



Student Submission on the Tītoko Project



**Co-written by Victoria University of Wellington
Students' Association (VUWSA) and the
Student Assembly of Te Herenga Waka – Victoria
University of Wellington**

Introduction

Titoko, previously known as the Student Success Project, sits at a crossroads. In its formative stages, it has the possibility to significantly benefit the student experience here at Te Herenga Waka, particularly around students' engagement with the administrative aspects of the University. It also has the possibility to stand as a successful example of 'co-design', in which the student experience and voice is adequately centered in the development and implementation of this programme. As we continue to work with the Titoko team in the spirit of genuine partnership, we expect that the information provided in this consultation is adequately considered, and formulates a strong base of student perspective.

Ngāi Tauira:

Ngāi Tauira agree with the overarching ideas behind Titoko, however we question whether this is actually going to achieve what's being proposed, because of the points below.

Disabled Students Association

Titoko consultation document does not provide explicit mention of disabled communities at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington. This is incredibly concerning and disheartening for our students as the apparent universal approach been given to address student wellbeing is being done so in negligence of the evident and significant barriers that face disabled students. DSA would want this to be immediately addressed if Titoko is to be seen as an effective service for this university. This consultation document is inaccessible for many to engage with both due to its length and lack of clarity and being located behind the staff intranet. This is not encompassing with genuine consultation or partnership for our community. Disabled students will never be heard, and their issues will not be addressed if such processes continue in this way.

Groups Involved in this Submissions

Below, we have given detailed feedback on aspects of the Titoko project. VUWSA has attempted to demonstrate the wide variety of student perspective on this proposal by gaining feedback and consultation from a number of different representative groups based on each of the three main campuses, and has brought this for discussion at our Student Assembly. Consulted at Student Assembly and/or included in this submission are the perspectives of the following Student Assembly members:

- Ngāi Tauira (NT)
- Pasifika Students' Council (PSC)

- Victoria International Students' Association (V-ISA)
- Victoria University of Wellington Women's Collective (VUWWC)
- Uni Q (Victoria University LGBTQIA + Student Representative Group)
- Thursdays in Black Victoria University of Wellington (TiB VUW)
- Victoria University of Wellington Arts' Society (ArtSoc)
- Victoria University of Wellington Law Students' Society (VUWLSS)
- Victoria University of Wellington Feminist Law Society (VUWFLS)
- Rainbow Law (Law School LGBTQIA+ Student Representative Group)
- Asian Law Students' Association (ALSA)
- Victoria University of Wellington Commerce Students' Association (VicCom)
- Pasifika Island Commerce Students' Association (PICSA)
- STUDI O (Te Aro Campus Students' Association)
- Tutors Collective
- Disabled Students Association (DSA)

Where particular groups have had specific feedback, we have presented this separately under a heading of their name.

Feedback Difficulties

It is worth noting that it has been difficult to comment on some of the proposal as we are aware there will be a second phase of consultation with its own relevant document. This has impacted upon our ability to comment in depth on the operational details and high-level concepts of SSP.

VUWSA would further like to engage in discussions regarding the cost of Tītoko and specifically the impact this will have on job restructures. Though it has been stated that Tītoko is going to be "cost neutral", there is growing concern by both students and staff that there will still be job losses resulting. This uncertainty and unclarity to the project make it more challenging for us to comment on this proposal.

Privacy Concerns

Students' privacy is a significant concern with the 'integrated systems' aspect to Tītoko. Though acknowledging the Pastoral Care Code and intent for Tītoko to provide the ability to effectively recognize and take steps to addressing student wellbeing, VUWSA wants to ensure that appropriate considerations and measures are being put in place to respect student privacy.

Student services, excluding the already acknowledged Mauri Ora and Disability Services, deal frequently with sensitive issues and information. These include Āwhina, Pasifika Student Success, International Office and Student Learning, to name a few. These services, which have built trust and relationships with students, often have to deal with sensitive issues and students

in sensitive states. For example, Student Learning frequently deal with students in incredibly anxious and stressful times that are under immense workload pressures. Including such services in a CRM that keeps records of appointment/meeting information does raise concerns for VUWSA and students.

This concern is raised further by the statement that consent would not need to be given for such 'confidential' information to be shared to other units of the university. VUWSA has concerns on this as this could be potentially triggering for a student if such information is not handled appropriately. This is a concern for us as students feel and should continue to feel comfortable and safe to disclose sensitive information to appropriate staff members.

