qualifications and open entry seems to be unique to New Zealand.

All Faculties of The University of Auckland admit students under Special Admission regulations although the numbers admitted to limited entry qualifications are small. A rank score is assigned to all Special Admission applicants based on any tertiary qualification, secondary school qualifications, professional qualifications, work or other experience and other factors determined through a cv.

In 2006 the University admitted 712 students into an undergraduate degree under Special Admission. 582 or 82% of these students were admitted into a BA or Certificate in Arts, a BEd (Tchg) or a BSc. The total number of EFTS enrolled in the University in 2006 who had been admitted under Special Admission was 1,965 (7% of the total enrolled EFTS). These students could be found in all Faculties and in both undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications.

From 2000 to 2004 the number of EFTS generated by Special Admission declined from 2,562 to 1,855. From 2005, with the amalgamation of the University and the Auckland College of Education, Special Admission student numbers increased but have not returned to the 2000 level. From 2000 to 2006 the number of EFT Special Admission students declined by about a quarter.

The majority of Special Admission students are women (58% in 2006). The largest single group of Special Admission students are Pākehā/European (35%) followed by Asian (21%), Pacific (19%), Māori (14%) and other (11%). However a higher proportion of both Māori and Pacific students than Pākehā/European and Asian students are admitted to the University through Special Admission. In 2006, Māori students constituted 6% and Pacific students 8% of the total University roll, but 14% and 19% of Special Admission students. 16% of both Māori and Pacific equivalent full time students in 2006 had entered the University via Special Admission whereas this was only 7% for Pākehā/European students and 4% for Asian students. Although the numbers of Māori and Pacific Special Admission students are not large, Special Admission has been more significant as an admission route for Māori and Pacific students than for Pākehā/European and Asian students.

The largest single age group of Special Admission students at admission is 20. This is somewhat at odds with the general perception of Special Admission students which is that they are mature students seeking a second chance at higher education. Over half the students who enter a BSc and a third of those entering a BA by Special Admission are 20 when they are admitted. Scarcely any Special Admission students enter a BSc over the age of 25. Students coming into a BEd (Tchg) are likely to be older – a quarter are between 21 and 24 and 41% are over 29.

Some submissions recommended that Special Admission students be required to take a preparatory course prior to being enrolled in a degree. The number of Special Admission students who undertake foundation or preparatory programmes before entering the university is low. Of the 712 Special Admission students in 2006, 47 had undertaken New Start (a preparatory programme for mature students) and 42 had undertaken a foundation programme. Over half of those students (53%) who had taken New Start passed all their courses and a quarter failed all their courses. 21% of those students who had taken a foundation programme passed all their courses and 31% did not pass any courses. This suggests that foundation or preparatory programmes for Special Admission students need to be very carefully considered.

The pass rates for Special Admission students are consistently lower than those for all students, although they have improved slightly over the period 2002-2006. For all students (including Special Admission students) the pass rate in 2006 was 86% of all courses in which students were enrolled. The pass rate of those enrolled as Special Admission students in 2006 was 71%. The lowest Special Admission student pass rates are in Science (52%) and Arts (67%) and the highest is in Law (86%). In general, the Faculties that currently have limited entry and select their students have significantly higher pass rates among their Special Admission students. However, as already stated, the numbers of such students are very low.

A number of Special Admission students who fail all their courses in their first year of study re-enrol for a second year. Of those re-enrolled students in 2007, 60% again failed all of their courses.

**Recommendation 15: That the University retain Special Admission as an admission category.**

**Recommendation 16: That the selection criteria for Special Admission students be based on both academic achievement and potential as far as it can be assessed from prior academic achievement together with attributes which indicate the potential to succeed at University, such as work and life experience, motivation, and aptitude for the programme which the applicant wishes to enter.**

**Recommendation 17: Special Admission applicants who have failed to successfully complete a foundation programme or not reached an adequate standard in a preparatory programme not be re-admitted to the University, but be advised as to other study options.**

#### **10.4 Foundation programmes**

Some submissions were concerned that the University might in a changing educational environment be under pressure to cease its Foundation Programmes. These were seen as a valuable way in which under-represented groups are able to access higher education.

The University currently offers a limited number of Foundation Programmes which, if successfully completed, provide students with an admission qualification. The Tertiary Foundation Certificate (formerly known as the Wellesley Programme) commenced in the late 1980s with targeted Government equity funding. It enrolls about 200 students annually for a year long programme focusing on bringing students who left school without a University Entrance up to the point where they can enter a degree programme. The Certificate in Health Sciences, started in the late 1990s, is a Foundation Programme for Māori and Pacific students who wish to undertake a career in one of the health professions. The Faculty of Education offers two Foundation Programmes which are entry points to degrees in education and social work. The Foundation Certificate Tohu Tuapapa Matauranga is designed to prepare students to enter the Huarahi Māori specialization in the Bachelor of Education (Teaching) and the Foundation Certificate Education prepares for admission into the general Bachelor of Education (Teaching) degree and the Bachelor of Social Work. In addition, New Start, a preparatory programme for mature students, can be taken into consideration when Special Admission applicants apply for limited entry programmes, such as Commerce.

The Government's Tertiary Education Strategy is to more clearly distinguish the role of different kinds of tertiary institutions and the Tertiary Education Commission has made it clear that, while universities may retain current Foundation Programmes that meet certain criteria, they should not increase the proportion of students enrolled in such programmes. Instead the emphasis is being placed on pathways between institutions as the means of staircasing students from one qualification to another.

The University considers that the foundation programmes it offers provide a relevant and appropriate foundation for students who lack the necessary preparation for degree work. There have been many successful students complete degrees after being admitted from a Foundation Programme. The Tertiary Foundation Certificate recently celebrated the graduation of the first PhD student who had started his University career in the Certificate. We carefully monitor the results of these programmes which enable students to get a head start within the University where they aspire to study.

Nevertheless the University has determined that it will continue but not expand its current Foundation provision. In addition, it plans to work collaboratively with other institutions in clarifying and making more certain the pathways between institutions. Under its agreement with the Manukau Institution of Technology (MIT), signed in 1999, the University accepts students from MIT Foundation Programmes into its BEd(Tchg) and its Bachelor of Visual Arts, both delivered on the MIT Campus. Discussions are underway between other Faculties and MIT to identify other programmes at Manukau that could lead to degree study at the University.

**Recommendation 18: That the University continue its current Foundation Certificate Programmes and that students who successfully complete such a programme be guaranteed admission to a qualification of the University.**

**Recommendation 19: That the University engage with other tertiary institutions in clarifying pathways from Foundation and Diploma programmes offered by those other institutions into degree study at the University, ensuring that the requirements are transparent, access is**

**guaranteed to successful students and, where appropriate, credit is given for work completed at other institutions.**

## **10.5 Quotas**

In many universities quotas are used to address the under-representation of designated groups. They achieve this by permitting the admission of certain categories of students who do not reach the required admission standards or who fall short of other selection criteria. Once selected through a quota system, students must reach the standard required of other students to achieve passing grades.

The Education Act 1989 permits universities to 'give preference to eligible persons who are included in a class of persons that is under-represented among the students undertaking the course' in cases where limits have been set and the number of applicants exceeds the numbers of places available.

All the Faculties which currently limit entry to undergraduate degrees have quotas which are approved by the University Council acting on the authority of the Act. In the main the quotas are for Māori and Pacific students although Law has a quota for disabled students and Medicine has a quota for rural students. It should be noted that many Māori and Pacific and other quota group students do not apply for admission under the quota arrangements and are successful in their application.

The Taskforce asked all Faculties with quota arrangements to report on the number of students who had applied under the quotas, the number of students who had been admitted under a quota, the support measures given to quota students and any data they had on the success of quota students. In undertaking this analysis it found that Faculties did not uniformly keep the data or monitor students who had been admitted under quota schemes.

