

132 submissions to the position papers commented on mission, vision and values.

Introduction

The following is a synthesis of the main themes that have come through in these submissions. Some overall commentary about purpose is followed with a table that organises the main ideas as follows:

- **Theme:** A characterisation of the main themes raised in submissions.
- **Quotes:** To give depth and nuance, where possible, themes are complemented by direct quotes from submissions.
- **Implications:** Many submissions foreshadowed implications that will need to be considered during detailed drafting of the strategic plan or subsequently during implementation.

Please note that a separate process is in place for determining the University's values. Feedback on values that has emerged through the submissions has been analysed separately and will feed into this process.

Purpose

"To make a positive difference to the world" is identified in the context paper *University of Auckland: Beyond 2020 vision* as the University's raison d'être. Other visionary statements put forward include the University "acting as a catalyst for broader societal transformation". Submitters are strongly supportive of these sentiments. There are a number of topics that consistently come through in the submissions in regard to what should be central to our purpose, and what will make a difference to the world around us. Or contribute to the betterment of the world / society; another turn of phrase used repeatedly.

The unifying theme is in many ways about the University's role in driving **societal transformation**, as it relates to addressing broader challenges of sustainable development; that is economic, social and environmental challenges e.g. social and economic inequalities and injustice, environmental degradation and climate change.

Quotes

"Adopting the language of 'transformation' is more appropriate to convey the purpose of the university. Research, science and technology systems are an identified lever in the Six Transformations now promoted by the multi-lateral community in the Global Sustainability Report. Therefore rather than being pigeon-holed by Grand Challenges, the UoA should commit instead to a fundamental role in transforming:

1. Human wellbeing and capability
2. Sustainable and just economies
3. Energy decarbonisation and access
4. Food systems and nutrition patterns
5. Urban and peri-urban development
6. Global environmental commons"

"The University of Auckland is committed to maximising its contribution to Aotearoa New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders. We recognise a need for transformation to ensure the future prosperity of New Zealand, and that this must be done in a way that ensures greater productivity, sustainability and inclusiveness as envisioned in the Government's economic and social agenda."

Theme Service to communities	Quotable quotes	Implications
<p>Collective sense that people wish for the University to be a truly societally engaged organisation, and focused on improving outcomes for our communities – local, national, regional and global – through teaching, research and innovation that are relevant and responsive to our context.</p> <p>A sentiment that comes through strongly is that the University should aim to be the best University FOR the World, rather than the best University IN the world.</p>	<p>“Being the best University FOR the world, rather than the best University IN the world. The University is well placed to succeed as a leading university FOR the world. We are ranked Number 1 on the Times Education Sustainability Impact. Combining existing strengths with an intensified focus on Tiriti, diversity, equity, and environmental issues, would place us in a unique position to lead the world from the bottom of the globe.”</p>	<p>Build strong, meaningful, reciprocal partnerships with community and industry to ensure relevance of our teaching and research.</p> <p>Commitment to co-development / co-design of solutions to national and international challenges.</p>

Theme Equity and social justice	Quotable quotes	Implications
<p>Equity should be central to our purpose – submitters seek a strong commitment to reducing inequities and posit that it should be at the core of our mission, vision and values.</p> <p>Our equity and social justice commitment should address very clearly the key challenges facing Aotearoa New Zealand.</p>	<p>“Sustained and continued focus on equity within the University and in our relationships with communities is critical to all our futures. If left unaddressed, persistent economic and social pressures work against our capacity to open up the opportunity of tertiary education to a diverse range of students. To find ourselves unable to respond in strong and impactful ways would diminish our reputation and compromise our civic responsibility”</p> <p>“Achieving equity outcomes that are robust and empirically defensible would make us world leading.”</p>	<p>Review how we set our equity targets, and set ambitious targets.</p>