We want to be assured that if sensitive information is deemed necessary to share to other units, this is handled with the utmost empathy and sensitivity. There have been situations in the past where students have been contacted regarding course pass rates with dismissive and unempathetic emails from staff members that have not had prior contact with, in times of immense difficulty because university units have not effectively communicated with each other or students. This cannot occur with Titoko, as VUWSA believes this will have a significantly harmful effect on students and deteriorate trust and confidence in staff, services and systems across the university. If this trust is damaged, VUWSA does not believe Titoko will be effective in identifying and addressing student wellbeing.

There must be checks within the process of documenting information to ensure this is not subject to human error, as it would be significantly concerning if information which was supposed to be flagged as confidential were to be inputted into the system with universal access. VUWSA advocate for clear guidance and expectations around confidentiality, practical checks and balances for inputting confidential information and extensive training for advisors, support services and academic staff on processes for interacting with confidential information.

Per VUWSA's understanding, conversations are still taking place on categorizing/defining what accounts for 'confidential information'. VUWSA want a collaborative discussion, incorporating Titoko, Student Services directors (e.g., Mauri Ora, Student Learning, Disability Services, International Office, Pasifika Student Success Team), VUWSA, Ngāi Tauria, Disability Students Association, V-ISA, Pasifika Student Council and other appropriate student representative groups, including Student Assembly. We think this is necessary, as these groups' 'on-the-ground' experience should be acknowledged and incorporated into the design of Titoko. This will ensure the processes established are realistic for these impacted services and the wider student body.

VUWSA have concerns regarding what 'role-based access' means and specifically what access academic staff, e.g. lecturers, course coordinators, Head of Schools, Associate Deans and Deans will have. These concerns relate mostly to Student Learning regarding disclosures about courses, lecturers and/or post-graduate supervisor complaints.

Based off of previous discussions, an idea was raised of hosting all student accommodation resident information on a singular system. VUWSA want further engagement and discussions on what this would look like in practice, and on how information would be stored, and who it would be accessible by.

Ngāi Taura:

There is a risk of privacy on how information is shared from one service to another, specifically academics. Although, on the face of it, this may not be confidential in the ordinary sense, sharing grades and academic information can be a sensitive kaupapa for some taura, as they may feel judged for their grades. For example, if the information at academic services (e.g. Student Learning) consultations involved a taura having a mental breakdown or crying and this information was shared throughout other services, this may be detrimental to the student. In particular, this would not be mana-enhancing of the university to share this information that the student deems private.

VicCom:

VicCom have concerns around the privacy of student information being shared between systems and advisors. Given that the scope of information that advisors can access is looking to be expanded, VicCom believe there must be more clarity around how this will be done and who between.

VicCom would encourage that there be in-depth discussions into 'good practice' in this area and further look into the direction of other universities in this space.

Training of advisors and academics

Currently, students have realistic expectations of what they can expect from course advisors – they know that the help they receive will be primarily administrative and more or less strictly about their course of study.

Tītoko advisors by contrast are intended to have a much more holistic role, and as such, students will be going to them with a wider range of problems – some of these problems will be outside the scope of their role and require referral to Mauri Ora, Student Finance, Disability Services or the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution Team (among others).

It is already standard practice to train staff, including course advisors, on when to refer students with those sorts of problems to the appropriate service. However, by increasing the scope of the Tītoko advisor from the administrative/academic into the pastoral, the expectations of students will blur as to what they should and shouldn't disclose to the Tītoko advisor and what precisely they'll be able to help with. Frankly, VUWSA isn't sure exactly where this line/scope is either.

As the University will be aware, every disclosure a student makes has the potential to be difficult and painful. Making this disclosure to someone not adequately equipped to resolve it ranges from annoying (when it comes to a simple problem with course selection) to outright dangerous - indeed the desire to prevent this and create a “one stop shop” is a core driver of this proposal.

We understand that referrals are inevitable. However, it is *essential* that Tītoko advisors are adequately trained and supported to receive personal and sensitive disclosures that will ultimately end up with other services. Tītoko advisors are not counsellors – but they will still be put in the position of receiving disclosures that counsellors would receive. We already see this phenomenon elsewhere in the University, including tutors who take on elements of pastoral care outside the strict scope of their job description, a point specifically endorsed by the Tutors Collective.

To clarify, it is inadequate and unacceptable for this support to be limited to the same support that all staff receive – specifically access to the Employee Assistance Program. EAP access is a bare minimum - it does not constitute extra support for a particularly exposed role. VUWSA want to see support being extended for these roles.

