

Thought



Briefing Note: Background and Talking Points for meeting with Universities New Zealand Komiti Pasifika

To:	Hon Aupito William Sio, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	10 May 2021	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1258331
Drafter:	Zoe Brown	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Key Contact:	Kieran Forde	DDI:	
Messaging seen by Communications team:	Yes / No	Round Robin:	Yes / No

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to provide you with background information and talking points for your upcoming meeting with Universities New Zealand: Komiti Pasifika on 13 May. This meeting follows your attendance at the Komiti's fono on 18 March 2021 meeting for which advice was provided on 12 March (METIS 1251718 refers).

We recommend you:

Agree that this Briefing will be proactively released.



Agree / Disagree

Summary

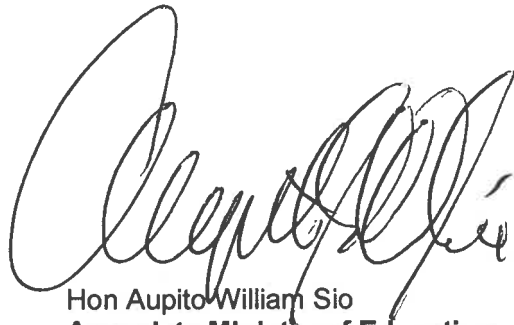
1. Komiti Pasifika is a subcommittee of Universities New Zealand (UNZ) made up of eight Pacific Vice-Chancellors and Directors representing all universities in Aotearoa. Komiti Pasifika's role is to advance and promote the collective national interests of New Zealand universities for any matters relating to the advancement of Pasifika. A short biography of each member of the Komiti is attached in Annex 2.

2. You have been invited to attend a Komiti Pasifika fono via zoom, from 12.30-1.00pm on 13 May. Your attendance provides an opportunity to update the Komiti on key work within Pacific education. Talking points are included in Annex 1.
3. This meeting follows your attendance at the 18 March Komiti Pasifika fono where you updated the Komiti on your priorities for the Pacific education portfolio. The Komiti raised concerns around support for Pacific learners in transition from schooling to university and numbers and support for Pacific tertiary staff. You asked the Komiti to provide advice around addressing these issues which we still look forward to receiving.
4. You have asked for further advice from the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) on secondary-tertiary transitions for Pacific learners.

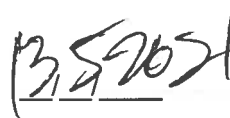


Kieran Forde
Senior Manager
Access and Participation Policy
Te Ara Kaimanawa

10/05/2021



Hon Aupito William Sio
Associate Minister of Education



Background

5. Komiti Pasifika was established in 2018 by New Zealand universities to advance and promote the collective national interests of New Zealand universities for any matters relating to the advancement of Pasifika. Pacific students make up 8% (13,700 students) of the total university learner population in New Zealand.
6. The Komiti is co-chaired by Hon Luamanuvao Dame Winnie Laban, DNZM, Assistant Vice Chancellor - Pasifika at the Victoria University of Wellington and Toeolesulusulu Associate Professor Damon Salesa, Pro-Vice Chancellor Pacific at the University of Auckland.
7. The Komiti currently consists of eight members of Pacific descent who are in the highest Pacific leadership roles within their respective universities. A short biography of each member is attached in Annex 2.
8. Komiti Pasifika has invited you to attend a zoom fono, and to also attend their regular quarterly meetings. This follows your attendance at the March fono where you provided an update on your priorities for the Pacific education portfolio and the government's actions to support Pacific education. This zoom fono provides an opportunity for you to update the Komiti on key work within Pacific education, particularly work pertaining to the tertiary sector.

Previous Komiti fono

9. On 12 March 2021, you attended the first in person Komiti Pasifika meeting where you discussed your current priorities for Pacific Education and the Komiti's key priorities. Priorities raised included:
 - a. Improving Pasifika learner success outcomes by preparing Pacific students to transition and succeed in degree study
 - b. Improving development and research excellence for academic staff, for example, through the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF)
10. You invited the Komiti to provide you with advice on both these issues.