Theme Honouring our commitment to Te Tiriti and incorporating Mātauranga Māori	Quotable quotes	Implications
<p>Strong support for the University honouring its commitment to Te Tiriti and incorporating Mātauranga Māori. There is a view that this should be central to our purpose.</p> <p>Advancement of Mātauranga Māori should be driven by a desire to improve social equity and decolonization in Aotearoa New Zealand, not as a mechanism for gaining international distinction as an institution.</p> <p>Some submitters suggest that greater clarity is needed about what it means to apply Mātauranga Māori.</p> <p>Building strong, reciprocal relationships with Māori is considered essential.</p> <p>There are a few voices that question the appropriateness of incorporating Māori into all we do.</p>	<p>“We would like to see a university that puts the principles, intent & function of Te Tiriti o Waitangi at its heart, encompassing a truly bicultural framework between Māori and non-Māori, supporting Māori defined, and led, initiatives across all areas of the University.”</p> <p>[The position papers] “place great emphasis on the centrality of Te Tiriti, kaupapa Māori, Mātauranga Māori and related issues, going as far as to say that these should be 'embedded in all we do'. I don't endorse this view - I would with a scattering of 'where appropriate' and 'where relevant'. But there is much of our research and teaching to which they are not relevant, in my view.”</p>	<p>Capacity building to ensure that staff has the level of Māori cultural competency to incorporate Mātauranga Māori.</p> <p>Develop strong reciprocal relationships with iwi and hapū, with associated resource and process implications.</p> <p>Address underrepresentation of Māori staff and students.</p>

Theme Sustainability	Quotable quotes	Implications
<p>Strong emphasis on sustainability as central to our purpose and mission, and submitters advocate that we have a moral obligation to focus on addressing the most pressing challenges of our time. There is a particularly strong focus on environmental sustainability, and there are many mentions of the University's responsibility to address the challenges presented by climate change.</p>	<p>“Sustainability is a concept that must shape all aspects of the University's mission and operations.”</p> <p>“The framing of ‘environmental sustainability’ [in position paper] is shallow and reductionist. It is blind to the complexity, scale and urgency of the global ecological and social crisis we confront.”</p> <p>“It is easy to reach for hyperbolae when describing global trends, but the present climate crisis marks a unique challenge for humanity, and it will require concerted, conscious and transformative actions to overcome it.” (Academic Heads Advisory Group)</p>	<p>Fully embed sustainability across teaching, research and operations to be leaders in driving New Zealand's transition to a sustainable future.</p> <p>Provide support to research specialisations that support a green transition.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to link I&E to sustainability, with innovative and new ideas being critical to solve sustainability challenges, and likewise entrepreneurial skills critical to bringing these ideas to life to create value for society.</p>

<p>Submitters are challenging the framing of sustainability in the position papers, suggesting that a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability is needed. There is a strong sense that the University community expects a stronger and more urgent response from the University in regards to sustainability challenges, commensurate with the magnitude of 21st century challenges.</p> <p>Submitters are emphasising the need for a green transformation and for the University to be a driver of that.</p> <p>The prioritisation of addressing major societal issues through collaborative research, innovation and entrepreneurship focus supported; improving society through innovation and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>There is support for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, but also suggestions that we need to adopt the language of transformation.</p>	<p>Universities have a “role as exemplars and leaders through our own policies and practices that protect the planet and its inhabitants, our university can communicate with the broader general public in ways that deliver sound understandings of science, politics, and policy.”</p>	
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Theme Pacific	Quotable quotes	Implications
<p>There is a strong Pacific voice among submitters and a wish that the University is intentional in its focus on the Pacific, recognising that we exist in the Pacific.</p> <p>Meaningful engagement with Pacific communities must be a priority to address the challenges faced by our Pacific communities.</p> <p>There is a suggestion that the University should seek to position itself as the number one Pacific University and actively increase cooperation with institutions in Pacific nations.</p>	<p>"Strengthening Pacific research capacity and empowering Pacific researchers. This is seen as urgent and valuable work, that would powerfully transform the University’s national, global and regional position."</p>	<p>Develop strong reciprocal relationships with Pacific communities.</p> <p>Focus on building a strong Pacific research workforce.</p> <p>Address underrepresentation of Pacific staff and students.</p>