

# STUDENT VOICE – GETTING STARTED

A look into the experience of new students at Victoria University of Wellington

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY JULY 2018 -



Capital thinking. Globally minded.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## METHODOLOGY

### 2,535 NEW STUDENTS PROVIDED FEEDBACK IN THE STUDENT VOICE – GETTING STARTED SURVEY

The survey was implemented via Qualtrics, a web-based on-line survey tool. All students new to Victoria in the first trimester of 2018 were sent an e-mail invitation with a link to complete the Student Voice – Getting Started Survey. A total of 2,649 (2017: 2,460) surveys were started in Qualtrics. Of those, 2,535 (2017: 2,368) were completed representing a 46% response rate (2017: 44%).

## CHOOSING VICTORIA

### THREE OUT OF FIVE NEW STUDENTS CHOSE VICTORIA BASED ON THEIR INTENDED PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Three out of five new students stated that they chose Victoria University of Wellington after they had decided on a specific programme of study, indicating that the reputation of the programmes had led them to seeing Victoria as a leading choice for tertiary study.

### INFORMATION SOURCES TO ASSIST STUDENTS DECIDE WHAT TO STUDY

Victoria's website (course information) (93%), Victoria's website (subjects and programmes) (93%), printed publications (80%) and university advisors (77%) are rated as the most useful sources of information to assist students decide what to study.

### USEFUL SOURCES OF ADVICE WHEN PREPARING FOR STUDIES

International students found Victoria International to be an excellent source of advice when preparing for studies (94%) while Māori and Pasifika students rated Te Rōpū Āwhina or Te Pūtahi Atawhai as useful when preparing for studies (78%). Overall, new students found the University website (93%) and fellow students (84%) to be the best sources of advice when preparing for their studies.

## GETTING SORTED

### PRE-ENROLMENT EXPERIENCE

The majority of new students rate the pre-enrolment experience positively. 78% of new students report communication about entry requirements was clear, 76% found course information useful in helping them decide what to study, 72% thought course information was easy to find. 69% of new students had confidence in the academic advice they received about their study options. 61% of new students reported information about fees was comprehensive even with the introduction of fees free eligibility, which may have impacted student access to clear information.

### NINE OUT OF TEN NEW STUDENTS APPRECIATED RECEIVING PHYSICAL PUBLICATIONS

89% of new students reported that they read at least one of two printed publications, 2018 Getting Started and 2018 Student Guide, that were sent to students before they arrived at Victoria University of Wellington. 93% reported that they appreciated receiving these publications and 91% stated that they enjoyed having a physical copy filled with useful information.

### THERE HAS BEEN A DECLINE IN THE ENROLMENT EXPERIENCE RATINGS OF NEW STUDENTS

While close to four in five new students report the overall enrolment experience went well for them (77%), less students found the enrolment process to be coordinated across the whole university (65%). 71% of students report that online enrolment is easy. Similar to 2017, 62% of new students found signing up for tutorials using myAllocator was easy.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

## NEW STUDENTS' ORIENTATION (NSO)

### THE NSO BOOKLET IS RATED AS THE MOST USEFUL SOURCE OF NSO INFORMATION

The majority of new students sourced information about the NSO programme through the Victoria website (90%), emails from Victoria (90%), the NSO Booklet (85%) and Facebook (71%). The NSO Booklet was rated as being the most useful source of NSO information (90%), followed by emails (87%), the Victoria website (86%), Campus Coaches (78%) and Facebook (77%).

### THE NSO EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS ARE CONSIDERED VALUABLE

Overall, new students found the NSO events and workshops valuable. Notably the Postgraduate (97%), Mature (97%), Pasifika (94%) and Māori (91%) Students' Orientation sessions were rated by the students they were targeted at, as the most valuable sessions. The degree orientation sessions were also considered useful by participants.

78% of new students enjoyed the Welcome Festival. Of those students who joined a Campus Coaches Group, 69% reported being part of the Campus Coaches Group helped them understand the services the University provides to students and helped them make connections with other students in their Faculty (57%). After attending the Campus Tour, 77% of new students are more confident finding their way around Victoria. 57% of those attending Afternoon Live reported that they enjoyed the event and 48% said they made connections with other students.

86% of new students report the NSO programme helped them know what resources are available, helped them find their way around Victoria (80%), and allowed them to meet new people (79%). 73% of students reported the programme was fun, with 60% reporting the NSO programme enabled them to learn new skills.

Suggestions made by students reaffirmed that the programme was helpful for students, but could be improved with more opportunities for students to meet each other and more events.