Roles and responsibilities in the tertiary education system

11. In considering how the Komiti could have a role in progressing your priorities, it may be useful to note that the roles and responsibilities for monitoring, recruitment, funding and delivery in tertiary education are spread across the system.
12. The Ministry of Education develops policy settings for the tertiary sector including the funding available to tertiary organisations and the rates at which that funding is applied in the various institutional settings.

13. The TEC allocates funding to tertiary education organisations and monitors their performance. This includes monitoring the learner success plans developed by providers as part of the Ōritetanga Learner Success approach. Ōritetanga aims to create whole of organisation changes rather than standalone individual interventions so that tertiary educators can adapt to learners rather than forcing learners to adapt to them.
14. Universities have autonomy over their recruitment and appointment decisions. They are responsible for the management and delivery of teaching and assessment, and research.
15. **9(2)(f)(iv)**
- **9(2)(f)(iv)** Pacific workers have been concentrated in specific occupations and industries. Key occupations (e.g. managers and professionals) that need to grow their Pacific representation are those that require university degrees.
 - **9(2)(f)(iv)** There are significant barriers to participating and succeeding in tertiary study for Pacific people, for example, culturally appropriate learning environments, timely support and guidance, balancing study and other life expectations. Universities have a role in navigating these barriers.
 - **9(2)(f)(iv)** Universities can also play a key role in building on Pacific entrepreneurship, delivering the skills and opportunities that Pacific people need to develop a dense Pacific business ecosystem.
16. The Academic Qualifications Authority (AQA) was established by the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (UNZ) to advise the Committee on academic quality assurance, and quality enhancement of universities. This includes undertaking academic audits of universities and promoting good practice.
- As part of the audit cycle, the AQA has an 'enhancement phase' where universities work together collectively on an 'Enhancement Theme' to address a nationally significant issue important to universities. The current theme is "Access, outcomes and opportunity for Māori and Pasifika students."

Pacific Education programme update

Pacific Education Funds

17. You will receive a briefing on 12 May updating you on the status of both Rounds 1 and 2 of the Pacific Education Funds. We note that the application period for Round 2 of the Funds closed on 26 April 2021.

Pacific Education Support Fund

18. The Pacific Education Support Fund was established to fund community providers, groups and organisations that help learners and their families meet education related and wellbeing needs arising from and/or exacerbated by COVID-19. The fund aims to support Pacific learners and families to engage in education during the COVID-19 response, and help learners and families access services.
19. Tertiary institutions, schools and early learning services are not eligible for this fund.

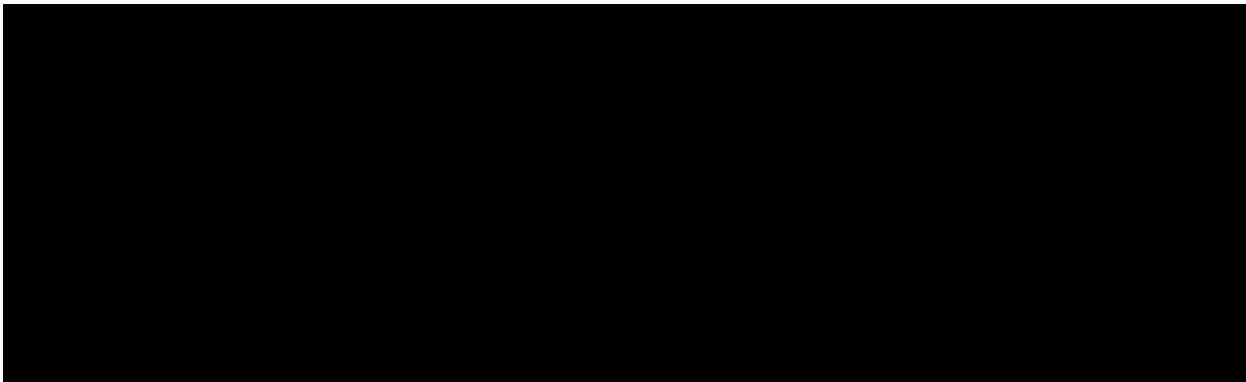
Pacific Education Innovation Fund

20. The Pacific Education Innovation Fund is targeted at supporting innovative practices that support Pacific learners' wellbeing and curriculum needs which have been affected by COVID-19. Pacific bilingual and immersion education are key foci of the fund. The Innovation fund is open to educators, places of learning, community groups, providers, researchers and academics.