Not all Faculties apply the approved quota schemes as they may find these unnecessary. For instance, the Bachelor of Fine Arts has a quota for 5 Māori and Pacific students. In 2007 the intake of Māori and Pacific students was 21 and 7, above the quota number and selected on the basis of merit.

The Faculty of Engineering has a Māori and Pasifika Targeted Entry Scheme (MAPTES) and sets a quota for 25 admissions under the scheme. All applicants submit a written application and are interviewed and are offered a place if they reach a certain standard. Other Māori and Pacific students are admitted to Engineering through the general selection process.

The Law Faculty was one of the first faculties to introduce limited entry and has managed a quota to admit Māori and Pacific students into Law Part I and II for many years. To be admitted to Law Part II, students must have achieved the prerequisite grades in LAW 121 and LAW 131 but their overall GPA (derived from the first year of study at the University) may be lower than the cut off point for general admission. Since 2005, the School has not allocated all the places in the Māori quota but has done so for the Pacific quota. It should be noted that significant numbers of Māori students enter Law under the general admission scheme.

The Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences has the most complete set of quotas as an integral part of its drive to increase the number of Māori and Pacific people working in the health workforce. It operates a Māori and Pacific Admission scheme (MAPAS) in all of its undergraduate programmes. Selection is based on

an interview (involving the applicants and their families), testing for maths and English ability, and recommendation as to the most appropriate programme of study. Offers are made for full quotas in Nursing and Health Sciences but the quotas for Medicine and Pharmacy, which are set high to include all possible qualified applicants, are not always filled. It should be noted that some Māori and Pacific students are admitted outside of the quota process.

All Faculties that have quota systems have support systems for the students who are admitted as quota students. Often these students participate in support systems that are offered to all students or to all Māori and/or Pacific students.

Some of the submissions received by the Taskforce expressed disquiet with quotas as a way of addressing disadvantage. Quotas were seen as creating 'second class' students. One submission argued that such schemes suggest that

'the cohort of students admitted by means of the special entry scheme is being favoured on the basis of their ethnicity or other demographic characteristic. These students are often given a hard time by other students for this reason; and the schemes are attacked by politicians and in the media. Not surprisingly, many of the students admitted under these schemes feel stigmatized and singled out.'

However, other submissions saw quotas or targeted admission schemes as an option that could be used with limited entry for applicants on the margins to be considered separately and in a consistent manner across the University. While pre-University educational disadvantage persists the use of such schemes remains a significant way to address issues of under-representation.

There is a need for the University to establish consistent policies and practices relating to the selection of students in targeted admission schemes. At the moment there are a variety of application forms and processes associated with the various schemes which are confusing for students.

**Recommendation 20: That until the University is convinced that a transparent fair and equitable admissions system can address educational disadvantage and produce an appropriately diverse student body, Faculties use targeted admission schemes to assist in meeting their goals for the admission of under-represented groups.**

**Recommendation 21: That the Equal Opportunities Committee be asked to recommend a set of consistent policies and practices, to be used in University targeted admission schemes.**

## **10.6 Unsatisfactory Progress**

Some submissions argued that instead of limiting entry, the University should be much more rigorous in its use of unsatisfactory progress regulations to exclude failing or non-performing students from the University. In some cases this argument was tied to the option (discussed below) that open entry be continued as it presently exists with selection at the end of the first year. It has also been noted that a proportion of students who do not progress satisfactorily do not complete or do not sit the examinations for any of the courses in which they are enrolled. The University requires ways of identifying such students at an early stage. The Faculty of Arts is trialling a 'track and trace' project this year which will assist us in this.

Unsatisfactory progress is currently under review as several faculties have expressed the view that the current regulations are too complex and should be based on the number of points passed rather than on a grade point average.

It is aimed to complete this review in 2008 for a regulation change and implementation in 2010.

**Recommendation 22: That the Taskforce in its monitoring of the implications of limited entry include changes to the unsatisfactory progress regulations.**

### **10.7 The 'Open First Year' entry option**

Some submissions proposed the option of retaining open entry in the degrees where it currently applies for a first year of study and the selection of students for continuation into a second year and beyond. This option is given consideration here.

This option has the following advantages

- All applicants with a basic University Entrance qualification and all Special Admission applicants would have an opportunity to study at The University of Auckland
- Open entry would be preserved in certain degrees
- Students would have an opportunity to demonstrate whether or not they were capable of undertaking University study successfully.

The qualifications that would retain entry from the basic University Entrance or Special Admission under this proposal would be:

- Certificate in Arts and Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Music, some majors
- Bachelor of Laws (Part I)
- Certificate in Science and Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Technology specialisations in Materials, Medical Physics and Imaging Technology and Optoelectronics
- Bachelor of Theology

The option has the following disadvantages:

- Students admitted to the University should have a reasonable expectation that they will be able to progress to graduation in a qualification of this University and not have the uncertainty of a selection process at the end of Year I.
- An analysis of satisfactory progress in the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science shows that selection into a second year based on performance in an open year would impact adversely most significantly and disproportionately on Pacific and then Māori students and could impact more significantly than the anticipated limits on entry.
- In an environment with constrained numbers, open entry at first year will produce a large first year intake which would need to be balanced against reduced second and third year course sizes. Reductions in advanced class sizes will impact on the viability of subjects, the ability to offer a balanced curriculum and the higher level teaching that is a hallmark of universities, especially research universities. It will also impact on the size of the potential pool of postgraduate students.
- There could be a significant decline in retentions from first to second year and completions which are key performance indicators used by the University Council, the Tertiary Education Commission and the

Government to measure the performance of institutions. The TEC has signaled that it expects funding to be partially based on these indicators by 2010.

- Year 2 is not a clear progression for many students enrolling in these degrees. There would be many difficulties of implementation, for instance determining what constituted the first 'open year' – a calendar year or 120 points – and what courses a student should be able to take before and for the purposes of selection?
- Students who are not selected into a second year of a degree will have foregone a year in which they might have gained success in another tertiary institution. This could lead to a loss of confidence and sense of failure. Current Unsatisfactory Progress regulations provide for a period of 'recovery' but using an 'open year' as a testing year prior to selection would not be able to provide for a second chance in this way.
- The increased costs and administration involved in a second year selection across the University which would deflect funding and time from other activities.

Members of the Taskforce have discussed the option of open entry for the first year at some length and are persuaded by the disadvantages, in particular the impact on equity groups, that this would not be a wise option for the University to pursue.

## **11 Conclusion**

The Taskforce acknowledges the challenges that the extension of limited entry poses and will continue to pose to the University goals of excellence and equity.

When the Taskforce started its work it set out the following indicators for its success:

- the introduction of limited entry practices that assist in meeting equity goals
- a similar or improved percentage of students from identified equity groups entering the University in 2009
- improved courses completion and pass rates for 2009, and improved retention and progression for 2010 among equity groups
- achievement of relevant student body and equity objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan 2005-2012 and the University Profile 2008-2010.

It is hoped that these recommendations, if adopted and implemented, will lead to these outcomes for the University.

The equity implications of limited entry make it imperative that the University have a fair and equitable admissions process.

## **List of recommendations**

**Recommendation 1:** That the University continue to bring the disparities in educational performance to the attention of government and education agencies; to participate actively in developing increased understanding of and information about these disparities and their impact on New Zealand; and to participate in programmes to address the disparities.

**Recommendation 2:** That the University carry out further work on its evidence base to ensure that the information and data needed to support research and initiatives on participation, retention and achievement of students from low socio-economic backgrounds and students with disabilities are available.