### OTHER COMMITMENTS WAS THE MAIN REASON FOR STUDENTS NOT ATTENDING THE NSO EVENTS

Other commitments, not being in Wellington, not being aware of the events and not thinking the events were of value were the main reasons for new students not attending the NSO events and sessions.

### STUDENTS CONTINUE TO ENJOY VUWSA'S OWEEK

Overall, new students enjoyed the events offered at VUWSA's OWeek and the opportunity to meet new people. Sachi & Kings (93%), the VUWSA Stall (92%) Peking Duk (91%), and the Toga Party (91%) were rated by students as the most enjoyable events.

A number of students reported the venues were not suitable for some of the events, limited tickets were available for new students, and recommended advertising events more as well as offering a greater variety of events.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' ORIENTATION (ISO)

### PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION IS USEFUL

Four in five new international students report the pre-departure information they received prior to coming to New Zealand was clear (85%) and informative (85%), while three in four new international students report that it was helpful (78%) and was received in a timely manner (73%). Student suggestions to improve the pre-departure information include: providing information earlier, offering more advice about accommodation, clarifying visa requirements, and giving students a clear point of contact.

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARE APPRECIATIVE OF THE VIC CREW WELCOME

73% of new international students were welcomed by Vic Crew. Students are particularly complimentary about the helpfulness and friendliness shown by the Vic Crew members.

### THE NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION APP IS USEFUL BUT THE CONTENT COULD BE MORE ACCESSIBLE

Only two in five (39%) new international students used the New International Student Orientation App. 38% of new international students reported that they did not know about the app. The main reason students did not download the app was because they felt they could find the information elsewhere (32%). Of those who used the app, 58% thought it was easy to use, and overall 68% found it useful. Top suggestions to improve the app focused on making the content more focused for the user.

### WHILE THE ENROLMENT PROCESS WAS EASY TO FOLLOW, STUDENTS FELT IT COULD HAVE BEEN MORE STREAMLINED ONLINE

The majority of new international students report the enrolment briefing speaker was easy to understand (82%) and that the session clearly explained all the steps needed to complete enrolment (83%). Those who met with the Course Advice Team after the enrolment briefing found the meeting useful to help them plan their study (90%).

Overall international students report the enrolment process is easy to follow (81%) and staff and volunteers were helpful (92%) and knowledgeable (86%). 77% of students reported that their questions were resolved quickly, while 73% of students report that the process was well organised and 71% stated that enrolment was completed in a timely manner. Streamlining and moving to an online system were suggested as ways in which the enrolment process could be improved.

### THE INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION PROGRAMME IS USEFUL

The Your Student Visa and Health Insurance (96%), Life in NZ (96%), Working with Supervisors for PhD students (95%), and Money Matters (95%) sessions were ranked as the most useful International Orientation sessions.

81% of new international students report after attending the orientation programme they knew who to contact in an emergency, what resources were available to them (80%), that the programme helped them learn about Victoria's academic system (77%) and find their way around Victoria (70%). For 83% of students the orientation programme provided an opportunity for them to meet new people. 58% of students thought the programme was fun.

Suggestions made by students to improve the programme include providing more opportunities for social interactions and ensuring students could find their way around the campus.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

## GETTING UNDERWAY

### THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS ARE OFF TO A POSITIVE START

Four fifths of new students are off to a positive start. 12% report they are off to a great start, 23% are off to a very good start, 42% a good start, 21% an okay start with 2% of students reporting they are not off to a good start.

### THE TOP PIECE OF ADVICE NEW STUDENTS WOULD GIVE TO STUDENTS STARTING VICTORIA IS "EVERYONE IS ALWAYS WILLING TO HELP"

"Don't be afraid to just walk up and say hello," "get organised early," "get involved," and "meet new people" are the key messages new students would offer to a student starting at Victoria.

### THE PERFORMANCE RATING OF KEY SERVICES IS STILL HIGH AMONG NEW STUDENTS

Pre-enrolment and enrolment services (that support students as they prepare for university and enrol in a programme of study) received an 82% satisfaction rating (2017: 84%, 2016: 75%) and Victoria's services for getting students started received an 81% satisfaction rating (2017: 84%, 2016: 75%).

### AWARENESS OF THE 0800 VIC 8888 NUMBER IS LOW

Just over one third of new students (37%) are aware 0800 VIC 8888 is the number to call if they have an emergency or safety concern on campus (2017: 32%, 2016: 40%). International students (53%, 2017: 53%) are more likely than domestic students (34%, 2017: 28%) to know about the 0800 VIC 8888 number.





Capital thinking. Globally minded.

