# Ara Institute of Canterbury Council

## AGENDA

**Tuesday 24 November 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]**<br>Meeting held 22 September 2026<br>a) Approval of minutes<br>b) Matters arising<br>c) Action List |
| | **1.4 Correspondence** |
| **2) For Discussion** | **MONTHLY REPORT**<br>**2.1 Chief Executive**<br>a) Ara Performance Summary<br>b) Financial Performance Summary<br>c) Safety, Health and Wellbeing<br>d) Highlights and Achievements<br>e) Media and Communications |
| **3) For Information** | **MONTHLY REPORTS**<br>**3.1 Chair** [Verbal]<br>**OTHER**<br>**3.2 Pacific Success and Māori Success – Quarterly Reports**<br>**3.3 Common Seal Report**<br>**Subcommittees**<br>**3.4 Audit and Risk Committee [27 October 2026]**<br>**3.5 Academic Committee – Quarterly Report** |
| **4) For Information** | **STANDING ITEMS**<br>**4.1 2026 Council Work Programme**<br>**4.2 2027 Council Work Programme [Draft]** |
| **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<br>Meeting held 22 September 2026<br>a) Approval of minutes<br>b) Matters arising<br>c) Action List<br>**6.2 Flying Minutes [for noting]** – Public Excluded<br>**6.3 Correspondence** – Public Excluded | [s9(2) (f), (i), (j)] |
| **7) For Discussion** | **7.1 Chief Executive Report –** Summary<br>a) China Update<br>b) Financial Performance and Reforecast 2026<br>c) Safety, Health and Wellbeing | [s9(2) (f), (i), (j)] |
| **8) TKM Session 9.45 -10.30am** | **8.1 Presentations** – Deans, Faculty of Applied Technology, Faculty of Culture and Services and Faculty of Health, Science and Sustainability. | [s9(2) (f), (i), (j)] |
| **9) For Decision** | **9.1 Budget 2027**<br>**9.2 Annual Report - 2026 Draft Financial Policies and Statements** | [s9(2) (f), (i), (j)] |
| **10) For Information** | **10.1 Chair Monthly Report** [Verbal]<br>**10.2 Risk Register**<br>**Subcommittees**<br>**10.3 Audit and Risk Committee [27 October 2026]**<br>**10.4 Academic Committee – Quarterly Report** | [s9(2) (f), (i), (j)] |
| **11) 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 24 November 2026

## Ara Council Members

| | |
|---|---|
| **Hugh Lindo [Chair]** | • Simpson Grierson [Partner] |
| **Michael Rondel [Deputy Chair]** | • Christchurch City Holdings Ltd [Director]<br>• Environment Canterbury [Independent Chair, Audit and Risk Committee]<br>• Comcare Charitable Trust [Trustee]<br>• Golf New Zealand Inc [Director/Chair]<br>• 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]<br>• Food and Fibre PTE Interim Board [Board Member]<br>• South Canterbury Kindergarten Association [Board Chair]<br>• NZ Kindergarten Association [Board Member] |

## Ara Council Officers

| | |
|---|---|
| **Darren Mitchell Chief Executive** | • Ara Foundation [Trustee]<br>• Ōtautahi Education Development Trust [Trustee]<br>• RR Turnbull Family Trust [Trustee]<br>• WorldSkills NZ [Trustee]<br>• CAANZ [Member] |
| **Christina Yeates Council Secretary** | Nil |

**Ara Council Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday 22 September 2026 – 9.20am**
**Ara Council Room, City Campus**

These are the **minutes** of the meeting of the Ara Council held on 22 September 2026 in the Ara Council Room, City 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.

**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.

b) Noting any revisions to the register should be notified to the Council Secretary and that Andrea Leslie had notified one addition and one change via email - Andrea is now Board Chair of the South Canterbury Kindergarten Association and a Board member of the NZ Kindergarten Association. The Interests Register will be updated.

### 1.3. Confirmation of Council Minutes [Public] – 3 August 2026

Res#34/220926

Council were pleased to note that Rick Hellings was able to attend the Ara Spring Graduation Ceremony.

*It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting of the Ara Council held on 3 August 2026, be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of the meeting.*
*H Lindo/M Rondel*
*CARRIED*

a) **Matters Arising** Nil raised.

b) **Action List** There are no outstanding actions.

### 1.4. Correspondence

a) Council acknowledged receipt of the introductory letter from the new NZQA Chief Executive, Christian Hawkesby dated 17 September 2026.

b) Council and the Ara Chief Executive wished to acknowledge the recent passing of Grant Klinkum, former Chief Executive, NZQA and note his significant contributions to the sector over the years.

c) It was further noted there are a number of NZQA working groups in train with Ara.