**Recommendation 3:** That the University adopt the following principles to guide it in the development and application of a fair and equitable admission system and that Faculties be required to develop their selection criteria and processes that align with these principles.

- i. The admissions system must recognise the University's commitments to and obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi;
- ii. A fair and equitable admissions process should be transparent;
- iii. A fair and equitable admissions process for our University should result in the admission of students who are judged by both their achievements and their potential to be capable of succeeding in a university of high international standing;
- iv. A fair and equitable admissions system should strive to use assessment methods that are reliable and valid;
- v. A fair and equitable admissions scheme should seek to minimise barriers for applicants;
- vi. A fair and equitable admissions system should be professional in every respect and be underpinned by appropriate institutional structures and processes.

**Recommendation 4:** That the University set targets for Māori and Pacific student numbers in two stages. The first stage should be to match the proportion of Māori and Pacific school leavers admitted to the University with the proportions of such students in the Auckland and Northland region gaining University Entrance, while retaining current numbers of Special Admission students. The second stage should be to match the proportion of enrolled Māori and Pacific students with the proportion of Māori and Pacific people over 15 in the University's regional population within five years.

**Recommendation 5:** That the University develop its Māori and Pacific student recruitment strategy and admission processes in an inclusive manner to support the achievement of its enrolment targets and a case management approach to target groups.

**Recommendation 6:** That the Senate retain the Taskforce for a period of three years to monitor and evaluate the impact of limited entry and then review the process for ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

**Recommendation 7:** That the University retain and enhance its learning and other support structures for students so that their chances of successful academic performance are maximized.

**Recommendation 8: That the University continue to use a single ranking system as a measure of academic achievement. Admission systems should include other factors such as interviews, portfolios, auditions, differential rank scores and equity principles, where required to mediate the selection of students with the potential for success and to achieve the University's equity goals.**

**Recommendation 9: That the University regularly review the ranking system, its components (ie the number of credits and the number of subjects), its bands and associated GPEs to ensure that the system is reliable and does not systematically discriminate against any group of students with the potential to succeed at the University.**

**Recommendation 10: That Education Committee initiate the first review of the ranking system to be carried out in time for the printing of the 2010 Prospectus and admissions in 2010.**

**Recommendation 11: That the University publish annually indicative minimum rank scores for admission to each undergraduate qualification.**

**Recommendation 12: That the Taskforce monitor the application and the review of the ranking system.**

**Recommendation 13: That applications from students with a low rank score be carefully reviewed and, where necessary, applicants be interviewed, to ensure that they have the necessary preparation for their intended programme of study.**

**Recommendation 14: That students admitted with a low rank score be required to participate in appropriate learning support programmes and their performance be monitored.**

**Recommendation 15: That the University retain Special Admission as an admission category.**

**Recommendation 16: That the selection criteria for Special Admission students be based on both academic achievement and potential as far as it can be assessed from prior academic achievement together with attributes which indicate the potential to succeed at University, such as work and life experience, motivation, and aptitude for the programme which the applicant wishes to enter.**

**Recommendation 17: Special Admission applicants who have failed to successfully complete a foundation programme or not reached an adequate standard in a preparatory programme not be re-admitted to the University, but be advised as to other study options.**

**Recommendation 18: That the University continue its current Foundation Certificate Programmes and that students who successfully complete such a programme be guaranteed admission to a qualification of the University.**

**Recommendation 19: That the University engage with other tertiary institutions in clarifying pathways from Foundation and Diploma Programmes offered by those other institutions into degree study at the University, ensuring that the requirements are transparent, access is**

**guaranteed to successful students and, where appropriate, credit is given for work completed at other institutions.**

**Recommendation 20: That until the University is convinced that a transparent fair and equitable admissions system can address educational disadvantage and produce an appropriately diverse student body, Faculties use targeted admission schemes to assist in meeting their goals for the admission of under-represented groups.**

**Recommendation 21: That the Equal Opportunities Committee be asked to recommend a set of consistent policies and practices, to be used in University targeted admission schemes.**

**Recommendation 22: That the Taskforce in its monitoring of the implications of limited entry include changes to the unsatisfactory progress regulations.**

## **Appendices**

Appendix I	Membership of the Taskforce
Appendix II	Information and Call for Feedback paper (1 February 2008)
Appendix III	List of submissions
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**Appendix I: Membership of the Taskforce**

Dr Airini, Head of the School of Critical Studies in Education, Faculty of Education

Ms Adrienne Cleland, Director, Systems Development

Professor Marston Conder, Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Science

Professor Raewyn Dalziel, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (Chair)

Mr David Do, President, Auckland University Students' Association

Ms Reina Harris, Co-President, Nga Tauira Māori

Dr Irena Madjar, Senior Research Coordinator, Starpath

Professor Iain Martin, Dean, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences

Ms Trudie McNaughton, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equal Opportunities)

Mr Jim Peters, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori)

Dr Tamasailau Suaalii-Sauni, Centre for Pacific Studies, Faculty of Arts; Chair,  
Pacific Reference Group

## **Appendix II: Information and Call for Feedback paper (1 February 2008)**

### **The University of Auckland**

#### **Undergraduate Admissions and Equity Taskforce**

#### **Information and Call for Feedback**

### **Background**

The University of Auckland's Strategic Plan 2005-2012 states its commitment to remaining 'accessible to all those with the potential to succeed in a university of high international standing'. At the same time, the Strategic Plan aims at increasing student numbers by an average of 1% a year and shifting the student profile over time so that 78% of student are undergraduates and 22% postgraduates.

The Strategic Plan is impacted by the Government's new tertiary education policy which came into effect on 1 January 2008. The policy is aimed at differentiating tertiary education institutions, bringing them into a 'network' of educational provision, and funding them through a system that encourages quality of education rather than the enrolment of the maximum number of students. The University of Auckland has welcomed these changes.

The new system of funding for tertiary education allows the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) to fund tertiary institutions only for an agreed number of students, thereby given the TEC a mechanism for managing growth in student numbers. Managing growth fits well with the University's Strategic Plan and its goals for the student body. Attaining these goals requires the University to keep a stable undergraduate student population and to manage growth in its postgraduate student body.

Negotiations between the TEC and the University throughout 2007 were part of the implementation of the new system. These negotiations produced an 'Investment Plan' which agreed the plans of the University for the period 2008 to 2010 and approved its government funding for 2008. As part of these negotiations, the University was required to project its student numbers and the funding required to support them from 2008-2010.

In 2007 the University enrolled over 38,500 students and grew at significantly more than 1%. By international standards it is a large University. Limited entry is already in place for a number of the University's undergraduate qualifications. The combination of the goals of the University's Strategic Plan and the tertiary education reforms has led the University to decide to extend limited entry to all undergraduate qualifications from the beginning of 2009. The Senate and the Council have endorsed this decision.

Selection processes pose challenges to universities internationally. Although limits will be set for all new admissions to undergraduate programmes in 2009, the development of University selection criteria and processes will be subject to on-going discussion and development. The Senate is aware of the potential impact on equity groups of extended limited entry and has set up an Undergraduate Admissions and Equity Taskforce to report on this impact by March 2008. This paper provides background and information to the work of the Taskforce for interested groups and individuals, and provides an opportunity for input into the work of the Taskforce.

## **Limited entry to The University of Auckland**

The University Senate resolved on 3 December 2007 to adopt recommendations from the University's Education Committee that:

- (i) the University limit entry to its undergraduate qualifications from Summer School 2009
- (ii) the limited number and standard in each case to be set through the 2008-9 limitation exercise
- (iii) limited entry and the required subjects and credits for admission to a qualification, if any, be signalled in the 2009 Prospectus

and that:

- (iv) the University establish a cross-faculty taskforce including the Pro Vice-Chancellors Māori and Equal Opportunities, to consider and report by March 2008 on the equity implications of extending limited entry to all undergraduate qualifications.

