



Ara Institute of Canterbury Council

AGENDA

Monday 3 August 2026 – 9.00am

Ara Council Room, City Campus and online [if required]

Council Members: Hugh Lindo [Chair], Michael Rondel [Deputy Chair], Rick Hellings and Andrea Leslie.

**Note: Ara Council only time 8.30am to 9.00am and the public meeting commences from 9.00am.*

Item	Subject
1) Meeting Business	1.1 Welcome and Apologies
	1.2 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest
	1.3 Confirmation of Council Minutes [Public] Meeting held 23 June 2026 a) Approval of minutes b) Matters arising c) Action List
	1.4 Correspondence
2) For Discussion	MONTHLY REPORT 2.1 Chief Executive a) Ara Performance Summary and 2025 Educational Performance Indicator [EPI] Sector Data b) Financial Performance Summary c) Safety, Health and Wellbeing d) Highlights and Achievements e) Media and Communications 2.2 Additional Items f) Te Kāhui Arataki Leadership Development Programme
	MONTHLY REPORTS 3.1 Chair [Verbal] Subcommittees 3.2 Academic Committee Quarterly Report
3) For Information/ Discussion	
4) For Information	STANDING ITEMS
	4.1 2026 Council Work Programme 4.2 2027 Council Meeting Dates
5) General Business	

ARA PUBLIC EXCLUDED COUNCIL MEETING

It will be moved that the public be excluded from the meeting.

The general subject of the matters to be considered while the public is excluded is:

Item	Subject	Clause
6) Meeting Business	6.1 Confirmation of Council Minutes Public Excluded Meeting held 23 June 2026 a) Approval of minutes b) Matters arising c) Action List	[s9(2) (f), (i), (j)]
	6.2 Correspondence – Public Excluded	
7) For Discussion	7.1 Ara's Future Strategy a) Chief Executive Reflections and Forward-Looking Strategy	[s9(2) (f), (i), (j)]
	7.2 Chief Executive Report – Summary a) EPI and Student Achievement b) Financial Performance c) Strategic Business Priorities d) Safety, Health and Wellbeing	
	7.3 Additional Items e) Holidays Act Remediation Project	
8) For Decision	8.1 Campus Masterplan - Timaru	[s9(2) (f), (i), (j)]
9) For Information	9.1 Chair Monthly Report [Verbal]	[s9(2) (f), (i), (j)]
	9.2 Risk Register Subcommittees 9.3 Academic Committee Quarterly Report	
10) General Business		

This resolution will be made in reliance on s48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interests protected by s9 of the Official Information Act 1982 which would be prejudiced by the holding of the proceedings of the meeting in public.

The sections of the Official Information Act which applies are shown below:

- *Matters involving confidential information about an identifiable person*
s9(2)(a) – Protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons
- *Submissions to Parliament and other formal advice*
s9(2)(f) – Maintain confidential conventions which protect political neutrality, and the confidentiality of communications and advice tendered by officials
- *Commercially sensitive financial data*
s9(2)(i) – The Crown or any Department or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities
- *Negotiations in progress with other organisations*
s9(2)(j) – Enable a Minister of the Crown or any Department or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations)



2026 Register of Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

Records held as of 3 August 2026

Ara Council Members

Hugh Lindo [Chair]	• Simpson Grierson [Partner]
Michael Rondel [Deputy Chair]	• Christchurch City Holdings Ltd [Director] • Environment Canterbury [Independent Chair, Audit and Risk Committee] • Comcare Charitable Trust [Trustee] • Golf New Zealand Inc [Director/Chair] • BDO Christchurch [and related BDO entities] [Director/Partner]
Richard [Rick] Hellings	• Helmac Action and Advisory Ltd [Part owner and Chair]
Andrea Leslie	• Y Central South Island [Chair] • Food and Fibre PTE Interim Board [Board Member] • South Canterbury Kindergarten Association [Board Member]

Ara Council Officers

Darren Mitchell Chief Executive	• Ara Foundation [Trustee] • Ōtautahi Education Development Trust [Trustee] • RR Turnbull Family Trust [Trustee] • WorldSkills NZ [Trustee] • Quotezi Ltd [Shareholder and Director] • CAANZ [Member]
Christina Yeates Council Secretary	Nil



Ara Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 23 June 2026 – 9.00am
Room V140, Boardroom, Woolston Campus

These are the **minutes** of the meeting of the Ara Council held on 23 June 2026 in Room V140, Woolston Campus.

1. MEETING BUSINESS

The meeting was opened with a mihi from the Council Chair.

1.1. Welcome and Apologies

Attendees

Ara Council members present: Hugh Lindo [Chair], Michael Rondel [Deputy Chair], Rick Hellings and Andrea Leslie.

Hugh Lindo acted as chairperson of the meeting.

Other attendees present: Darren Mitchell [Chief Executive] and Christina Yeates (Ara Executive Assistant/Council Secretary).

Apologies Nil.

1.2. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

- a) Nil declarations were recorded for the matters of business for this meeting.

1.3. Confirmation of Council Minutes [Public] – 26 May 2026

[Res#18/230626](#)

*It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting of the Ara Council held on 26 May 2026, be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of the meeting.*

H Lindo/R Hellings
CARRIED

1.4. Matters Arising Nil raised.

1.5. Correspondence Nil received.

2. FOR DISCUSSION – Monthly Report

2.1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE The report was taken as read. Discussion as follows:

- a) **Divisional Quarterly Reporting** - Council confirmed they are comfortable with the quarterly reporting format as detailed in the Chief Executive's report and noted the contents; in particular, how the reports linked to the strategic priorities.
- b) **Transnational Education [TNE]** – Council noted Ara is actively exploring the expansion of its international portfolio through Transnational Education (TNE) partnerships, whereby Ara programmes are delivered offshore through partner universities or colleges. The current objective is to establish approximately two new TNE partnerships annually over the next 2–3 years, building to up to five active partnerships by 2028–2029. Further discussion included the operating model, involving collaboration with an in-country partner to provide learner support and pastoral care, financial considerations and resourcing and capability. Risks highlighted included the challenges of relying on pathways into New Zealand programmes. Overall, it was agreed TNA presents a potentially valuable diversification opportunity for Ara's international portfolio, balancing domestic enrolment activity with offshore revenue streams. However, success depends on careful partner selection, robust due diligence, regulatory compliance, effective learner support, and prudent risk management.
- c) **Significant Achievements: King's Honours 2026** – Council wished to formally acknowledge and congratulate Ara academic staff member, Irihapeti Bullmore, who was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) in recognition of her services to seniors' health, particularly Māori. **A letter of congratulations is to be sent on behalf of the Ara Council. [15 Council Secretary/Chair]**

Res#19/230626

It was resolved that the Chief Executive's report be received and contents noted.