9(2)(f)(iv)

Secondary-tertiary transitions

22. One of your key priority areas shared with Komiti Pasifika is supporting Pacific learners transitioning from secondary to tertiary education. In 2019, retention and completion rates for Pacific learners at university were persistently lower than for other groups. Pacific learner completion rates at bachelor's level were 19% lower than Pākehā learner completion rates at the same level, based on a five-year qualification. Better preparation and support during this transition phase is important in lifting outcomes for Pacific learners.
23. An important step in this work is establishing and expanding partnerships with key tertiary providers and schools with high numbers of Pacific learners (28 secondary schools in New Zealand have over 50% of all Pacific secondary students enrolled).



25. The TEC will provide regular monthly updates on how this work is progressing.

Performance-Based Research Fund

26. You have previously talked with Komiti Pasifika about the Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF), and heard about their ongoing concerns that the PBRF does not adequately recognise and reward Pacific research staff and Pacific research.

27. Minister Hipkins is currently conducting Ministerial consultation on a package of final changes to the PBRF, 9(2)(f)(iv)

9(2)(f)(iv)

9(2)(f)(iv)

This is due to be considered by Cabinet on Monday 24 May.

28. While you are unable to share the final package of change with Komiti Pasifika yet, it may be useful to reference the establishment of the PBRF Sector Reference Group who will be responsible for providing advice and recommendations to the Tertiary Education Commission on implementation for the 2025 Quality Evaluation. It may be useful to signal that they will be consulting on a range of issues over the next couple of years, where they would welcome feedback from Komiti Pasifika.

¹ TEC would work with all 24 South Auckland schools and Porirua College where more than 50% of the total cohort of Pacific learners are enrolled.

Tagaloa Scholarships

29. Tagaloa Scholarships are part of the Ministry's wider Talanoa Ako response. They are intended to support the growth of Pacific research capability and capacity within our communities to support Pacific success (METIS 1250421 refers). Two scholarships are available for one year of full-time study, one for a Pacific Masters student and one for a Pacific Doctoral student.
30. 2021 was the inaugural year of the scholarship, with the two successful scholars receiving their awards in March.

Next Steps

31. You may want to confirm again your offer to receive advice from Komiti Pasifika (in particular around successful transitions into tertiary).
32. We also note that tertiary education can have a role to play in supporting and strengthening languages. You may wish to invite the Komiti to include their thoughts on how universities can support bilingual language aspirations in their forthcoming advice.

9(2)(f)(iv)

Proactive Release

34. We recommend that this Briefing is proactively released as per your expectation that information be released as soon as possible. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

Annexes

Annex 1: Talking Points

Annex 2: Short biographies of Komiti Pasifika members

Annex 2: Komiti Pasifika members

Hon Luamanuvao Dame Winnie Laban, DNZM, Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Pasifika)



Hon. Luamanuvao Dame Winnie Laban, DNZM is currently the Assistant Vice Chancellor (Pasifika) at Victoria University of Wellington since 2010, she provides strategic advice, direction and support for Pacific students and staff, increasing enrolments and raising Pacific achievement.

Co-chair Komiti Pasifika

Toeolesulusulu Associate Professor Damon Salesa, Pro-Vice Chancellor Pasifika



Toeolesulusulu Damon Salesa is a prizewinning scholar who specializes in the study of colonialism, empire, government and race. With a particular interest in the Pacific Islands, he also works on education, economics and development in the Pacific region, as well as in New Zealand and Australia. After studying at the University of Auckland, he completed his studies at Oxford University.