The University Council approved these recommendations on 10 December 2007.

## **Legal framework for Limited Entry**

The Conditions under which the University admits students are provided for in the Education Act of 1989. Section 224 of the Act empowers the Council to determine minimum entry requirements for a course of study and, where there is an insufficiency of staff, accommodation or equipment, to determine the maximum number of students who may be enrolled in a course of study in a particular year. Where a maximum number of students is stipulated for a course of study and the number of eligible applicants exceeds the maximum number, Council may, in the selection of students to be enrolled, give preference to eligible persons who are under-represented among the students taking the course.

Limited entry is further governed by the University's Limitation of Entry Statute 1991. Council, on the recommendation of Senate, determines the maximum number of students to be enrolled for any programme or course and prescribes academic standards to be achieved as a prerequisite for enrolment and any other selection criteria for selection. The Statute provides for account to be taken of the University's Equal Educational Opportunity objectives.

## **Objectives and Outcomes of the Undergraduate Admissions and Equity Taskforce**

The Taskforce has set itself the following objectives and outcomes:

### *Objectives*

- an analysis and understanding of the equity implications of extending limited entry across all undergraduate programmes
- a clear understanding of the current mechanisms used to limit entry
- an understanding of the University's support structures that assist students from equity groups to be successful in their studies
- to make recommendations based on evidence
- to work in a transparent and consultative manner.

### *Outcomes*

- a report that enables the University to understand the equity implications of limited entry
- a report that includes a description of benchmarked limited entry practices that best meet equity goals

- recommendations for a framework for limited entry that will assist the University in achieving its equity goals
- recommendations that will enable limited entry policies and practices to be monitored and evaluated.

### **Measures of success of the Taskforce**

The success of the Taskforce will be demonstrated if its objectives are achieved and its recommendations are accepted by Senate.

This will lead to:

- the introduction of limited entry practices that assist in meeting equity goals
- a similar or improved percentage of students from identified equity groups entering the University in 2009
- improved courses completion and pass rates for 2009, and improved retention and progression for 2010 among equity groups
- achievement of relevant student body and equity objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan 2005-2012 and the University Profile 2008-2010.

### **Definition of Equity groups**

The Taskforce is particularly concerned with ensuring equal opportunities for students with the potential to succeed from the following groups:

- Māori
- Pacific
- men and women in disciplines and occupational groups where there are barriers to their undertaking study and entering careers
- students with disabilities
- students from low socio-economic backgrounds.

#### *Supporting documents*

The Strategic Plan 2005-2012 acknowledges the need 'to enhance the participation and success of high quality students from under-represented groups, including Māori, Pacific, men and women in some disciplines and occupational groups, and students with disabilities'.

The University's policy on its Equal Opportunity Programme as stated in *The University of Auckland 2008 Calendar* acknowledges 'special responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi...[and] aims to deliver equal opportunities to Pacific people and other ethnic minorities, to those from low socio-economic backgrounds, to those with disabilities, [and] to women in areas where they are under-represented' (p.743).

The *Calendar* also states that:

The University opposes unfair discrimination on the grounds of gender, race or colour, ethnic or national origins, employment status, disability, family status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religious or ethical belief, political opinion, or any other grounds. The EO Programme thus requires that all selection...processes should be based on impartial assessment or merit and the definition of merit is inclusive of diverse skills and contributions (p.744).

## Stakeholders

The Taskforce recognises that there are a wide range of groups interested in the work of the Taskforce and the framework will be formulated considering the needs of these groups:

- current students at the University
- prospective students
- secondary school principals and staff
- alumni
- University staff
- community groups
- iwi
- government bodies
- professional bodies, particularly those which provide accreditation for University degrees
- employers and industry organisations
- other tertiary education providers in the Auckland region.

The following groups within the University have a particular interest and involvement in the work of the Taskforce:

- Education Committee: responsible for policy on admissions and enrolment
- University Entrance Taskforce: a standing sub-committee of Education Committee which deals with operational issues relating to admission and enrolment
- Equal Opportunities Committee: responsible for advice on equal opportunities policy, and monitoring and reporting on the implementation of policies
- Runanga: advises and reports on the progress and achievements of the University towards its strategic objectives for Māori
- Pacific Reference Group: a subgroup of the Equal Opportunities Committee that advises and reports on the University's strategic objectives for Pasifika advancement
- Community Consultative Group: provides feedback to the University on matters of interest to the University's communities
- Business Process Review Group: a cross-faculty and Service Division working group that deals with nDeva issues
- Communications and Marketing: a team is currently working on a recruitment campaign for Māori and Pacific students
- Schools' Partnership Office: provides secondary school students and staff with information and advice, including information and advice on entry requirements and the application process
- Equal Opportunities Office: develops strategies, policies, programmes and procedures to fulfil the University's commitment to equity in education, and provides advice and services to students from under-represented groups
- An ad hoc group that is monitoring 2008 admission and enrolment in view of the set funding to be received from the TEC for the Student Achievement and Tertiary Education Organisation Component of funding in 2008
- Auckland University Students' Association (AUSA): acts as a voice for students within the University and wider community
- Nga Taura Māori: advocates for Māori students on campus
- Auckland University Pacific Island Students' Association: an affiliate student body of AUSA representing Pacific Island students on campus.

## Other information

- The Curriculum Commission Report 2002 recommended capping of enrolments in open-entry faculties. The Report included a list of possible admission processes for

determining places in a limited entry environment

<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoaa/about/uoaa/publications/archived-official-publications.cfm>

- The Investment Brief from the TEC that formed the basis of the Investment Plan negotiation stated that the University should improve retention and achievement of Māori and Pacific students. The TEC is comfortable with the University's decision to limit entry for 2009
- A summary of the University's Profile 2008-2010 can be found at:  
<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/investmentplan>
- The University's Strategic Plan 2005-2012 can be found at:  
[http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoaa/about/uoaa/publications/strategic\\_plan.cfm](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoaa/about/uoaa/publications/strategic_plan.cfm)
- The University's equity initiatives are summarised at the Equal Opportunities Office webpages <http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoaa/about/uoaa/equalopp/eedo/eedo.cfm>

### **Communications about limited entry**

The University has communicated to external stakeholders as follows:

- the University has sent a letter about limited entry in 2009 to all Auckland MPs, various Ministers and targeted MPs in other parties
- all New Zealand secondary schools were contacted in early December 2007. A follow up communication will be sent in late January 2008
- a list of Frequently Asked Questions about admissions in 2009 has been made available on the University's website  
[http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoaa/for/prospective/welcomes/school\\_students/admission\\_2009.cfm](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoaa/for/prospective/welcomes/school_students/admission_2009.cfm)

### **What is happening now?**

#### ***Undergraduate Admissions and Equity Taskforce***

The Taskforce has been set up and has started its work.

Membership of the Taskforce:

- Professor Raewyn Dalziel, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
- Ms Trudie McNaughton, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equal Opportunities)
- Mr Jim Peters, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori)
- Professor Iain Martin, Dean, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences
- Dr Airini, Head, School of Pasifika and Social Policy, Faculty of Education
- Dr Tamasailau Suaalii-Sauni, Centre for Pacific Studies, Faculty of Arts
- Ms Adrienne Cleland, Director, Systems Development
- Professor Marston Conder, Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Science
- Dr Irena Madjar, Senior Research Coordinator, Starpath
- Mr David Do, nominee, Auckland University Students' Association
- Ms Reina Harris, nominee, Auckland University Students' Association

The Taskforce will produce a report that will be considered by Senate in April 2008.