*H Lindo/A Leslie
CARRIED*

3. FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION – Monthly Report

3.1. Chair

- a) Deputy Chair, Michael Rondel attended the recent ITP Chairs meeting on the Chair's behalf and discussions continue in terms of collaborative opportunities within the sector.

3.2. Audit and Risk Committee

- a) The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 3 June 2026 were received for noting.
- b) No further discussion.

4. FOR INFORMATION – STANDING ITEMS

4.1. 2026 Council Work Programme – taken as read.

- a) Noting that the 2027 Budget is due for sign off at the 22 September Council meeting, the Audit and Risk Committee will look to review the draft at their meeting of 2 September.
- b) It was agreed that the Campus Masterplan for Timaru is to be made a priority in the Council workplan.
- c) It was noted that Rick Hellings and Michael Rondel will proceed with a tour of the Manawa Campus at a future date. Council Secretary to co-ordinate.
[#16 Council Secretary]
- d) Dates for the Chief Executive Remuneration Committee are to be agreed for June/July.
[#17 Chair/Council Secretary]
- e) The Council Secretary will circulate a list of suggested Council meeting dates for 2027.
[#18 Council Secretary]

5. GENERAL BUSINESS – Nil.

Closure

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the public section of the meeting closed at 9.30am.

Action Number	Date When Action Arose	Agenda Item	Topic	Action	Board Responsibility	Status	Due Meeting date
15	23 June 26	2.1c	Kings Honours Recipient	Letter of congratulations to be sent to the recipient on behalf of the Ara Council	Council Secretary/Chair	Completed	28 July 26
16	23 June 26	4.1c	2026 Work Programme	Manawa Campus tour – to be arranged	Council Secretary	Completed	28 July 26
17	23 June 26	4.1d		CE REM Committee - Dates for the first meeting to be agreed	Council Secretary	Completed	28 July 26
18	23 June 26	4.1e		2027 Council meeting dates to be circulated for review	Council Secretary	In progress	28 July 26

Ara Council 3 August 2026	Agenda Item	2.1
	Discussion Item	
PUBLIC	Presented by	Darren Mitchell

ARA COUNCIL REPORT SUMMARY	
TITLE OF REPORT	Chief Executive's Report
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE	To provide the Ara Council with key information and data that are important in Ara's development.
RECOMMENDATION(S)	That the Ara Council Receive the Chief Executive's Report and Note the contents of the report.
LINK TO ARA STRATEGY	- Seven Strategic Business Priorities - Vision 2030
KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED	Achieving Semester Two enrolments is necessary to achieve the overall forecast, particularly within non-degree and international delivery.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	Ara remains in a strong financial position, however there are risks in achieving the overall forecast.
RISK IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	As above.

Chief Executive's Report

Public Meeting

1 Overview

This month's overview focus is on the work of the Ako Excellence team that are increasing momentum and action related to our priority area of high-quality teaching and learning.

1.1 Ako Excellence

a Programme Development

Programme development activities continue across several priority areas, A number of programmes, such as Carpentry (Level 4) and Commercial Barbering (Level 4) are transitioning into Skills Standards delivery which will be Ara's first delivery of full skills standards programmes.

b Priority 7: QMS Reset

The QMS reset continues to take shape. This work is intended to modernise Ara's quality framework, improve usability for staff, reduce duplication and ensure quality assurance activities are more clearly connected to learner outcomes and organisational performance. There are several sub-streams within the project. The Policy updates sub-stream is moving along well with several academic policies to go to Academic Committee for approval in August. A draft framework for Self-Assessment at Ara has been shared with the Project Leadership group – further valuable feedback has been received and the next draft being developed for sign off.

c Academic Risk and Assurance

Attention has been given recently to ensuring moderation requirements are met across programmes, monitoring the implementation of action plans where required and strengthening visibility of academic risks through enhanced reporting. This piece of work is ongoing and expected to be in place in Q4. Work has also commenced on reviewing how academic risks are identified, escalated and monitored to ensure oversight of emerging quality risks. Rapid Programme Audits are beginning in the short term with 10 programmes identified for audit from external support. Procedures have been developed so that these can happen swiftly with actions put in place to support programme readiness where appropriate.

d Kaiako Capability

(i) AI in teaching and learning

- A working group has been established to review/renew/produce organisation-accepted high-level guidelines. Currently finalising an AI Position Statement, in collaboration with the Digital division, that draws from existing Digital and Academic policies and provides more explicit statements about use and responsibilities specific to generative AI.
- The team have been strengthening Kaiako awareness and skills to take responsibility for embedding AI literacy development for ākonga into teaching and assessment practice through workshops, webinars, and review of programme-specific AI use

guidelines.

- Phase 3 programme development - driving redesign of assessments in line with currently accepted best-practice approaches related to responsible AI use.

(ii) Quality of Teaching tools and support

- Developmental observation form and quality of teaching survey questions updated to ensure alignment with T&L Strategy and Vision 2030 priorities.
- New process for accessing online (Qualtrics) Quality of Teaching survey underway aiming to increase the response rate and eliminate any paper-based administration of surveys. Process to be piloted with Trades-specific survey in August.
- New to teaching support is being further refined and strengthened through clearer instructions to hiring managers and more proactive support from Kaiako capability advisors, including class visits to support new Kaiako developing positive learning relationships and environments early with their new learner groups.
- Teams participating in peer observations have provided positive feedback and work is underway to refine the process and expand.

(iii) Assessment moderation practice

- Significant work undertaken to strengthen understanding of assessment practice, particularly pre-assessment moderation. Current work concentrated in ex-MAINZ programme and redeveloped Trades Primer programme. Work with Primer programme included supporting developing Moodle courses, Kaiako understanding of new Mātauranga Māori outcomes and embedding AI literacies into teaching, and cross-faculty peer observations.

(iv) Priority 2 project

- Scan of currently flexible options completed. Survey data analysed and reporting underway. Working group been guided to provide PCG with next steps and change of scope to the project if required.

e Research

(i) TREF Funding Decision

- Cabinet has approved TEC research funding for ITPs to be determined by:
 - External Research Income,
 - Research Degree Completions and
 - Research capacity (calculated through “contracted or committed research time”).
- Eligibility for staff to be considered as part of the Research Capacity component are that the staff member is
 - employed under a contract of salaried employment with at least a 12-month duration
 - are employed at least 0.2 FTE
 - have employment functions that include a substantive contribution to research and/or knowledge exchange activities and
 - are not based overseas.
- TEC are tasked with constructing criteria to determine what ‘substantive contribution’ means. ITP research managers are being consulted by the TEC team tasked with creating these criteria.

(ii) OPSITARA [Otago Polytechnic, SIT and Ara research collaboration]

There has been a good response to OPSITARA which is being held at SIT in Invercargill in December. We have 16 researchers approved to travel to present with additional non-travelling authors that means 23 individual researchers will gain outputs. There will be 36 outputs in total.