VUWSA have additional concerns on the proposed student to advisor ratio being 600-1. This does not provide VUWSA with confidence in Tītoko’s ability to realistically address the issues proposed. VUWSA believes that it is impossible to provide quality support for 600 students in the beginning of a trimester. For example, we find it unlikely that all 600 students, or even a fraction of this, would be able to be seen prior to the course withdrawal date that is two weeks after trimester commencing. Collaborative conversations must be held on this matter as, throughout the university, student to advisor ratios is already causing persisting issues. These units deal with significantly lower ratios than Tītoko is proposing.

Ngāi Taurira:

At the moment the proposal looks as though these roles are referral positions. It needs to be made explicit as to what these coaches have the scope to advise on and when they are to refer. For example, if a taurira would go to them for help on some academic advice for an essay and they would then refer it to student learning. On the face of it, if the role is to simply refer students to other services, anyone is more than capable of doing this.

Ngāi Taurira think that this position of referral is not where resources should be spent, instead they should focus on the already established services - namely, Āwhina, Mauri Ora and Academic services. These are the services that our taurira and student community most rely on but are not currently reaching their full potential. The underfunding of these services makes it hard for them to be accessed in a prompt manner. Ngāi Taurira engagement and understanding of the consultation document makes Tītoko present as a referral process, rather than a project that is going to be addressing the root issues of student wellbeing.

There is a concern of the ratio; for every 1 advisor is 600 taura. This does not seem viable for this service. Particularly if Titoko focus is to provide holistic support that would be meaningful to students.

This furthers our comment regarding wrap around support and training for these advisor roles. There is no doubt that the university should be offering training support for advisors, in particular cultural competency and cultural safety. Questions to consider are:

(a) What processes and training are going to be constructed for these coaches to become culturally competent and culturally safe to be able to properly engage with our taura in a meaningful way that is holistic.

(b) Do they understand the difference between cultural competency and cultural safety?

(c) Are these coaches reflective of the student population?

Ngāi Taura want to advocate for the distinction between cultural competency and cultural safety. This goes beyond surface understanding of mātauranga Māori. This is an established understanding of peoples own biases that may affect them in their roles of advising and how this plays out for our taura Māori and also other taura from different ethnic backgrounds. This can affect the overall environment of our university.

Pasifika Students Council

PSC want to advocate the proposed ratio of 600-1 is not going to deliver on the promises of Titoko. In our experience, ratios alike to this do not deliver quality wrap-around support for students, they result in prolonged wait times for students to be seen and thus negatively heighten student's wellbeing issues.

UniQ

UniQ want to advocate that it is paramount that Titoko advisors have extensive training regarding rainbow safety, LGBTQIA+ and Takatāpui competency. This is essential because as part of understanding student experience and wellbeing it is important to consider all different facets within this. Currently Vic has a large rainbow community encompassing over 3,500 students.

These students do not have access to an effective, efficient, comprehensive and empathetic advocacy and representative university service. This has meant that these students are consistently falling through the cracks as their issues are not addressed. The mainstream wellbeing services available are not truly able to support these students. UniQ believe that Titoko will not be able to appropriately address student wellbeing if this training is not extensively incorporated into advisor training and Titoko generally.

Disabled Students Association

DSA are disappointed to see that issues facing disabled students has not been explicitly stated or addressed. It is additionally concerning that this project, which focuses on improving student wellbeing has not outlined processes to support these students. It is our experience when this is not explicitly mentioned, we fall through the cracks and continue to be underserved by this institution.

DSA are not confident that one advisor is adequate to meet the unique and diverse needs of students within the disabled community when they are advising 600 others. If this project is wanting to make a difference for these students there needs to be greater and more extensive undertaking on how these students' issues are going to be addressed. We see this being done by more extensive and consistent training for these advisors, allowing them to create a safe space for these students. All advisors should undergo in-depth training, particularly concerning ableism.

Thursdays' In Black VUW and Pasifika Commerce Society

Further conversations and communications would need to had regarding whether the advisor assigned to students would remain throughout the course of the student's undergraduate degree. In addition to this, do these advisors remain for students entering post-graduate programmes. This raises additional concerns regarding the involvement and engagement intended by Titoko for postgraduate students.

Victoria University of Wellington Arts Society (ArtSoc)

Arts Soc are concerned that students' undertaking conjoint degrees may not be adequately supported by these changes. Any changes to the way that student advisors operate must ensure that students studying conjoint degrees no longer have to run between faculties to gain course advice.