#### ***Limits and Selection Criteria set by Faculties***

Faculties that do not currently limit entry to their qualifications are considering the limits they will set, and the criteria they will use for selection in 2009. The qualifications that are affected are:

- Certificate in Arts
- Bachelor of Arts

- Bachelor of Music
- Bachelor of Education (Teaching)
- Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education)
- Bachelor of Human Services
- Bachelor of Social Work
- Bachelor of Laws (Part I)
- Certificate in Science
- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Technology specialisations in Materials, Medical Physics and Imaging Technology, and Optoelectronics
- Bachelor of Theology

All other undergraduate qualifications already have limited entry and selection criteria.

**Key dates:**

The University recognises the importance of providing certainty about entry requirements as soon as possible to students who will be applying for admission in 2009. Prospective students, their parents and secondary schools which provide advice to students on their future tertiary study are the key drivers in the timeline for the work of the Taskforce.

February – April	Faculties consider limits and selection criteria for 2009
Early March	Publication of 2009 Undergraduate Prospectus including the requirements for admission to each programme (for example, subjects, interviews, portfolios). (Please note that achievement of these requirements will not guarantee admission, but are the minimum requirements for an applicant to be considered.) For 2009, requirements will be as close as possible to the requirements for 2008
20 March 2008	Final Report of Taskforce
7 April 2008	Senate considers the recommendations of the Taskforce
21 April 2008/19 May 2008	Education Committee will consider programme and course enrolment limitations and selection criteria including quotas for under-represented groups
23 June 2008	Council will consider any recommendations from Senate. Council will consider programme and course enrolment limitations and selection criteria including quotas for under-represented groups

**Consultation and Feedback**

The Taskforce is working within a limited timeframe due to the constraints set out in the key dates above. However, the members of the Taskforce recognise the importance of consultation and input from the wider University community. Individual Taskforce members will be discussing this document with various groups, such as the Runanga, Equal Opportunities Committee, and the Pacific Reference Group. The two AUSA nominees of the Taskforce will be seeking student input through various student networks. This document will also be placed on the staff intranet to allow an opportunity for staff input and feedback.

**The Taskforce is specifically looking for input on the equity implications of introducing extending limited entry to all undergraduate degrees and comment on some or all of the following points:**

- Which groups do you consider will be most affected by limited entry?
- Do you consider that limited entry might have unintended consequences and what might they be?
- What are the fairest selection criteria for limited entry (for example. academic achievement (GPE/GPA), academic achievement in comparison to other students in the same secondary school, interviews, essays)?
- Should students who are not admitted to the University be encouraged to study at another tertiary institution and to re-apply to the University on the basis of their results from that tertiary study?
- How should mature students who do not have a university entrance qualification be assessed for entry to the University (for example, work experience, essays, other life experiences)?
- What are the benchmarks for best practice in limited entry schemes that ensure equity outcomes that you recommend the taskforce should consider?
- What comments do you have on the strengths and weaknesses of current limited entry selection procedures in the University of Auckland?

Other comments or feedback would also be welcome.

Feedback should be sent to Nina Herriman ([n.herriman@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:n.herriman@auckland.ac.nz)) by Friday 29 February 2008.

**Appendix: Enrolments of students from equity groups in the University, 2003-2007**

The University is currently unable to report on socio-economic status and students with disabilities. The following tables provide gender and ethnicity information on enrolments by generating faculty (i.e. faculty that owns the programme in which the student is enrolled).

**Māori and Pacific EFTS enrolled in undergraduate qualifications by Generating Faculty, 2003-2007**

	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007	
	EFTS	%	EFTS	%	EFTS	%	EFTS	%	EFTS	%
<b>Faculty of Arts</b>										
Māori	341	9%	333	8%	304	8%	287	8%	309	8%
Pacific Islands	468	12%	476	12%	499	13%	494	13%	500	13%
Total	3977		4058		3909		3708		3865	
<b>Faculty of Business and Economics</b>										
Māori	103	2%	86	2%	76	2%	90	2%	104	3%
Pacific Islands	189	4%	181	4%	180	4%	197	5%	203	6%
Total	4361		4526		4273		3838		3667	
<b>Faculty of Creative Arts and Industries</b>										
Māori	94	6%	89	6%	92	6%	85	6%	89	6%
Pacific Islands	90	6%	100	7%	99	7%	84	6%	94	6%
Total	1452		1453		1479		1502		1518	
<b>Faculty of Education</b>										
Māori	54	17%	51	13%	549	18%	409	16%	330	14%
Pacific Islands	89	28%	95	24%	642	21%	549	21%	487	20%
Total	311		395		3082		2597		2410	
<b>Faculty of Engineering</b>										
Māori	45	2%	57	3%	65	3%	65	3%	64	3%
Pacific Islands	52	3%	46	2%	48	2%	43	2%	49	2%
Total	1888		1960		2061		2058		2134	
<b>Faculty of Law</b>										
Māori	77	17%	73	15%	60	13%	55	12%	71	11%
Pacific Islands	73	16%	70	15%	68	15%	71	16%	123	19%
Total	461		476		450		455		641	
<b>Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences</b>										
Māori	136	9%	164	10%	176	10%	168	10%	175	10%
Pacific Islands	154	10%	162	10%	162	10%	174	10%	170	9%
Total	1540		1619		1674		1716		1826	
<b>Faculty of Science</b>										
Māori	157	3%	153	3%	147	3%	158	4%	164	4%
Pacific Islands	239	5%	257	6%	256	6%	291	7%	281	6%
Total	4526		4664		4522		4434		4551	
<b>School of Theology</b>										
Māori	15	13%	16	15%	12	14%	8	12%	5	10%
Pacific Islands	34	28%	25	24%	21	25%	20	34%	19	36%
Total	121		105		86		60		51	
<b>Conjoint degrees</b>										
Māori	149	5%	168	5%	185	6%	183	6%	190	6%
Pacific Islands	96	3%	111	4%	119	4%	158	5%	178	5%
Total	2973		3138		3266		3295		3455	
<b>Other</b>										
Māori	18	3%	17	3%	23	3%	16	2%	12	2%
Pacific Islands	24	4%	23	4%	24	4%	19	3%	24	4%
Total	591		640		661		656		682	

**EFTS enrolled in undergraduate qualifications by Generating Faculty and Gender, 2003-2007**

	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007	
	EFTS	%	EFTS	%	EFTS	%	EFTS	%	EFTS	%
<b>Faculty of Arts</b>										
F	2664	67%	2651	65%	2554	65%	2411	65%	2486	64%
M	1313	33%	1407	35%	1355	35%	1297	35%	1379	36%
<b>Faculty of Business and Economics</b>										
F	2362	54%	2448	54%	2265	53%	1924	50%	1781	49%
M	1999	46%	2079	46%	2007	47%	1914	50%	1886	51%
<b>Faculty of Creative Arts and Industries</b>										
F	858	59%	860	59%	907	61%	932	62%	958	63%
M	593	41%	593	41%	572	39%	569	38%	560	37%
<b>Faculty of Education</b>										
F	254	82%	326	83%	2563	83%	2198	85%	2025	84%
M	57	18%	69	17%	519	17%	399	15%	385	16%
<b>Faculty of Engineering</b>										
F	370	20%	394	20%	403	20%	398	19%	412	19%
M	1519	80%	1567	80%	1658	80%	1659	81%	1723	81%
<b>Faculty of Law</b>										
F	288	62%	284	60%	278	62%	285	63%	386	60%
M	173	38%	191	40%	173	38%	169	37%	255	40%
<b>Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences</b>										
F	1009	66%	1052	65%	1106	66%	1132	66%	1169	64%
M	531	34%	568	35%	568	34%	585	34%	657	36%
<b>Faculty of Science</b>										
F	1863	41%	2000	43%	1989	44%	2015	45%	2151	47%
M	2664	59%	2665	57%	2534	56%	2418	55%	2401	53%
<b>School of Theology</b>										
F	54	44%	48	46%	42	49%	24	40%	20	38%
M	67	56%	56	54%	44	51%	36	60%	32	62%
<b>Conjoint degrees</b>										
F	1697	57%	1805	58%	1849	57%	1850	56%	1964	57%
M	1276	43%	1332	42%	1417	43%	1446	44%	1491	43%
<b>Other</b>										
F	318	54%	377	59%	369	56%	375	57%	384	56%
M	272	46%	263	41%	292	44%	281	43%	297	44%