(iii) Internal Research Funding

Funding has been approved for the June funding round. Six researchers were successful. Funds will support two team projects and allow three new PhD awardees to network and gain opportunities for future research collaborations. Two grants were awarded to the Applied Trades faculty and four to Health, Science and Sustainability. One grant will support Kaupapa Māori research. Total funding was \$10,274.

(iv) Book launch

Organised for July 21 to celebrate Dominic Chilvers' publication *Inviting Spiritual Conversations*, which has been published by Routledge.

2 Ara Performance Summary – as at 15 July 2026

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Pre App Closed		Pre App		Active App	Unsuccessful App	Converted App	Re-enrolm... and Other
Ara Overall		Est. req. Apps (Full Year)	Last year (Full Year)	Current Tracking	Last year Tracking	Req. EFTS Growth	Actual YTD App Growth
		28,088	27,036	27,307	25,601	3.9%	6.7%
International/Domestic							
International		5,416	4,366	6,472	4,210	24.0%	53.7%
Domestic		23,161	22,670	20,838	21,394	2.2%	-2.6%

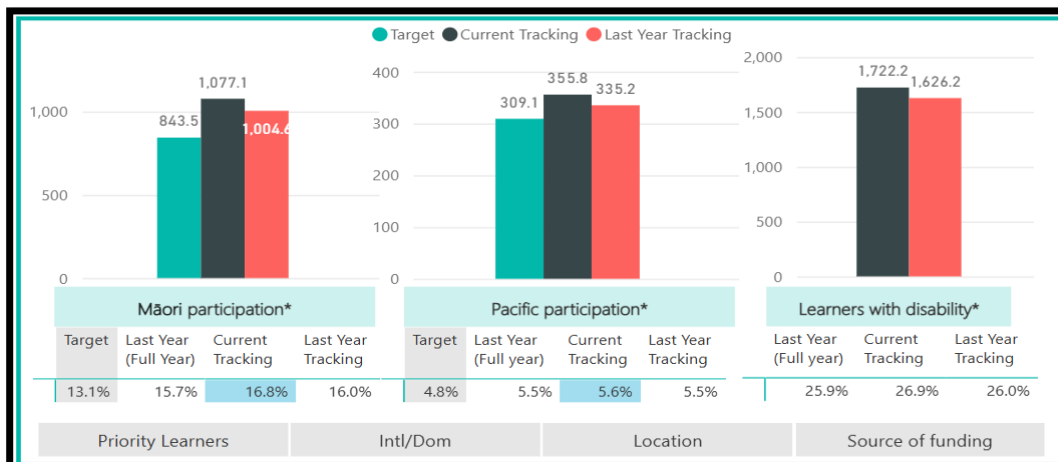
ENROLMENT SUMMARY (EFTS)

							
Active		Committed		Future		Potential	
Ara Overall	Target (Full year)	Last year (Full Year)	Current Tracking	Last year Tracking	Req. Growth	Actual YTD Growth	
	7,109.3	6,843.1	7,002.2	6,763.1	3.9%	3.5%	

ENROLMENT BY LOCATION (EFTS)

Location						
⊕ All Other	6,787.0	6,481.2	6,692.2	6,400.4	4.7%	4.6%
⊕ South Canter...	322.3	361.9	306.5	362.7	-10.9%	-15.5%

PRIORITY LEARNER PARTICIPATION



3 Financial Performance

Executive Financial Summary as at 30 June 2026

% of EFTS budget enrolled	78%	78% of the 2026 EFTS Budget were enrolled by month end. At the same time last year 81% of final 2025 EFTS had been enrolled.
YTD EBITDA	\$3.8m	The year-to-date EBITDA is \$3.8m, which is \$3.2m better than the budget of \$0.6m. In the prior month EBITDA was \$3.0m better than budget.
YTD Total Revenue	\$68.9m	Year-to-date revenue is \$68.9m, which is \$0.2m higher than the budget of \$68.7m. Prior month revenue was -\$0.2m lower than budget.
YTD Total Personnel Exp (ex annual leave impact)	\$42.8m	Year-to-date personnel costs (excluding net annual leave) are \$42.8m, which is -\$0.8m lower than the budget of \$43.5m.
YTD Net Surplus / (Deficit)	\$4.5m	The net surplus is \$4.5m, which is \$3.0m better than the budget of \$1.5m. The prior month variance was \$2.7m, better than budget.
Cash	\$98.4m	Current Cash Position is \$98.4m. This has increased by \$1.6m from the prior month.
Cash Cover	9.7 months	Measures ability to meet costs in absence of funding. TEC benchmark is minimum 2 months.
11YTD Capex	\$5.3m	Capex commitments year-to-date are \$5.3m against a full-year budget of \$16.6m.

4 Safety, Health and Wellbeing

4.1 Overall SHW Performance and Key Themes

- a Overall health, safety and wellbeing performance remains steady, with progress made in leadership visibility, governance arrangements, worker participation, and organisational assurance activity. The revised Health, Safety and Wellbeing Leadership Group Terms of Reference, Council and TKM walkabouts, and now a fully staffed SHW team provide a stronger platform for strategic oversight, system improvement, and assurance over corrective action management.

4.2 Bomb Threat Evacuation - Organisational Learning and Assurance

- a The bomb threat evacuation on 23 June 2026 provided a significant real-time test of Ara's emergency management arrangements and generated important organisational learnings.

5 Highlights and Achievements

- 5.1 **Stakeholder Engagements** A morning tea with industry was held earlier this month, hosted by the Ara Business team, in recognition of our industry partners supporting Ara through redocumentation consultations, taking our learners on placements and to provide an update on the future direction of the new degree.

- 5.2 **NASDA** NASDA's production of Beauty & the Beast ran for six sold out nights at Papahou Theatre. The production was well received and reflected the time and effort put in by the staff and learners.



- 5.3 Waitaha Young Chefs Championship** The 2026 Waitaha Young Chefs Championship were held at Ara on 15 June. This event showcased emerging culinary talent from across Canterbury. Ara graduate and OGB sous chef Ellouise Day was named Waitaha Young Chef of the Year, building on her Young Pastry Chef title from 2025. The event attracted strong industry participation and significant media coverage, reinforcing Ara's reputation as a leading provider of hospitality and culinary education in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 5.4 Certificate in Creativity and Digital Media and Design Exhibition** On June 25 the Certificate in Creativity and Digital Media and Design Ākonga held their end of Semester exhibition. This event was a chance for our learners to share their work with whanau, friends and fellow students. The standard of learner work was very high and for many this was the first time they had publicly shown their work.
- 5.5 Ara Music Tutor on RNZ** Michael Story a Tutor in Jazz School, was interviewed on RNZ on the topic of learning a musical instrument. [Expert Feature: How hard is it to learn an instrument? | RNZ](#).