Asian Law Students' Association (ALSA)

ALSA agree with the above points made by Ngāi Tauira in relation to cultural competency and cultural safety. These considerations are an important element in fostering a supportive and comfortable learning environment for students, particularly in the context of students who are reaching out to advisors for assistance or are in a more vulnerable state. Providing this level of training allows advisors to engage in a way which is inclusive, accessible, and can provide more meaningful support. In addition, the presence of multiple representative groups in Law School alone indicates the importance of representation and identity to students and why students would benefit from their advisors being provided with cultural competency training.

Pasifika Support Team and Āwhina

VUWSA advocate for the empowerment and resourcing of already established services that have an advisory element to them. VUWSA believe that Āwhina and Pasifika Student Success must be better resourced and funded to ensure the delivery of the Tītoko project is beneficial for students. In order for Tītoko to be successful, there must be an acknowledgement that different students require different styles of advising dependent on their culture, lived experience, and individual needs. Therefore, there must be significant focus, in partnership with representative groups and their current services, on ensuring Tītoko is respectful of these differences.

As outlined in the proceeding comments by Ngāi Taurira and Pasifika Students Council, services such as Āwhina and Pasifika Student Success are incredibly influential and beneficial for these student communities, however, they are not resourced enough. Therefore, collectively we want assurances that both Āwhina and Pasifika Student Success are included in the funding that would be allocated for the Tītoko project. We ask this as with engaging with the consultation document these services are identified on the rim of this model.

In consideration of the discussions outlining that there will be a liaising relationship between Tītoko advisors and these services, we collectively want to promote that Tītoko advisors still need to be representative of the community, showcasing diversity of lived experiences and identity in those that fill these positions as well as the wider roles within the Tītoko programme. It is important for students to see this diversity and representation in these student-facing services in order to best facilitate a safe environment for students from minority communities.

Ngāi Taurira:

The role and influence that Āwhina has is already huge within the university. They are located at all three campuses, some of them in full-time positions. The team at Āwhina is already small, with massive capability. They stream into every part of the university and Māori taurira lives.

The programme is asking Āwhina to expand their workload. If they were to be considered a part of Tītoko they would require far greater support in terms of resourcing, funding and expansions of their team. Āwhina is crucial to taurira Māori success, they run multiple programmes and other great amounts of support.

Ngāi Taurira advise that the Tītoko team look into the role further and consult and work collaboratively with Āwhina on this kaupapa.

Crossover of services from that of a mainstream Tītoko to an Āwhina advisor. For example, if a student who identifies as Māori is with a mainstream Tītoko advisor and wants to switch over to an Āwhina Tītoko, is that handover going to be as smooth as possible for the taurira and not a prolonged process?

Pasifika Students Council:

As the Pacific Student Council, we endeavor to represent the voices of all Pasifika students. We appreciate that Victoria University of Wellington has identified that a change is needed and is striving to materialise these changes. The Student Success Programme (SSP), or Titoko, shows much promise though we want to express concerns.

Pasifika students continue to face inequality at home, and in many structures in New Zealand, including through the educational system. The welfare of Pasifika students is paramount to ensure that they feel safe on their journey through higher education. Their wellbeing needs to be taken care of to ensure they strive academically. From a cultural standpoint, wellness, wellbeing, and welfare are deeply embedded in Pasifika culture and identity. With the continued inequality in society, there needs to be more emphasis on the wellbeing of students. We see room for improvement on student wellbeing in the current proposed Titoko plan.

Pasifika students currently receive support from the Pasifika Student Success team (PSS). Under the proposed Titoko programme, if a Pasifika student chooses to follow the path of Titoko, the counselor will be required to check-in with PSS. There is no information present in the report to address if PSS will receive extra resources to match the extra work required. We express concerns that the extra work will make the much-needed services PSS provide, more difficult to access for an already fast-growing demographic of the university.

The model of PSS “For Pasifika by Pasifika” is a model that has been proven to work for empowering Pasifika students. It can be quite challenging for a Pasifika student to feel safe and be open about issues to non-Pasifika people, due to cultural differences. It will need to be ensured that PSS continue to have the independence currently available to them. We emphasise that there must be a guarantee that Pasifika students, when newly enrolled, will continue to be informed of the Pasifika specific services available to them. If a Pasifika student chooses to join the Titoko path, there needs to be a guarantee that said Pasifika Student can switch back to the PSS at any point.