### **Appendix III: List of submissions**

1. Auckland University Students' Association
2. Associate Professor Mark Costello, Leigh Marine Laboratory
3. John Crockett, Counsellor, University Health Services
4. Department of Māori Studies (request to make oral submission)
5. Disability Services
6. Equal Educational Opportunities Office
- 6a. Margaret Taurere, Māori Equity Officer, Equal Educational Opportunities Office
7. Equal Opportunities Committee (notes from discussion at special meeting)
8. Faculty of Business and Economics Māori Academic Staff
9. Faculty of Creative Arts and Industries
10. Faculty of Education
11. Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences (summary of responses from the Faculty's Equal Opportunities Committee and Education Committee)
12. Faculty of Science
13. Māori Academic Staff
14. Dr Tracey McIntosh, Faculty of Arts
15. Nga Tauira Māori (by Te Mana Akonga (Inc.), National Māori Tertiary Students' Association)
16. Pacific Reference Group
17. Distinguished Professor Dame Anne Salmond, Faculty of Arts
18. Schools' Partnership Office
19. Starpath Project
20. Caroline Vercoe, Faculty of Arts

#### Oral submissions:

1. Māori staff, 7 March 2008, 27 March 2008
2. Pacific Reference Group, 20 March 2008

## Appendix IV: Papers considered by the Taskforce

- Published documents

Admissions to Higher Education Steering Group, *Fair admissions to higher education: recommendations for good practice*, 2004 ([www.admissions-review.org.uk](http://www.admissions-review.org.uk)).

Education Act, 1989 (as at 01 January 2008).

'Selecting students for success', *ACER Higher Education Update*, December 2007.

Shulruf, Boaz, John Hattie and Sarah Tumen, 'The Predictability of Enrolment and First Year University Results from Secondary School Performance', unpublished paper, nd, *Starpath* Project, The University of Auckland.

Zwick, Rebecca, 'College Admission in Twenty-First Century America: The Role of Grades, Tests, and Games of Chance', *Harvard Educational Review*, Winter, 2007, pp.419-29.

- Ministry of Education reports and data

'Māori Senior Secondary Students Achievement 2004 – 2006 Factsheet', 2007, online, available at:  
[http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/maori\\_education/mss\\_achievement\\_04-06\\_factsheet](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/maori_education/mss_achievement_04-06_factsheet) (28 March 2008).

'School leavers with a university entrance standard', online, available at:  
[http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/indicators/education\\_and\\_learning\\_outcomes/qualifications/school\\_leavers\\_with\\_a\\_university\\_entrance\\_standard](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/indicators/education_and_learning_outcomes/qualifications/school_leavers_with_a_university_entrance_standard) (28 March 2008).

'Tertiary education choices for school leavers', 2007, online, available at:  
[http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/tertiary\\_education/15997](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/tertiary_education/15997) (28 March 2008).

David Earle, Te whai i ngā taumata atakura. *Supporting Māori achievement in bachelors degrees*, Ministry of Education, June 2007.

- University of Auckland documents

Programme and Course Limitations and Selection Criteria (Education Committee: 17 May 2004)

Report of the Curriculum Commission, 2002.

The University of Auckland Charter, 2003.

The University of Auckland Profile 2008-2010, 2007.

The University of Auckland Strategic Plan 2005 – 2012, 2006.

The University of Auckland Undergraduate Prospectus 2008 and 2009 (draft).

Papers prepared as part of negotiation of the Profile 2008-2010 with the TEC:

- i. Summary of contributions to STEP priorities: under-represented groups – Māori students
- ii. Summary of contributions to STEP priorities: under-represented groups – Pasifika students
- iii. Proposals for improving the achievement of Māori and Pasifika students (3)

- Papers and data prepared for the Taskforce

2006 School leavers: applicants to the University and 2007 pass rates

2006 Students admitted to the University with a GPE of 0

2007 Semester One applicants to the University: NCEA approved subjects and Credits

2007 GPAs of first year undergraduate students

2008 Limited entry programmes and selection criteria (Summary)

2008 Target EFTS by Faculty

International admission processes for benchmark institutions

Options paper: data to inform goals for participation of equity groups in undergraduate qualifications

Predictors of success in university education (literature review)

Processes and outcomes of existing Faculty quota systems

Regional analysis of Māori and Pacific students entering the University in 2007

University of Auckland special admission students

## **Appendix V: University of Auckland support structures and pathways for Māori students, and research into best practice**

### **a) Support structures and pathways into university study for Māori students**

There are a range of initiatives at University, Faculty and Department level which provide support for Māori students to increase their participation and success. These include:

#### ***Equal Educational Opportunities (EEoO)***

The EEoO office works with Māori and Pacific students, and other under-represented groups, allowing prospective students to find out more about the university and its programmes, meet role models and have questions answered. Attracting and retaining the most talented people from groups which are under-represented in the student population is an important function of the Office.

#### ***STEAM and STEAM AHEAD***

Steam is a collaborative programme (established in 1998) between the EEoO office and Engineering, Science, NICA, Medical and Health Science faculties which introduces Māori and Pacific Year 10 students to future study and career opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, Architecture and Medicine - areas of study where Māori and Pacific peoples have the lowest representation. The programme consists of interactive workshops in each of the five STEAM areas.

This is complemented by the STEAM AHEAD day which is held annually. This day is aimed at Year 12 and 13 Māori and Pacific students. The main purpose of STEAM AHEAD is to encourage students to consider degree options at the University and to follow up students who attended STEAM in Year 10.

#### ***Whaia te Pae Tawhiti***

This is a "summer school" type motivational programme which encourages Year 12 Māori students from out of Auckland (with potential to succeed in tertiary education) to aspire and work towards a university education.

#### ***Māori Equity Advisers***

The University's Māori equity adviser ensures Māori students receive all the assistance they need to have full access to a university education. This ranges from visiting schools to talk to students about coming to university, to acting as a first point of support for students with questions or concerns about university life. Services provided by the equity advisers include: enrolment advice and assistance, assistance with course planning, information on scholarships and grants, and orientation for first-year students.

#### ***University preparation programmes***

The University offers a range of programmes which are designed to prepare students to enrol and succeed in degree-level study. These are targeted at under-represented groups including Māori students (for example, the Certificate in Health Sciences).

#### ***Admission schemes for Māori students***

All limited entry faculties in the University which limit entry (e.g. Creative Arts and Industries, Engineering, Medical and Health Sciences) reserve places for Māori students to encourage participation by these students in areas that might not normally be considered. Students must still meet the minimum entrance

requirements for these programmes, but equity considerations are included in the selection process.

### ***Scholarships***

The University offers a range of scholarships, many of them targeted at Māori students, and other under-represented groups (for example, the Chancellor's Award for Top Māori and Pacific Scholars). Other organisations also offer scholarships for university study. The University publishes a brochure for Māori and Pacific students highlighting the availability of these scholarships and information about how to apply.