6 Media and Communications

6.1 Media engagement and coverage

Media sentiment in June was mostly positive due to strong proactive media outreach and extensive coverage of Ara's zero-fee offerings and student success stories across industry and regional titles. The media mention count was high because of the bomb threat resulting in the closure of all campuses

- Media mentions 42
- Media releases issued 1
- Proactive media contacts 8
- Total media engagements 22

Coverage highlights:

- **The Press:** [Ara lures new students with free courses: Christchurch disability theatre company prepares for global stage](#)
- **Chris Lynch:** [Ellouise Day crowned Waitaha Young Chef of the Year](#)
- **RNZ and NewstalkZB:** [zero-fee pathway courses interviews](#).

6.2 Storytelling and Content

a Website

Twelve website stories were published. Content continues to be developed with both external reputation and internal pride in mind, in direct service of the Strategic Business Priority 5 programme.

- [Finding strength through connection: Jamie Ogilvy's research into mana wāhine and weightlifting](#) (194 views)
- [Talofa lava: Ara celebrates Vaiaso o le Gagana Samoa](#) (251)
- [Ara's NASDA welcomes rising Kiwi director for Beauty and the Beast](#) (852)
- [Young pâtissier back for second helping in Ara's Young Chef competition](#) (191)
- [SPACPAC careers expo returns to Ara](#) (190)
- [Rising talent shines at Ara's Waitaha Young Chef Competition](#) (744)
- [Ara ākonga celebrate the power of volunteering](#) (434)
- [Ara researcher takes disability theatre work to global platforms](#) (52)

- [Bomb threat](#) (4,162)
- [Zero fee offerings pique mid-year interest at Ara](#) (768)
- [Dr Jacqueline Martin: The importance of reclaiming the whakapapa of midwifery](#) (46)
- [The ultimate team challenge – Ara hosts ArchEngBuild 2026](#) (22)

b LinkedIn

LinkedIn engagement remained strong, with followers increasing to 18,067 (up 259 over 30 days). Total impressions for the month were high, notably reaching over 8,000 in a single week during the Young Chef competition coverage.

6.3 Internal Communications

Waituhi engagement remained solid throughout June, ranging from around 945 to 982 unique viewers and 31,000–42,000 hub visits per week. Key internal content included creating the Whiria te Muka Tangata page, bomb threat messaging, Holidays Act remediation messaging, the SIT transition story, and our regular three-weekly Ara Pānui (1,400 recipients) and Te Tumu Pānui (leaders' email – 161 recipients). Work continues on Waituhi (intranet) tidy-up and maintenance, and a Waituhi training refresh was delivered for editors and champions with 12 attendees. Ara Update (all-staff update) was delivered at Manawa campus for the first time with 109 attendees online and 35 in person.

6.4 Visual highlights



Members of Different Light Theatre in rehearsal ahead of their performance at the World Congress of the International Federation for Theatre Research.



Chief Executive Darren Mitchell (right) playing suipi during Ara's Vaiaso o le Gagana Samoa celebrations.



A winning dish from the Ara Waitaha Young Chef competition, created by graduate Ellouise Day.



Chefs in action during the Ara Waitaha Young Chef competition.



Bachelor of Applied Management ākonga enjoying the warmth of a Coolpak welcome and tour.



Certificate in Creativity ākonga present their mahi at the mid-year exhibition.

Ara Council 3 August 2026	Agenda Item 2.1a		
	Decision item	Discussion Item	Information Item
PUBLIC	Presented by		D Mitchell

ARA COUNCIL REPORT SUMMARY	
TITLE OF REPORT	2025 Educational Performance Indicator Sector Data: Public Release and Ara Performance Summary
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE	- Provides Council with a high-level view of the publicly released 2025 EPI sector data, as at 15 July 2026. - Celebrates Ara's positive performance story and identifies areas where further improvement is required. - Supports Council oversight of learner outcomes, equity, and organisational performance.
RECOMMENDATION(S)	That the Ara Council Receive the information paper, 2025 Educational Performance Indicator Sector Data: Public Release and Ara Performance Summary. Note Ara's areas of strength and positive sector performance in the released 2025 EPI data; and Note the continuing focus on equity, retention, progression, and completion outcomes.
LINK TO ARA STRATEGY	The paper aligns with Ara's Vision 2030, Investment Plan 2027-2029, Learner Success direction, Māori Success, Pacific Success, and Disability Action Plan.
KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED	Ara's 2025 results provide a strong performance story and reflect sustained mahi across faculties, learner support, and enabling teams. - The public EPI data provides an opportunity to recognise sector strengths while maintaining a clear improvement focus. - Priority areas remain where equity gaps persist, or where learner progression, retention, and completion outcomes require further lift. - The attached paper keeps the analysis at a Council governance level and includes dashboard snapshots to make the performance story visible.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	There are no direct financial implications from receiving this information paper. The results inform performance monitoring, Investment Plan delivery, funding confidence, and future focus areas for learner success effort.

RISK IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	The key risk is reputational and performance related. Ara must continue to demonstrate strong outcomes for all learners, with particular attention to equity of achievement for Māori, Pacific, disabled learners, and other priority groups.
RATIONALE FOR EXCLUDING PUBLIC	Not applicable. This is a public information item and the underlying 2025 EPI sector data has now been publicly released.

Ara Council Information Paper

2025 Educational Performance Indicators - Sector Benchmarking and Equity Insights

Data as at 15 July 2026 | TEC data publicly released

To	Ara Council
From	Director, Strategy, Planning and Performance
Date	3 August 2026
Purpose	For information and discussion
Confidentiality	Internal - based on publicly released TEC data
Recommendation	That Council notes Ara' s 2025 EPI sector benchmarking results, including areas of strength and areas for continued improvement.

1. Purpose

This paper provides Council with a high-level summary of Ara' s position in the 2025 Educational Performance Indicator (EPI) sector data, released by TEC and now publicly available. It celebrates Ara' s areas of strength and identifies the main areas where further focus is required.

2. High-level message for Council

The 2025 data tells a positive story for Ara. Ara is performing strongly in the indicators that show learners are staying engaged, succeeding in courses, and progressing. This is particularly evident in SAC-funded provision and in outcomes for Māori learners.

- **Ara' s strongest results:** first-year retention, course completion, and progression.
- **Equity success to celebrate:** Māori learner outcomes are sector-leading in the SAC-funded view for first-year retention and course completion.
- **Improvement focus:** qualification completion remains the clearest area requiring sustained management attention.
- **Next step:** use the data to sharpen portfolio, learner success, and completion-focused interventions without losing the positive gains already evident.

3. What the data shows

Area	Council-level interpretation
Overall ITP sector	Ara is strongly placed for first-year retention, course completion and progression. Qualification completion is comparatively lower.
SAC-funded provision	Ara' s relative position strengthens. Retention and progression are standout results, and course completion is strong.
Māori learners	This is a key success story. Ara is sector-leading for Māori first-year retention and Māori course completion in the SAC-funded view.