We express a concern for the capability of non-Pasifika advisors to be able to respectfully interact with Pasifika students. Proper training of Titoko advisors needs to be conducted and be made ongoing. As Pasifika peoples, we all fall under the umbrella of the Pacific, yet each culture is special and unique in its customs, values, and traditions. We suggest a prompt process of being able to change coaches, and lay complaints within Titoko, that allows Pasifika students to safely navigate this sphere. Too often have we been ‘passed around’ to the wrong services, that can make seeking assistance in future distressing.

Within Pasifika cultures, holistic support is a relevant and vital aspect. The holistic services and support given to Pasifika students by PSS cover holistic support to a vast extent. The proposed model of Titoko does not specify to what extent holistic support will be available. To ensure that the proposed model provides safe support to Pasifika students, the holistic aspect of Titoko needs to match PSS.

Currently, there is no understanding of what will happen if the new Titoko system fails Pasifika students. We urge there to be a system where there is continued monitoring of how Titoko affects Pasifika students. Frequent reviews will help in identifying weaknesses and address changes that need to be made. We want advocate for extensive and collaborative student involvement in these reviews.

Our Pasifika students are spread across the three different campuses. The students who are not based on the Kelburn Campus have a few difficulties at accessing support from the university as is. We want to advocate that Titoko needs to focus upon empowering the sense of community at all campuses for Pasifika students who hold a deeper and diverse understanding of what community at Vic looks like. As PSC, we have been working to ensure our Pasifika students have a sense of belonging to the university entwined with their own campuses, with a strong focus on Te Aro and Pipitea. We want to advocate that the support being given though Titoko at all these campuses is reinforcing a sense of belonging, wellbeing and community for Pasifika students.

Overall, we acknowledge the effort being made to create a system that is trying to help students. The proposed Titoko has much potential, though a few areas have room for improvement. We urge that the process in constructing what Titoko will look like for students, has an immense student input. As students we can advise on and foresee issues that may arise. We feel that Titoko may not have a strong focus on Pasifika students and attribute this to the fact that we have PSS. However, to ensure the relationship between Titoko and PSS works well, PSS need more resources to accommodate the extra work that will be required of them.

Impact of Titoko on other Campuses

Titoko has great potential to considerably benefit the lives of all students. However, there is concern from student representative groups on our satellite campuses, Te Aro and Pipitea, as to the impacts that Titoko will have on the resourcing and structure of the current student advisor services provided in their respective campuses. This section has been co-written alongside the respective student rep groups of each campus, notably Victoria University of Wellington Law Students' Society (VUWLSS), Victoria University of Wellington Feminist Law Students' Association (VUWFLSS), Asian Law Students' Society (ALSA), STUDIO (the Te Aro students' association), and Victoria Commerce Students Society (VicCom). We have divided this section into each separate area.

Pipitea – Old Government Buildings

Victoria University of Wellington Law Students' Society (VUWLSS)

It is of the opinion of VUWLSS that Pipitea essentially operates as two separate campuses, Rutherford House (RH, home of the School of Business and Government) and the Old

Government Buildings (OGB, home of the Law School). There is substantial separation between the two in terms of student population, as Law Students rarely enter into RH to study, and Commerce Students rarely enter into OGB. Each has its own library, study and common areas, and information service areas, and are self-sufficient, with the exception of Rutherford House's Mauri Ora Student Health area.

Given this, the placement of student advisors in OGB suits Law Student's accessibility well. They are able to easily access student support, including the placing of Māori and Pasifika Law advisors within the walls of OGB. All students understand where in OGB they can find this help, and have a good sense of community and staff-student interconnectedness through this easy accessibility. VUWLSS are strongly opposed to the possibility of the moving of law school advisors outside of OGB, as they believe this will not only disrupt the community-based organisation found within the building, but also significantly detract from the accessibility of these services by law students.

While VUWLSS acknowledge the independence of the Āwhina and PSS support services, we are worried that the flow on effects of Titoko will impact these advisors as well. VUWLSS want assurances that the current Law-specific advisors that are specified for Āwhina and Pasifika Student Success teams remain within the Law/Old Government Building campus. These advisors are essential to the functioning of the Law faculty in terms of providing advisory services and support for students identifying within these communities. VUWLSS wants to gain confirmation that these advisors' role remains in a Law specific scope and are not restructured to become general Titoko advisors.

Victoria University of Wellington Feminist Law Students' Society (VUWFLS)

The transition to university is a significant one, with many students requiring differing levels of support and navigational help when accessing resources and information from the University. Victoria University of Wellington Feminist Law Society (VUWFLS) acknowledge that, while the current system is insufficient in successfully guiding and advising students, the transition to the Titoko policy presents several issues.