### ***Te Kupenga o MAI : The National Programme for Māori and Indigenous Post-graduate Advancement***

This network provides advice, support and information to Māori and Indigenous PhD candidates. The programme comes out of a recognition that Māori students will usually not have gone straight to doctoral studies after completing a degree, but that many are older and have to balance study with community, family and leadership responsibilities. By bringing students together in a collegial, multi-disciplinary environment, with everyone participating in the mentoring process, MAI addresses common problems of feeling isolated or over-stretched. It has had a dramatic impact on enrolments and successful completions of doctorates.

### ***Te Puni Wananga***

Te Puni Wananga is the Māori arm of the University's Student Learning Centre. It provides individual assistance for Māori students and courses specifically designed to meet their learning needs.

### ***Faculty and department based programmes***

Most faculties in the university run support programmes for Māori students. These include the Tuakana programme which supports Māori and Pacific students through peer mentoring, and provides students with a contact network to help them achieve academically and thrive in the university environment, and Te Korowai Atawhai academic support service in the Faculty of Education.

### ***The University Marae***

The focal point for Māori student life at The University of Auckland is the University Marae, Waipapa, located next to the Department of Māori Studies. It is the venue for a range of activities throughout the year.

### ***Hineteiwaiwa Te Kohanga Reo***

The University also offers full-time early childhood care within a Māori immersion programme on the City campus.

### ***Satellite Campuses***

The University recognises the difficulties some students from underrepresented groups face in travelling to study at the University's main campuses. Therefore, programmes are offered at a number of satellite campuses to give these students greater accessibility to educational opportunities. These include the Bachelor of Education (Teaching) programme at the Tai Tokerau campus in Whangarei, the Postgraduate Diploma in Business (Māori Development) in Rotorua, and teacher education and visual arts qualifications at Manukau Institute of Technology.

## **b) Researching best practice**

### ***Starpath Project for Tertiary Participation and Success***

The Starpath Project for Tertiary Participation and Success is a Partnership for Excellence between the University of Auckland and the Tertiary Education

Commission. It is a collaborative undertaking dedicated to bringing about improvement in educational and economic outcomes for those groups of students currently under-represented in higher education in New Zealand.

***International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education***

Established at The University of Auckland in 1996, IRI's aim is to develop research which improves Māori and Indigenous people's lives. In particular its concern is to develop practical 'intervention measures' to alleviate the educational crises faced by many Māori, and thereby contribute to the general betterment of Māori and New Zealand society as a whole.

***Nga Pae o te Maramatanga, The National Institute of Research Excellence for Māori Development and Advancement***

The University of Auckland hosts the Centre. Other institutions involved are Manaaki Whenua (Landcare Research), Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiârangi, Te Wananga o Aotearoa, Auckland Museum and the Universities of Waikato, Otago (Eru Pomare Māori Health Research Centre) and Victoria University of Wellington.

The Centre has three research themes: sustainable and healthy communities, social and educational transformation, and new frontier of knowledge for Māori. Within the education and social transformation theme, the Centre is focused on: building bridges between Māori and public institutions, strengthening citizenship and participation, and improving educational outcomes for Māori, especially in Science and Māori Medium Education.

***Mira Szászy Research Centre for Māori and Pacific Economic Development***

The Mira Szászy Research Centre is New Zealand's first dedicated Māori and Pacific research facility in business and economics. The Centre: conducts and disseminates research, and promotes scholarship, debate and education that will make a positive contribution to the economic and business development of Māori, Pacific and other indigenous peoples; draws together highly skilled and respected scholars and practitioners who are dedicated to quality outcomes, and provides research opportunities and support for students and communities; and focuses on the ways that Māori and Pacific Island cultures learn and do business.

***James Henare Māori Research Centre***

The James Henare Māori Research Centre was established in response to a request from representatives of the Māori people of the Tai Tokerau for a research centre at the University of Auckland which would focus the intellectual resources of the University on issues relevant to their needs. Two new co-directors have recently been appointed to lead the Centre. This followed extensive discussions with Tai Tokerau and Ngati Whatua on the direction and future of the Centre.

***Woolf Fisher Research Centre***

Centre for the development of education and schooling success within South Auckland communities which aims to promote research-based positive educational interventions working with children/students, teachers, communities and colleagues in South Auckland with a particular emphasis on Māori and Pacific children's educational achievement.

## **Appendix VI: University of Auckland support structures and pathways for Pacific students, and research into best practice**

### **a) Support structures and pathways into university study for Pacific students**

There are a range of initiatives at University, Faculty and Department level which provide support for Pacific students to increase their participation and success. These include:

#### ***Equal Educational Opportunities (EEoO)***

The EEoO office works with Pacific students, and other under-represented groups, allowing prospective students to find out more about the university and its programmes, meet role models and have questions answered. Attracting and retaining the most talented people from groups which are under-represented in the student population is an important function of the Office.

#### ***STEAM and STEAM AHEAD***

Steam is a collaborative programme (established in 1998) between the EEoO office and Engineering, Science, NICA, Medical and Health Science faculties which introduces Māori and Pacific Year 10 students to future study and career opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, Architecture and Medicine - areas of study where Māori and Pacific peoples have the lowest representation. The programme consists of interactive workshops in each of the five STEAM areas.

This is complemented by the STEAM AHEAD day which is held annually. This day is aimed at Year 12 and 13 Māori and Pacific students. The main purpose of STEAM AHEAD is to encourage students to consider degree options at the University and to follow up students who attended STEAM in Year 10.

#### ***Pacific Island Dream Fonotaga***

The Pacific Islands Dream Fonotaga was an initiative founded in 2002 and is a week long camp in which Pacific students have the opportunity to hear motivational speakers, and take part in DREAM and academic workshops, sporting activities and more. The vision of the fonotaga is to inspire Pacific senior high school students to higher education. The fonotaga encourages students to aspire to being all they can be and offers guidance on taking real and practical steps to making those dreams a reality.

Current university students also participate in the fonotaga in menTOA roles. (MenTOA is a play on words combining the word mentor and the pan-Pacific word TOA, loosely defined as warrior or fighter.) High school students have consistently commented over the last four years that they have appreciated working alongside Pacific university students who have been role models for them and shared part of their education with the participants.

#### ***Pacific Equity Advisers***

The University's Pacific equity adviser ensures Pacific students receive the assistance they need to have full access to a university education. This ranges from visiting schools to talk to students about coming to university, to acting as a first point of support for students with questions or concerns about university life. Services provided by the equity advisers include: enrolment advice and assistance, assistance with course planning, information on scholarships and grants, and orientation for first-year students.

#### ***University preparation programmes***

The University offers a range of programmes which are designed to prepare students to enrol and succeed in degree-level study. These are targeted at under-represented groups including Māori and Pacific students (for example, the Certificate in Health Sciences).

#### ***Admission schemes for Pacific students***

Most faculties in the University which limit entry (e.g. Creative Arts and Industries, Engineering, Medical and Health Sciences) reserve places for Pacific students to encourage participation by these students in areas that might not normally be considered. Students must still meet the minimum entrance requirements for these programmes, but equity considerations are included in the selection process.

#### ***Scholarships***

The University offers a range of scholarships, many of them targeted at Pacific students, and other under-represented groups (for example, the Chancellor's Award for Top Māori and Pacific Scholars). Other organisations also offer scholarships for university study. The University publishes a brochure for Māori and Pacific students highlighting the availability of these scholarships and information about how to apply.

#### ***Faculty and department based programmes***

Most faculties in the university run support programmes for Pacific students. These include the Tuakana programme which supports Māori and Pacific students through peer mentoring, and provides students with a contact network to help them achieve academically and thrive in the university environment; the SPIES (South Pacific Islands Engineering Students) association in the Faculty of Engineering; and Te Korowai Atawhai academic support service in the Faculty of Education.