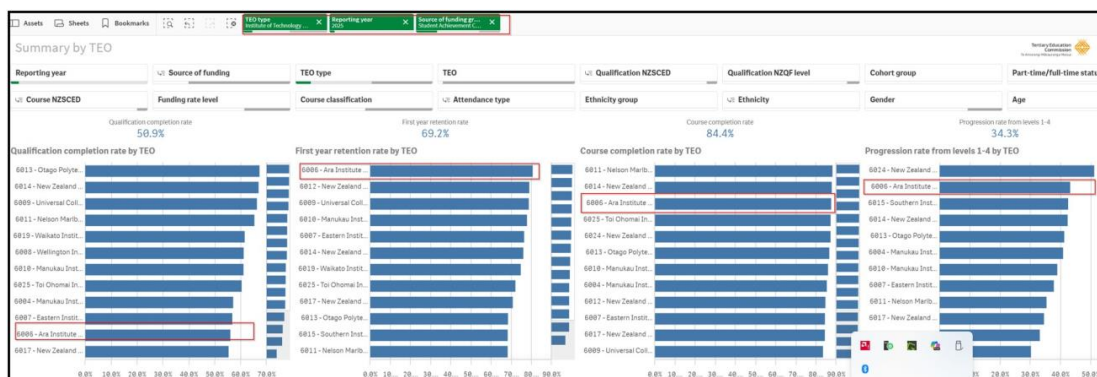
Pacific learners	Retention is positive. Course completion, progression and qualification completion require more targeted focus by programme and cohort.
Non-Māori/non-Pacific learners	The same overall pattern is visible: strong retention/course success, with qualification completion requiring attention.

4. Sector position - current year view

Ara's current-year position is positive overall. The snapshots below show strong learner retention and course-level success, with qualification completion standing out as the main area to lift.



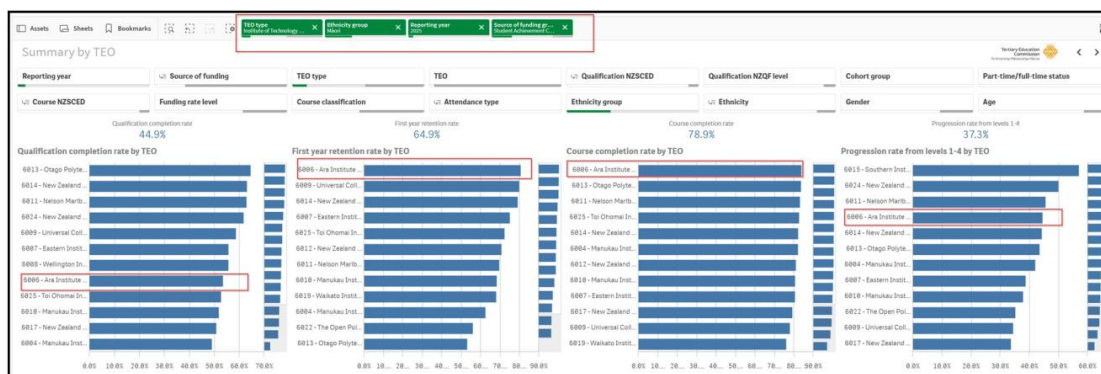
Overall ITP sector position - 2025



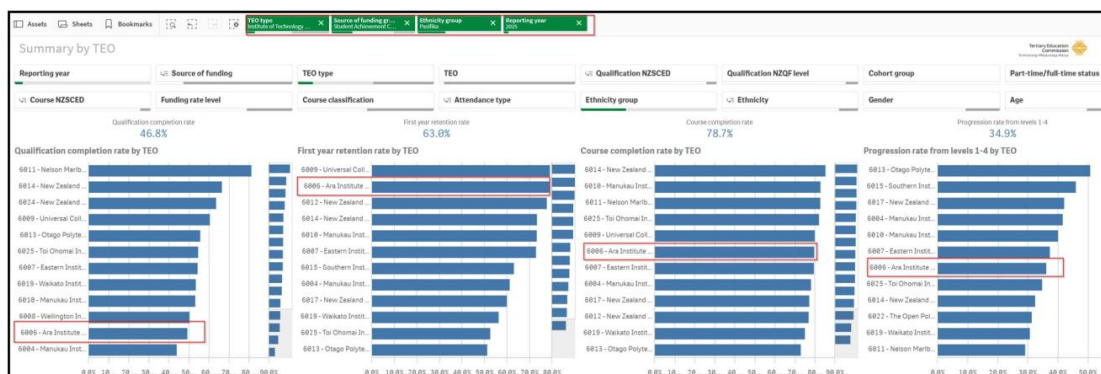
SAC-funded ITP provision - 2025

5. Equity outcomes

The equity view provides an important success story. Māori learner outcomes are particularly strong, while Pacific learner outcomes indicate the need to convert positive retention into stronger completion and progression outcomes.



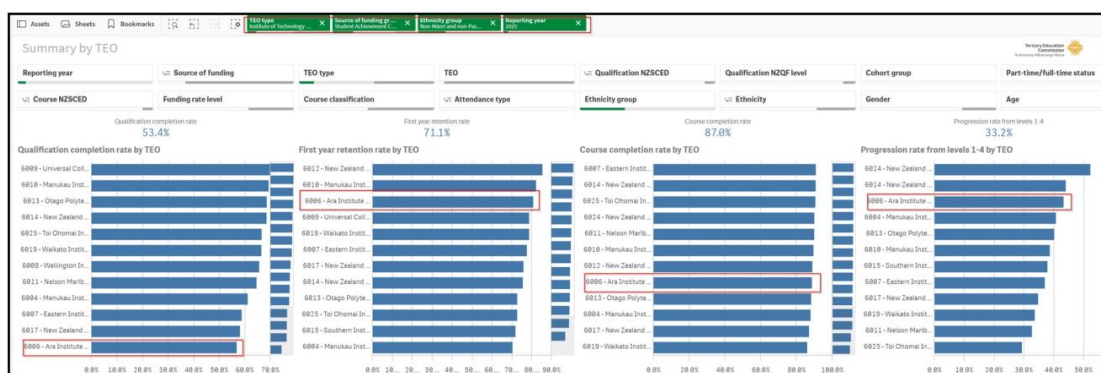
Māori learners, SAC-funded ITP provision - 2025



Pacific learners, SAC-funded ITP provision - 2025

6. Portfolio-wide pattern

The same broad pattern is visible in the non-Māori/non-Pacific view, which indicates that the qualification completion issue is not confined to one learner group. The improvement response should therefore be portfolio-wide, with additional targeted actions where equity gaps remain.



Non-Māori/non-Pacific learners, SAC-funded ITP provision - 2025

7. Areas for improvement

- **Qualification completion:** investigate where learners are completing courses but not completing qualifications, including programme structure, part-time patterns, withdrawals, credit recognition and learner intent.
- **Pacific learner success:** strengthen progression and completion supports, especially in programmes where retention is not yet translating into successful completion.
- **Programme-level diagnostics:** use the public sector data alongside Ara' s internal learner success dashboards to identify programmes where completion rates can be lifted.
- **Sustaining what works:** protect the practice, engagement and support models that are contributing to strong retention, Māori outcomes and course completion.