Students based at OGB, Rutherford House and Te Aro campuses have a specialised sense of belonging to their campus, allowing them to create meaningful connections which hugely impact their well-being. In the case of Pipitea, shifting support and advisory services to Rutherford House, and replacing current focused advisors with generalised ones, risks isolating law students further from the support services they require. The needs of the two Pipitea student groups differ greatly, and the guidance they require needs to be personalised and supported by staff who are familiar with these unique needs.

Access to the services is currently insufficient given the vast number of enrolments, a fact which only worsened with the COVID-19 pandemic. Victoria University of Wellington pride themselves on offering a wide variety of course options for students, but it would be unrealistic for a single

course advisor to have intimate and detailed knowledge of all of the offerings and their pros and cons across the many different degree paths. Requiring staff to have an intimate knowledge of course planning across all degrees may result not only in poor results for students but an increased strain on staff well-being.

We see it as a high-priority that the university would want to treat all students in a holistic way in order to promote academic success and connection. We also acknowledge that the university ecosystem is complex and needs to be navigated with skill and precision. However, by centralising support on Pipitea campus, we do not feel that those students with differing needs and preferences for how they will receive and ask for information and guidance has been simplified. Instead, the process remains more complex and raises new academic, personal and social experience problems.

Asian Law Students' Association (ALSA)

ALSA agrees with the points made by VUWLSS and VUWFLS in relation to Pipitea effectively functioning as two separate campuses, these being Rutherford House and the Old Government Buildings. In this context, placement of student advisors is important as it allows particular groups (law students in Old Government Building, commerce students in Rutherford House) to access student services more easily. Another important consideration is that first year students operate mostly in Kelburn, therefore they might benefit from having an advisor specifically for first years in Kelburn.

The needs of student groups differing greatly, and guidance they require needs to be personalised and supported by staff who are familiar with these unique needs, including first years. More focused support would reduce the strain on staff who wouldn't need to accommodate for the knowledge of course planning across different degrees. These staff may also be better positioned to give meaningful advice and support to the first-year students who do not make it past the first year of Law School. The combination of distance from Kelburn to Pipitea, as well as the intimidating nature of approaching the Pipitea campus as a first year, acts as a barrier to accessible learning support.

Pipitea – Rutherford House

Victoria Commerce Society (VicCom) - Endorsed by Art Society (ArtSoc)

In the opinion of Victoria Commerce Society (VicCom), the Titoko project will help to streamline the currently cumbersome process of course advice. Many students in commerce study conjoint degrees, meaning they need to gain course advice from two different faculties when attempting to organise their degree. This is particularly frustrating when those advisors give contradicting advice. This leads to students trekking to both Pipitea and Kelburn campus for course advice, and often leaving confused and in no better a position.

VicCom have two key concerns regarding the Titoko project. Firstly, we are concerned that, unless these course advisors have a robust cross-faculty understanding of degree pathways, they will still be giving poor or improper advice. These advisors must be given adequate resourcing to understand the myriad degree options available across faculty, otherwise they run the risk of continuing the current befuddling and unclear course advisor system.

VicCom want it acknowledged that first-year commerce students (and law students) are located in Kelburn campus. From our understanding, it is proposed that advisors would be grouped on discipline, this raises concerns as we want to advocate for these first-year students having access to quality and specialised commerce expertise at Kelburn campus. VicCom do not want these students being forced to travel to Pipitea campus to receive this quality advice as this invalidates the reasoning and intentions for establishing Titoko.

Te Aro - Vivian Street Campus

STUDiO (Te Aro Students' Association)

Regarding Te Aro campus, we maintain that any Titoko advancement must result in tangible benefits for the students of Te Aro campus.

This campus has been significantly under resourced for a long period of time. There are systemic issues of poor mental health, high work-load, a feeling of overwhelm, and a lack of engagement within the wider university community. There is a lack of connection between Te Aro and the other campuses, not just in distance, but in terms of funding, resourcing, and distribution of services. There must be equal and adequate support given to these students to create an atmosphere of wellness, supportive study, and engagement. We believe an increase in resourcing under Titoko to each of the satellite campuses would show Titoko to be a genuine success, especially given how poorly resourced these campuses are currently.