#### ***The Fale Pasifika***

The Fale Pacific complex houses the Centre for Pacific Studies, and is the "home base" for Pacific students at The University of Auckland. The Fale complex is a centre of excellence for Pacific research, teaching and service, and its traditional Pacific Fale provides a space for discussion and support as well as teaching and learning.

#### ***Satellite Campuses***

The University recognises the difficulties some students from underrepresented groups face in travelling to study at the University's main campuses. Therefore, programmes are offered at a number of satellite campuses to give these students greater accessibility to educational opportunities. These include teacher education and visual arts qualifications at Manukau Institute of Technology.

## **b) Researching best practice**

### ***Starpath Project for Tertiary Participation and Success***

The Starpath Project for Tertiary Participation and Success is a Partnership for Excellence between the University of Auckland and the Tertiary Education Commission. It is a collaborative undertaking dedicated to bringing about improvement in educational and economic outcomes for those groups of students currently under-represented in higher education in New Zealand.

### ***Mira Szászy Research Centre for Māori and Pacific Economic Development***

The Mira Szászy Research Centre is New Zealand's first dedicated Māori and Pacific research facility in business and economics. The Centre: conducts and disseminates research, and promotes scholarship, debate and education that will make a positive contribution to the economic and business development of Māori, Pacific and other indigenous peoples; draws together highly skilled and respected scholars and practitioners who are dedicated to quality outcomes, and provides research opportunities and support for students and communities; and focuses on the ways that Māori and Pacific Island cultures learn and do business.

### ***Pacific Health Research Centre***

The PHRC is a joint initiative between the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, University of Auckland. The overall objectives of the centre are to undertake culturally appropriate and scientific research and training with a focus on training of Pacific researchers, information dissemination and the delivery of improved health services to Pacific peoples, while at the same time contributing internationally.

### ***Wolf Fisher Research Centre***

Centre for the development of education and schooling success within South Auckland communities which aims to promote research-based positive educational interventions working with children/students, teachers, communities and colleagues in South Auckland with a particular emphasis on Māori and Pacific children's educational achievement.

### ***Pacific Education Research Unit (RUPE)***

RUPE co-ordinates, publishes and disseminates research into Pacific Education, which will extend existing knowledge about Pacific Education and complement Faculty of Education academic programmes concerned with Pacific Education.

## **Appendix VII: The Common Entrance Standard**

The Common Entrance Standard is outlined on the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee website (<http://www.nzvcc.ac.nz/default.aspx?l=4&p=31>):

To be eligible to enrol at a New Zealand university, a student must meet **one** of the following:

### **1. National Certificate of Educational Achievement**

For admission in 2005 and thereafter:

- a minimum of 42 credits at level 3 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework, including a minimum of 14 credits at level 3 or higher in each of two subjects from an [approved list](#) of subjects, with a further 14 credits at level 3 or higher taken from no more than two additional domains on the National Qualifications Framework or approved subjects, and
- a minimum of 14 credits at level 1 or higher in Mathematics or Pangarau on the National Qualifications Framework, and
- a minimum of 8 credits at level 2 or higher in English or Te Reo Māori ; 4 credits must be in Reading and 4 credits must be in Writing. The literacy credits will be selected from a [schedule of approved achievement standards and unit standards](#).

### **2. University of Cambridge International Examinations**

CIE candidates presenting A or AS levels must gain a minimum of 120 points on the UCAS Tariff\* and a minimum grade of D in *each of* at least 2 subjects equivalent to subjects in the [approved list](#), plus a minimum grade of D in one further subject either from the approved list or related to a domain on the National Qualifications Framework. A candidate with 3 subjects as described who has not reached the 120-point minimum may include points from any one additional subject available for CIE.

*plus literacy and numeracy*

A CIE candidate with an E grade or better in AS English and a D grade or better in IGCSE mathematics will be deemed to have satisfied the literacy and numeracy requirements of the university entrance standard. (Any mathematics taken at AS level will also satisfy the numeracy requirement. IGCSE mathematics is the minimum acceptable and corresponds approximately to NCEA level 1.)

A CIE candidate may also fulfil the literacy and/or numeracy requirements through NCEA, as detailed in section 1 above.

Students applying with CIE will be dealt with under admission *ad eundem statum* (with equivalent status) procedures. The fee for this type of admission will be remitted for CIE students who have completed the qualification in New Zealand.

\* The UCAS Tariff may be found at <http://www.ucas.ac.uk/candq/tariff/>

### 3. Other qualifications

Other qualifications available to students in New Zealand may be deemed equivalent to the common entrance standard in two ways:

(i) on their own

Name of qualification	Requirement for entrance
Accelerated Christian Education	A Year 13 Academic Certificate containing at least 4 credits in subjects designated Year 13.
International Baccalaureate	Completion of the Diploma (minimum of 24 points).

(ii) with some elements combined with elements of the entrance standard.

Name of qualification	Requirement for entrance
New Zealand Institute of Management – Certificate in Management	Through credit inclusion as recognised by NZQA may contribute to the 'third subject' of the common entrance standard (i.e. a minimum of 14 credits at level 3). Requirements for literacy, numeracy and 2 approved subjects must be separately fulfilled.
New Zealand Institute of Management – Certificate in Small Business Management	
Enterprise New Zealand Trust – Young Enterprise Certificate (the YES Certificate)	Through credit inclusion as recognised by NZQA may contribute to the 'third subject' of the common entrance standard (i.e. a minimum of 14 credits at level 3) in one of 2 ways: (a) completion of the YES Certificate, or (b) completion of the course requirements only (worth 10 level 3 credits equivalent to NZIM paper 836) plus at least 4 further credits at level 3 or higher from the National Qualifications Framework, or a pass in another NZIM paper (worth 10 credits). Requirements for literacy, numeracy and 2 approved subjects must be separately fulfilled.

Admission in all cases is *ad eundem statum* (with equivalent status) at entrance level. A fee may be payable.

## **Appendix VIII Glossary of terms**

**Admission:** Admission is the process by which a student applies, and is approved for entry to the University and a University qualification.

**Common Entrance Standard:** The Common Entrance Standard is a standard based on Level 3 of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement and approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority as the minimum standard required for a school leaver over the age of 16 to be admitted to a New Zealand University.

**Enrolment:** The process by which a student having gained admission to the University, and to a qualification, selects and gains entry to courses and classes.

**Grade Point Average:** A means of measuring a student's performance at this University. The average achieved over a period of time expressed numerically on a scale between 0 (no passes) and 9 (A+ average).

**Grade Point Equivalent:** A means of measuring a student's prior relevant academic performance and experience. Grades or marks achieved at external institutions and/or in examinations (such as NCEA) expressed as an equivalent to a Grade Point Average on the scale 0-9.

**Norm-referenced:** a system of assessing student achievement in relation to the norms achieved i.e. students are graded in reference to their achievement in relation to other students.

**Rank Score:** A score assigned by the University to applicants for admission based on prior educational achievement and, in the case of Special Admission students, a range of other factors, to select students into limited admission qualifications and courses.

**School decile:** Schools in New Zealand are divided into 10 even groups from 1 to 10 according to the extent to which the school draws its students from low socio-economic communities. Decile 1 schools are the 10% of schools with the highest proportion of students from low socio-economic communities whereas decile 10 schools are the 10% of schools with the lowest proportion of these students. A school's decile does not indicate the overall socio-economic mix of the school.

**Selection:** The process used by the University to select students into limited entry qualifications and courses. This may be on the basis of prior academic achievement and/or other criteria and factors recommended by Faculties and approved by the University Council on advice of the University Senate.

**Special Admission:** An admission category for New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who do not hold a university entrance qualification and have attained the age of 20 on or before the first day of the semester in which the proposed programme commences.

**Standards-based achievement:** A system of assessing student achievement against approved standards.