8. Management response

Focus	Action
Celebrate and embed success	Recognise strong retention, progression, course completion and Māori learner outcomes. Share practice across faculties.
Complete targeted analysis	Validate the qualification completion pattern by faculty, programme, level, cohort and study mode.
Act through existing work programmes	Connect findings to learner success planning, portfolio review, timetable and attendance work, and 2027 planning.
Report through governance	Provide Council with future updates through existing performance, learner success and Investment Plan reporting.

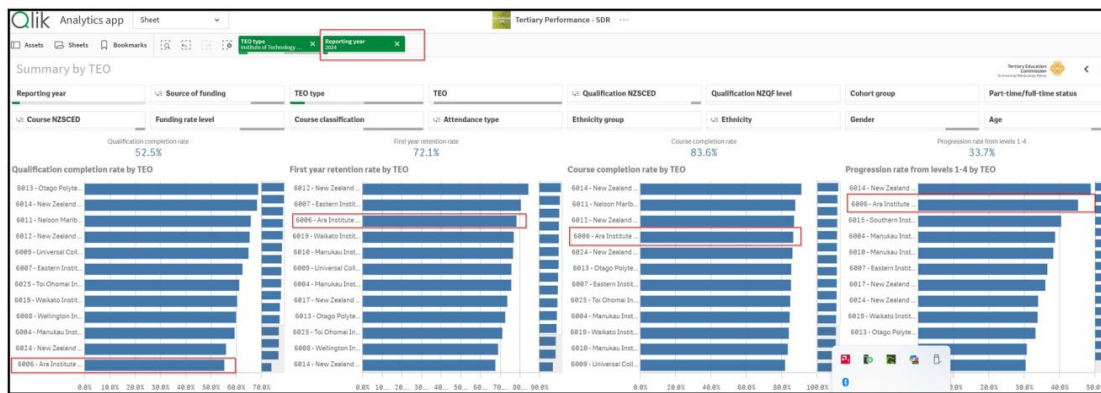
9. Conclusion

Ara can take confidence from the 2025 EPI sector data. The results show an organisation that is retaining learners, supporting course success, and achieving strong outcomes for Māori learners. The clearest improvement agenda is to strengthen qualification completion and lift Pacific learner progression and completion.

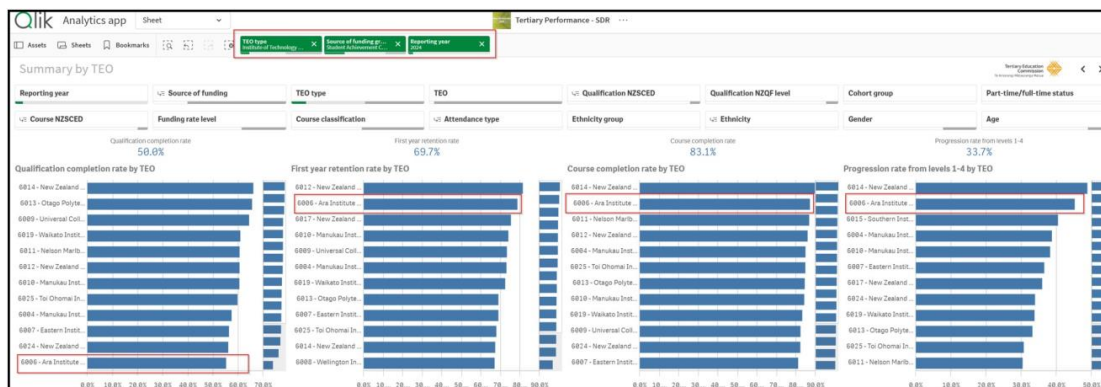
Appendix: 2024 comparator views

The following comparator views are included to support Council' s understanding of the 2025 position in context.

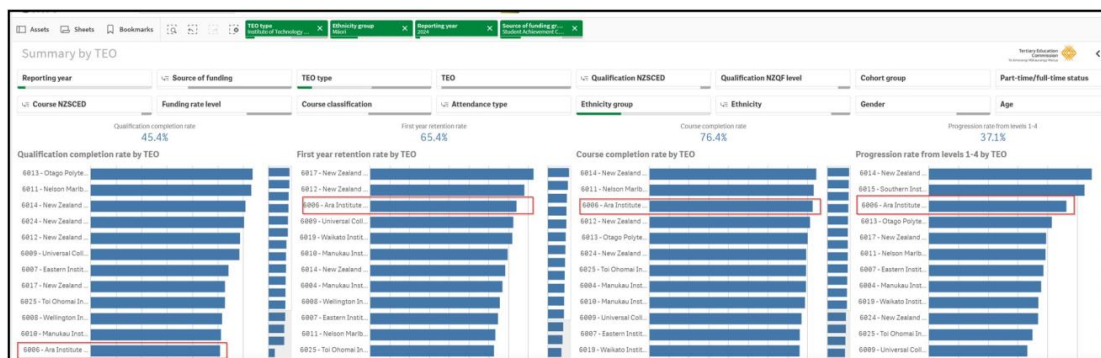
Ara Council July [Aug 3] - Public - 2) Chief Executive Report



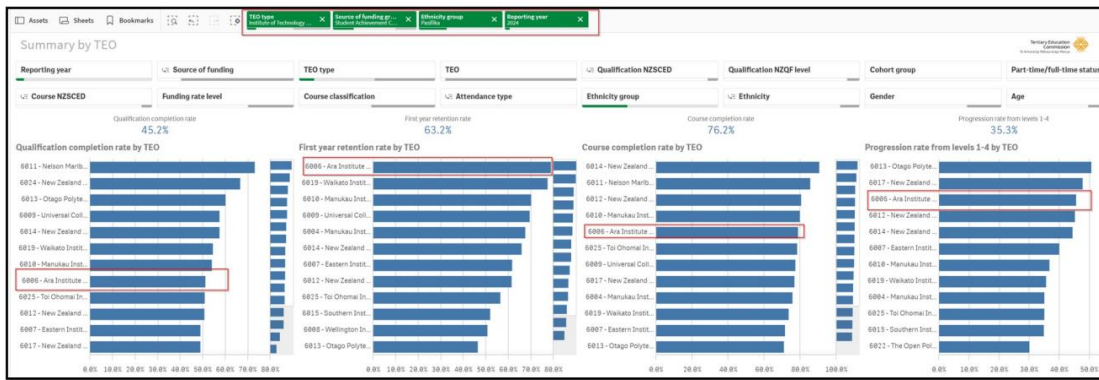
Overall ITP sector position - 2024 comparator