This includes everything from greater accessibility for key student support services (advisors, student wellbeing, Mauri Ora, and student learning) by having a genuine presence on this campus, to a greater level of University run and funded engagement opportunities for Te Aro students. While there have been attempts to do so in the past, they have often fallen short on the engagement front due to lack of exposure, interest, accessibility, and intrigue with the student populous at Te Aro campus. If these services are to be sustainable and successful long term, they must be equitably resourced, accessible, well-advertised and designed with the Te Aro student in mind.

There is significant concern that Titoko could lead to Te Aro's current advisors (all experts in the course and degree layout of Te Aro core academic pathways, as well as all matters concerning the campus) being replaced with 'general' student advisors, who have an inferior understanding of Te Aro student needs and desires. While we realise that positions may be filled with existing Te Aro advisors, increasing the ratio of students to advisors in concerning, given that the systems across the university are already overwhelmed. Quite frankly, a 1:600

ratio of staff members to students is extremely insufficient, given that the student population has been shown to grow annually, and is projected to grow over the coming years. Staff are already overwhelmed and increasing these ratios will only result in more burn out for staff and students, lower retention rates across the board, and an increase in systemic health issues.

This would be to the detriment of Te Aro students, as the current system needs further resourcing, not restructure.

There is an element of co-design outlined in the development of Titoko. Co-design is about engaging with the end user and customising the final designed output to that user. Treating all students as the same/similar or creating personas is not equivalent to co-design, nor is engaging with a select few students (student representatives, class reps, VUWSA, PGSA, Student Assembly). Given that a dataset has not been selected to train the proposed the new system, here is a solution instead.

An effective way of designing any new tool for student success would result in meaningful, long-term development with consistent development, opportunity for feedback and iterations of the tools. It is recommended that open-ended, public forums, be held to get a broad and meaningful understanding of the student body. These forums would use qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection to better understand each cluster of the student population. Afterall, one of the universities key values is student partnership (student is also in the name of the previous iteration of Titoko). This could be done at all campuses, not just at the usual Kelburn campus. This would result in an accurate and meaningful dataset that could be used in the training of any artificial system.

Each student is different, and we are human. We are not just a number in a system, or a pay-check in the bank. Designing systems and policies that attempt to solve our problems before understanding them generates more issues than solutions and will be harmful to students. Many of our issues as students are non-quantifiable and are too complex for a system to comprehend and compute.

While we agree that the ultimate goal of university is to gain a qualification, students (on the majority) come into university in their formative adult years, and although they leave with a degree, it isn't guaranteed that they will be successful in their adult lives. There is more to being a student than gaining a qualification. We need to be healthy, we need life balance and decent support systems around us.

Ngāi Taurira:

Ngāi Taurira believes that there needs to be a greater amount of support and quality time given to taurira at other campuses in order for the programme to be successful. Ngāi Taurira believe

that this looks like expanding capability on other campuses, specifically with Māori taura, as there is a lack of engagement within these campuses.

As it stands, there is only one representative at the other campuses for Māori taura. This is a student engagement officer (Kaiakiaki) provided by Āwhina. If this programme is to reach its full potential and truly deliver for Ngāi Taura Māori there must be more engagement put into these campuses in order for this kaupapa to succeed.

Continued Under-resourcing of Student Services

Student support mechanisms are already overburdened and underfunded. Mauri Ora is notorious among students for its wait times. Āwhina only has one student support adviser on each of the Te Aro and Pipitea campuses. Many core student services are constrained, thus cannot fulfill their potential as fully effective support mechanisms because of gross underfunding. An administrative reshuffle will not solve systemic issues stemming from massive inequity between demand for support services, and resourcing given to these services.

VUWSA believes the University must pair efficiency increasing measures such as Tītoko with funding increases. These holistic student services proposed by Tītoko will only be able to adequately support students if there is a significant funding increase and administrative support. We are concerned that the difference between students' needs-to-be-met and current support availability is too great for Tītoko to realistically provide an effective solution. This will be exacerbated without additional resourcing going to the core services already accessed by students.

Tītoko proposes student advisers would become more holistic in their support given to students. This will increase the expectations placed on advisers and thus the resources required to meet these.

Current services need both additional administrative support and staff support (e.g. Mauri Ora counsellors, Student Learning and Disability advisers, etc.) It is important that expectations and resources placed on Tītoko are not done in a trade-off/substitution for addressing the evident need for current services to be funded more. There are current gaping funding holes throughout student support services at this university that need to be addressed if any work concerning student wellbeing is to be effective.