He is currently Associate Professor of Pacific Studies at the Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Auckland. Previously he was Associate Professor of History, American Culture, and Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Co-chair Komiti Pasifika

Walter Fraser Assistant Vice-Chancellor Pacific Advancement and AUT South Campus, Auckland University of Technology



Walter is the Head of Pacific Advancement at AUT. He attended the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji, the University of Hawaii and the University of Auckland. He has extensive tertiary management and planning experience. He started his career working at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji and Samoa before he took up a role at the University of Auckland, initially in the Department of English before being appointed Registrar of the Faculty of Arts. Walter returned to the Pacific in 2001 when he was appointed Registrar of the University of the South Pacific (USP). He returned to New Zealand in 2009 to the University of Auckland where he was Director of the Centre for Pacific Studies and Director of Pacific Strategy and Engagement before moving to be Head of Pacific Advancement at AUT in April 2014. In 2015, Walter was also appointed Associate Head of AUT South.

Dr Keakaokawai Keaka Varner Hemi, Assistant Vice-Chancellor of Pasifika, The University of Waikato



Dr Keakaokawai Varner Hemi is the first Assistant Vice Chancellor Pacific appointed by the University of Waikato. She is Kanaka Maoli and part of Na 'Ohana o Kalama from La'ie, Oahu, Hawai'i through her mother, as well as Cherokee/Tsalagi from Bohannon Mountain in Northwest Arkansas through her father.

Dr Hemi has a background in small business ownership and administration, as well as non-profit work. She earned her Bachelor of Laws with first class honours from Te Piringa - Faculty of Law, University of Waikato in 2007.

Professor Palatasa Havea ONZM, Dean Pacific, Office of Pasifika Student Success, Massey University



Professor Palatasa Havea ONZM Dean Pacific in the new Office of Pasifika Student Success. Professor Havea, also known as Tasa, comes to Massey from Fonterra's Research and Development Centre in Palmerston North where he was Principal Research Scientist.

Professor Havea has a record of leadership in the Pacific community, serving on a range of boards, committees and reference groups. A strong advocate for encouraging Pacific students into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects, he is part of the Reference Group at the Ministry of Social Development developing new strategy, is Deputy Chair of the Pacific Education Foundation Board at the Tertiary Education Commission and chairs the Amanaki STEM Academy Board.

Dr Dione Payne Assistant Vice-Chancellor Maori and Pacific, Lincoln University



Dione Payne is the Director for Maori and Pasifika Development at Te Whare Wanaka o Aoraki (Lincoln University) in Canterbury, New Zealand. Dione advocates for Maori land development and productivity by customary owners, utilising customary ethics and principles.

Dione lives in Koukourarata, a customary Maori papakainga (homeland) with her husband's people. Dione continues to maintain her own whanau (family) links to her own papakainga in Aotearoa New Zealand's North Island, Te Ika a Maui.

Pauline Luafutu-Simpson, Director of Pasifika Development, the University of Canterbury



Pauline and her team are the main pastoral care providers for Pasifika students at UC and alongside her Pacific Academic lead, both work to advance the achievement of UC Pasifika students at a strategic level. This includes development, implementation, and oversight of the UC Pasifika Strategy, as well as providing advice and expertise to UC Staff.

Pauline has been involved with the Christchurch Pasifika community over a number of years and has an enduring interest and passion in Pasifika education.

Dr Tasileta Teevale NZOM, Director of Pacific Development, the University of Otago



Dr Teevale has a broad background in academia and the public service.

Graduating from Otago in 1995 with a Physical Education degree, she entered directly into a lecturing position in Exercise Science at UCOL (Universal College of Learning) in Palmerston North. She also completed a Master of Business Studies at Massey.

As Director of Pacific Development Tasileta is responsible for monitoring the progress of the Pacific Strategic Framework, which has been adopted by the University of Otago in December 2012.

The Framework is the University's commitment to ensuring equity in student achievement.