SAC-funded ITP provision - 2024 comparator



Māori learners, SAC-funded ITP provision - 2024 comparator



Pacific learners, SAC-funded ITP provision - 2024 comparator



Non-Māori/non-Pacific learners, SAC-funded ITP provision - 2024 comparator

Ara Council 3 August 2026	Agenda Item			2.2f
	Decision item	Discussion Item	Information Item	
PUBLIC	Presented by			D Mitchell

ARA COUNCIL REPORT SUMMARY	
TITLE OF REPORT	Te Kāhui Arataki – Leadership Development Programme
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE	To provide the Council with an overview of the new leadership development programme for Level 300 Faculty and Business Support Leaders at Ara.
RECOMMENDATION(S)	That the Ara Council Note the summary of Ara’s new leadership development programme, Te Kāhui Arataki (TKA) and its’ strategic investment into Ara’s future leadership capability, culture, and organisational resilience.
LINK TO ARA STRATEGY	By strengthening this cohort, Ara is building the leadership capability, consistency and culture required to support organisational change, deliver strategic priorities, and improve outcomes for kaimahi and ākonga.
LINK TO TERTIARY EDUCATION STRATEGY	Economic Impact and Innovation – educating a flexible workforce
KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED	Not applicable.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	Nil.
RISK IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	Without deliberate investment in this leadership cohort, Ara risks inconsistent leadership practice, fragmented decision-making, continued organisational silos, increased escalation of operational issues, and reduced capacity to lead teams effectively through change.
RATIONALE FOR EXCLUDING PUBLIC	N/A



Te Kāhui Arataki Leadership Development Programme

1 Background

- 1.1** Te Kāhui Arataki (TKA) is Ara's new leadership development programme, designed to strengthen organisational performance by building the leadership capability of 48 of our L300 faculty and business support leaders. The programme was launched on 14 July 2026 and is a strategic investment in Ara's future leadership capability, culture, and organisational resilience.
- 1.2** The programme is expected to contribute to:
- stronger leadership confidence and effectiveness
 - improved team engagement and performance
 - greater collaboration across faculties and business divisions
 - earlier resolution of issues
 - enhanced organisational capability to deliver strategic priorities and improve outcomes for kaimahi and ākonga.
- 1.3** Te Kāhui Arataki represents a targeted investment in the leadership layer that most directly connects Ara's strategic intent with everyday operational delivery. By strengthening this cohort, Ara is building the leadership capability, consistency and culture required to support organisational change, deliver strategic priorities, and improve outcomes for kaimahi and ākonga.

2 Discussion

- 2.1 Why are we doing it?**
- a This level of leadership sits between strategic intent and operational delivery. Our L300 leaders have direct influence on organisational performance, team culture, ākonga outcomes and the successful delivery of Ara's strategic priorities. The programme comes at a critical time as Ara continues to navigate significant organisational change and focuses on delivering key strategic priorities, including Vision 2030 and our return to independence.
 - b The programme also builds on the foundation established through Kāhui Manukura by developing a key leadership cohort responsible for translating strategy into practice. In the context of ongoing organisational change, strengthening this layer is critical to achieving greater consistency in leadership, improving cross-organisational collaboration, and ultimately lifting outcomes for kaimahi and ākonga.
 - c Without deliberate investment in this leadership cohort, Ara risks inconsistent leadership practice, fragmented decision-making, continued



organisational silos, increased escalation of operational issues, and reduced capacity to lead teams effectively through change. Strengthening L300 leadership capability is therefore not only a development opportunity, but an important risk mitigation strategy that supports organisational stability, culture and performance.

2.2 What is the approach?

- a Te Kāhui Arataki combines leadership development with practical application in the workplace. Learning is grounded in real-world Ara leadership scenarios and challenges, enabling participants to apply new insights directly to their roles. The programme is built around five integrated learning methods:
 - vertical development through the My World View leadership profile
 - facilitated wānanga (workshops)
 - cross-functional peer learning trios
 - individual reflection and journalling
 - coaching conversations between participants and their TKM leader.
- b The programme is intentionally designed to break down organisational silos, strengthen collaboration, and build a shared leadership culture across Ara. Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Ara's values of Hono, Hihiri and Aroha are woven throughout the programme design and expected leadership practice.

2.3 Timeframe

- a This is a 12-month leadership development experience concluding in July 2027. Evaluation and reporting will occur throughout the programme, with a final evaluation report scheduled for August 2027.

2.4 How impact will be measured

- a The impact of Te Kāhui Arataki will be evaluated throughout the 12-month programme and reported following completion. Evaluation will consider both participant development and the extent to which learning is influencing leadership practice, collaboration, and organisational outcomes. This will include attendance and engagement, participant reflection, feedback from peer learning trios, coaching conversations with TKM leaders, and evidence of how learning is being applied in real workplace contexts.
- b Over time, the programme is expected to contribute to improved leadership consistency, stronger cross-organisational collaboration, more effective decision-making, earlier resolution of issues, and improved support for kaimahi and ākonga.

2.5 Who is delivering the programme?

- a The programme is co-facilitated by an external leadership consultant in collaboration with the Manager, Capability and the Project Manager, Transformation and Transition.



3 Recommendation

- 3.1 **That the Ara Council note** the summary of Ara’s new leadership development programme, Te Kāhui Arataki (TKA) and its’ strategic investment into Ara’s future leadership capability, culture, and organisational resilience.

Ara Council 3 August 2026	Agenda Item 3.2		
	Decision item	Discussion Item	Information Item
PUBLIC	Presented by		D Mitchell

ARA COUNCIL REPORT SUMMARY	
TITLE OF REPORT	Academic Committee Report (Open) – Quarter 2
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE	To provide Council with a summary of the matters discussed by the Academic Committee on the agenda of its meetings taking place in quarter two of 2026. Meeting dates included: • 26 March 2026 • 7 May 2026 • 25 May 2026 (Electronic Vote) • 16 June 2026 • 25 June 2026 (Electronic Vote) • 1 July 2026 (Electronic Vote)
RECOMMENDATION(S)	That the Ara Council 1. Receive the report and; 2. Note the sub-delegations exercised and that the Academic Committee approved the following: i. Two new academic policies • APP204 Faculty Board of Studies Terms of Reference • APP205 Faculty Research Group Terms of Reference ii. Changes to two existing policies • APP507 Recognising Prior Knowledge and Skills • APP801 Rangahau Research and Postgraduate Committee Terms of Reference iii. One new product • MC5027 Hangarau Matihiko: Advanced Digital Design, Programming and Reflective Analysis.
LINK TO ARA STRATEGY	From Vision 2030: • Ensure Academic Excellence • Support Learner Success • Advance Research and Development • Foster Innovation
LINK TO TERTIARY EDUCATION STRATEGY	• Academic Achievement • Economic Impact and Innovation • Access and Participation • Integration and Collaboration

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED	Nil
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	Nil
RISK IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	No new or emerging risks.



