In 2018 the University continued to innovate in teaching and learning to meet the needs of students and ensure an engaging learning experience. One example of this is the newly approved micro-credentialing policy, offering recognition for taking courses and developing skills in specific areas. The first pilot micro-credential to be offered is in Digital Fluency through the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

In addition, a new course called The Future of Work offers second-year students from the Faculties of Commerce and Humanities and Social Sciences an internship-like experience without having to leave the lecture theatre. The course brings in industry experts from organisations such as Wellington Zoo, Flick Electric, and Inland Revenue to give presentations on how they are being challenged by social and technological changes.

The University continued to expand its outreach through the edX platform with two new massive open online courses (MOOCs). In March, the University launched the world’s first restorative justice MOOC, drawing on the pioneering role New Zealand has played in incorporating restorative practices into its justice, welfare, and education systems.

In August, the University launched another MOOC, New Zealand Landscape as Culture: Maunga (Mountains), which explores New Zealand’s mountain landscapes through the lens of Māori and Pākehā cultures, touching on mythology, literature, and the cultural identities attached to mountains. Victoria University of Wellington is still the only university in New Zealand to offer MOOCs on the prestigious edX platform, founded by Harvard University and MIT.

Dr Christian Schott from Victoria Business School has created a new teaching tool that takes students out into the world using innovative technology. The tool is a ‘virtual field trip’ that replicates a real Fijian island and its community, allowing Sustainable Tourism Management students to explore sustainable development on the island. Constructed by 3D gaming software and incorporating videoed conversations with Fijian community members, students use virtual reality headsets or computer monitors to explore the island, taking the theories from the course to the ‘field’.

The tool creates a highly immersive experience that also incorporates sound elements such as the crashing of waves. In addition to learning about sustainable development, the students gain leadership skills critical for a sustainable future and develop awareness as global citizens. The tool has already received several accolades for its innovative approach to teaching.

Victoria University of Wellington and LexisNexis announced a new five-year Innovation Partnership providing Law students with cutting-edge technology to support their studies and their transition to the workforce. Alongside the software, LexisNexis will also provide 35 scholarships over five years to support the next generation of outstanding legal talent from New Zealand as well as annual workshops for students, faculty members, and alumni on industry trends, insights, and challenges.

A new initiative organised by the Centre for Academic Development saw award-winning teachers open their classrooms for others to observe excellent teaching in action. In Trimester 1, five award-winning teachers opened their classrooms and in Trimester 2, seven different teachers from five different faculties put their teaching and their students’ learning on display to other teachers and interested staff from around the University. Each week finished with a panel discussion and social event.

The University has undertaken a stocktake into aspects of academic integrity and as a result it is developing a holistic Academic Integrity Framework. This piece of work is informed by practices at other universities in Australasia and is expected to have a transformative impact on lifting understanding and aligning policies and monitoring systems with international best practice.