Tītoko aims to improve student accessibility to services through the advisor referral process. Increased accessibility will be ineffective for addressing core wellbeing issues if students are prevented from utilising support services by long wait times rushed/shortened appointments and overall ineffective support.

Ngāi Taura:

The resourcing of Tītoko needs to consider the demand on current services and whether it is viable for them to take part in Tītoko. Āwhina is one example of a student service that is already underfunded. Mauri Ora is grossly underfunded when it comes to student support.

Ngāi Taurira believe these current student services should be further looked into in regard to the support the University offers them and thus greater resources should be focused to them instead.

V-ISA

V-ISA wants to ensure that there is a continued presence of specified international advisors, which is currently established within the international office. V-ISA has concerns that the proposed inclusion of the international office in Tītoko will dilute the advisory service that is currently given. International students often require more specialised advice than domestic students in regards to insurance, visas, scholarships and enrollments. Tītoko potentially removing/restructuring these specialised advisors and instead providing general advisors that also advise domestic students will not benefit our community of students as the quality and efficiency of advice will suffer. V-ISA want to ensure that international students are being appropriately considered and incorporated from the outset of Tītoko with their diverse needs and unique arrangements being considered.

ViCom

VicCom want to ensure that students are still able to access the various services throughout the university without having to go through a referral process with Tītoko advisors. We believe that this would inherently disadvantage students and lead to prolonged wait times for addressing their issues.

Disabled Students Association

The issues facing disabled students are tangible, systemic and far-reaching. We do not consider, Tītoko to be an effective mechanism to address and correct these issues. We would want to be assured that Tītoko is not used as a substitution to continue neglect of resource allocation to Disability Services, as this would not facilitate a strong foundation for Tītoko to appropriately address all students wellbeing issues.

Consultation and Co-design

VUWSA have been pleasantly surprised with the level of engagement they have received from the director and design team of the Tītoko project so far. The frequent meetings, and transparency and openness in communication has been deeply appreciated from VUWSA's end, and has allowed us to pass on information and clarify concerns with student representatives in a straightforward manner. The very fact that this approach has been a novel step, however,

does showcase the University's previous lack of co-design and adequate consultation with the student body. We hope this is the beginning of a new direction of engagement between the University and student body.

VUWSA believe that in order for this consultation to be robust and to clearly understand the outlook of the myriad of students' who make up our university, it must be ongoing and proactive. This includes effectively using and engaging with our existing paid consultation bodies, such as Student Assembly. Student Assembly is a forum made up of a number of student representatives with a focus on open consultation and discussion where students are adequately compensated for their time. Engaging in this consultation and process of co-design shows student's you are willing to enter their spaces and work around their schedule to understand what they want from Tītoko. This will give Tītoko the best opportunity to be effective in delivering for student's needs.

In order for the co-design and consultation portions of the Tītoko project to be deemed a success, we must see outcomes which put students at the heart of the project. This means genuinely placing student feedback as the guide and design principles of the project. VUWSA advocates for an accountability mechanism within the Tītoko leadership team. This could include frequent reporting to key student groups and consultation bodies on the development of Tītoko, with the inclusion of Student Assembly.

Ngāi Tauira

Ngāi tauira think that further consultation needs to happen on Tītoko. There is great opportunity here to ensure that the success of Tītoko can have a real impact on student lives. Further opportunity can be seen through co-design of Tītoko with students, mana whenua and student services.

Ngāi Tauira believe that this is inherent of the university's obligation as good Te Tiriti partners.

Consultation for Ngāi Tauira is consistent engagement with tauira Māori, mana whenua and staff, such as Āwhina. Consistent engagement in key decision-making processes is key in order for Tītoko to reach its full potential.

Co-design is an opportunity for Tītoko to reach its full potential to deliver for Ngāi Tauira Māori, PSC and other cultures encompassed in the diverse student population. This is in respect of our mātauranga (knowledge) that is uniquely special and necessary in a programme such as Tītoko.

Conclusion

As shown above, there is a wide breadth of perspectives, ideas and concerns with the implementation of the Tītoko project. There is no single student perspective on this matter,

something which only further showcases the requirement for ongoing and robust consultation. Those submitting within this document represent a number of different student groups, but all with a singular focus; ensuring that Titoko delivers tangible benefits to the student body at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington.

We call for ongoing consultation, a genuine co-design process that centers the student voice in the creation of Titoko, and an acute awareness of the areas in which the current University system has failed. It is in the best interest of this programmes success that the latter be immediately rectified. We look forward to working in a continued partnership towards bettering student experience here at Te Herenga Waka.