Academic Committee Report for Quarter Two

1 Sub-delegations exercised

1.1 Courses/programmes of study

- a **MC5027 Hangarau Matihiko: Advanced Digital Design, Programming and Reflective Analysis** The approval minute of MC5027 Hangarau Matihiko: Advanced Digital Design, Programming and Reflective Analysis was received.
- b This micro-credential is currently approved through NZIST. In 2025, Ara was the delivery vehicle for this micro-credential delivered by Te Pūkenga to a cohort of secondary school IT teachers.
- c As Ara is no longer part of NZIST / Te Pūkenga, Ara is now seeking its own approval for this micro credential so that it may be delivered independently in the future.

1.2 Academic Policies

a **APP204 Faculty Board of Studies Terms of Reference**

This new Terms of Reference establishes the Faculty Board of Studies as a faculty-level forum to provide academic oversight of programme and curriculum matters, including quality, development, review, and continuous improvement. It supports consistent academic decision-making and strengthens faculty input into the academic governance framework.

b **APP507 Recognising Prior Knowledge and Skills**

The Committee received a memo from the Portfolio and Assurance Committee recommending an amendment to APP507 Recognising Prior Knowledge and Skills. The proposed amendment introduces a limit on the age of credits that may be used for cross-crediting, aligned with the maximum programme completion timeframe.

A further suggestion was to allow variations to the policy to be approved by the Director – Ako Excellence. The Committee approved these amendments.

c **APP801 Rangahau Research and Postgraduate Committee Terms of Reference**

The updated Terms of Reference clarifies the Committee's role in providing oversight of research and postgraduate matters, including research quality, postgraduate activity, and the development of a coherent institutional research culture. It supports coordination, advice, and assurance across Ara's research and postgraduate portfolio.

d **APP205 Faculty Research Group Terms of Reference**

This new Terms of Reference establishes the Faculty Research Group as a faculty-level forum to support research activity, capability development, and engagement within faculties. It complements the Faculty Board of Studies by providing a structured mechanism for promoting research culture, sharing good practice, and supporting research-related priorities.



The Faculty Research Group Chairs also sit on the Rangahau Research and Postgraduate Committee, supporting alignment between faculty-level research activity and Ara's broader research and postgraduate oversight.

2 Key Risks

There are no new or emerging risks.

3 Other Matters

3.1 Subcommittee Reports

a Portfolio and Assurance Committee

The Committee received reports from the Portfolio and Assurance Committee, which noted NZQA consistency review and external moderation outcomes. The Committee also noted that the Portfolio and Assurance Committee had received an update from the Portfolio Manager regarding progress towards the action plan resulting from the Built Environments Portfolio audit.

b Learning and Teaching Committee

The Committee received reports from the Learning and Teaching Committee. Teaching practice was discussed, with peer observation noted as a valuable tool for professional development.

4 Recommendation

That the Ara Council

- 1) **Receive** the report and;
- 2) **Note the sub-delegations exercised** and that the Academic Committee approved the following:
 - i. **Two new academic policies**
 - APP204 Faculty Board of Studies Terms of Reference
 - APP205 Faculty Research Group Terms of Reference
 - ii. **Changes to two existing policies**
 - APP507 Recognising Prior Knowledge and Skills
 - APP801 Rangahau Research and Postgraduate Committee Terms of Reference
 - iii. **One new product** MC5027 Hangarau Matihiko: Advanced Digital Design, Programming and Reflective Analysis.

Ara Council Meeting Schedule - Work Programme 2026

as at 3 August 2026

Month		Topics	Notified Non-availability
February	4	Induction and Strategy Day	
	18	Ara Whakatau Semester One – Woolston	
	19	Academic Committee	
	24	Council Meeting (Christchurch)	
March	4	Ara Whakatau Semester One – City	
	5	Audit and Risk Committee	
	11	Ara Whakatau Semester One – Timaru	
	13	Autumn Graduation (Christchurch)	
	18	Ara Whakatau Semester One – Manawa	
	24	Council Meeting (Christchurch) - Quarterly TKM Reports - Health and Safety Walkabout - Academic Committee Quarterly Report	
	26	Academic Committee	
April	28	Council Meeting [Christchurch] STRATEGY TOPIC	CE 8/4 to 27/4
	30	Timaru Graduation	
May	7	Academic Committee	Chair 28/5 to 20/6
	26	Council Meeting (Timaru) - Report on Affixing of Common Seal - Campus Tour and Health and Safety Walkabout [Timaru]	
June	3	Audit and Risk Committee	Chair 28/5 to 20/6
	18	Academic Committee	
	23	Council Meeting (Woolston) - Draft Investment Plan 2027-2029 - Quarterly TKM Reports - Fee Setting - Health and Safety Walkabout	
July	22	Ara Whakatau Semester Two – City	
	23	Academic Committee	
	29	Ara Whakatau Semester Two – Timaru	
August	3	Rescheduled July Council Meeting [Christchurch] Academic Committee Quarterly Report	
	11	Ara Whakatau Semester Two – Woolston	
	12	Ara Whakatau Semester Two – Manawa	
	25	Council Meeting (Christchurch) STRATEGY TOPIC	
	27	Academic Committee	

September	2	Audit and Risk Committee	
	17	Spring Graduation (Christchurch)	
	22	Council Meeting (Christchurch) • 2027 Budget Sign Off • Quarterly TKM Reports • Ōtautahi House Site Visit / Health and Safety Walkabout	
October	15	Academic Committee	
	27	Audit and Risk Committee • Annual Report 2025 – content/format	
November	19	Academic Committee	
	24	Council Meeting (Christchurch) • Planning 2027 • Report on Affixing of Common Seal • Academic Committee Quarterly Report	
	24	Remuneration Committee	
December	8	Council Meeting (Christchurch) (if required)	

Ara Council meeting timings

8.30am – 9.00am Council only time

9.00am – 12pm Council meeting

Ara Council and Committee meeting venues

Christchurch – Room G202, Council Room, Te Kei, Christchurch City Campus

Timaru – Room TA210, Board Room, Timaru Campus

Woolston – Room V140, Board Room, Woolston Campus

Waitangi Day – Observed Friday 6 February
 Otago Anniversary – Mon 23 March (Oamaru campus closed)
 Good Friday – Fri 3 April
 Easter Monday – Mon 6 April
 Easter Tuesday – Tues 7 April
 ANZAC Day observance – Observed Mon 27 April
 King's Birthday – Mon 1 June
 Matariki – Friday 10 July
 South Canterbury Anniversary Day (Timaru campus closed) – Mon 28 September
 Labour Day – Mon 26 October
 Canterbury Anniversary/Show Day (Christchurch campuses closed) – Fri 13 November

Note: 2027 Proposed Meeting Dates for the Ara Council: Tuesdays 9-12 [Council only time 8.30-9am]

23 Feb

23 March

27 April – noting ANZAC Day is 26 April

25 May

22 June

27 July

24 August

28 September

26 October – noting 25 October is Labour Day

23 November

7 December [if required]