## 2. FOR DISCUSSION – Monthly Report

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

a) **Health and Safety**
- The ongoing review and refresh of the Critical Incident Management Plan and the strong performance during the most recent incident management response was noted.
- Council were advised that preparation is underway for the anticipated legislative changes and as a result, structure will be in place to meet the needs of the Health and Safety at Work Amendment Act 2026 and the Employment Leave Act 2026 before implementation in 2027 and 2028 respectively.
- The increased participation in health and safety reporting and the work being undertaken to improve reporting was noted and well received.
- Furthermore, a positive organisational safety culture has been evidenced and noted by Council on recent campus tours.

b) **Holidays Act Remediation** work continues for former employees and Management provided assurance regarding legislative compliance and controls.

c) **EFTS position** remains stable. Council agreed the need for purposeful recruitment activity to secure funding and support future sustainability.

d) **Additional degree-level funding** for 2027 was discussed and Council were advised it is hoped this additional funding will continue, reflecting Ara performance and alignment with TEC priorities, particularly in health-related programmes.

e) The **pathway development between Ara and the University of Canterbury** is progressing, initially focused on engineering programmes and learner transitions. Further opportunities in other programme domains are being explored. Council agreed with a collaborative rather than competitive approach.

Res#35/220926

*It was **resolved** that the Chief Executive's report be **received** and contents **noted**.*
*H Lindo/M Rondel*
*CARRIED*

### 2.2. Te Kāhui Manukura [TKM] Quarterly Reports

The reports were taken as read. Discussion:

a) **Faculty Reports** – Council Council noted the positive outcome for nursing graduates with success rates of approximately 98%, being above the national average.

b) Further improvement is required in report consistency and performance tracking. Council are keen to see enhanced faculty performance reporting, with better integration of financial and performance commentary. Action #26 Chief Executive

c) It was agreed that the Faculty Deans will present directly to Council at the November meeting, with a focus on finance and academic performance. Action #27 Chief Executive

## 3. FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION – Monthly Report

**3.1. Chair** – provided the following verbal update:

a) Discussions are continuing regarding Audit New Zealand audit pricing.
b) The Chair of the Federation, Charles Finney attended the recent ITP Chairs meeting and development of the ITP Federation model continues. Also in attendance was Andy Jackson, Deputy Secretary Policy, Ministry of Education.
c) Governance structures for collaborative ITP activity are progressing.

### 3.2. Audit and Risk Committee

Council noted the draft public Audit and Risk Committee meeting minutes of 2 September 2026.

## 4. FOR INFORMATION – STANDING ITEMS

### 4.1. 2026 Council Work Programme

a) **Tertiary Education Commission [TEC] Engagement** - It was agreed to defer the planned TEC attendance at the November 2026 Council meeting as the agenda is budget-focused and largely public excluded. TEC are to be invited to the March 2027 meeting instead to discuss 2026 outcomes and the draft Annual Report. Action#28 Council Secretary

b) An overview of the Eke Panuku Māori and Pacific Achievement Awards to be held later this year was provided to Council.

## 5. GENERAL BUSINESS – Nil.

**Closure**

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the public section of the meeting closed at 10.15am.

Note: 10.15am to 10.45am: Council tour of Ōtautahi House, Ara Student Accommodation facility.

DRAFT

| Action Number | Date When Action Arose | Agenda Item | Topic | Action | Board Responsibility | Status | Due Meeting Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26 and 27 | 22 Sept 26 | 2.2b and 2.2c | Faculty Performance | Enhanced faculty performance dashboards to be produced<br>Faculty Deans to present at the November Council meeting – focus on academic, financials, accountability and performance | Chief Executive | In progress | Nov 24 |
| 28 | 22 Sept 26 | 4.1a | Council Work Programme | TEC to be invited to the March 2027 Council meeting | Council Secretary | Completed | Nov 24 |

DRAFT

| Ara Council<br>24 November 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 Council with an overview of significant matters, activities, decisions, stakeholder engagements and emerging issues that have occupied the Chief Executive during the reporting period, and which are relevant to Council's governance oversight responsibilities. |
| RECOMMENDATION(S) | That the Ara Council<br>1. **Receives** the Chief Executive's update; and<br>2. **Notes** the significant institutional activities, developments and highlights during the reporting period. |
| LINK TO ARA STRATEGY | • Seven Strategic Business Priorities<br>• Vision 2030 |
| KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED | • Nil. |
| FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA | • Ara remains in a strong financial position, with a year-to-date surplus of $11.7m. |
| RISK IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA | • EFTS are expected to change only minimally during the remainder of the year, and significant movements in income are therefore unlikely. |

# Chief Executive's Report

## Public Meeting

## Overview

The past two months have been a busy and productive period for Ara, with our attention increasingly shifting from completing 2026 strongly to ensuring that the organisation is well positioned for 2027 and the next phase of our longer-term development.

Ara continues to operate from a sound overall position. As at 10 November, 97% of the 2026 EFTS budget had been enrolled. Year-to-date revenue was $123.0 million and EBITDA was $10.3 million, $2.7 million ahead of budget. The year-to-date net surplus was $11.7 million, $2.5 million ahead of budget, with cash holdings of $91.2 million.

A particularly significant development during the reporting period was confirmation that the TEC Board had approved a three-year Investment Plan for Ara. Initial confirmation was received on 25 September, following the TEC Board's investment-round decisions, with formal written confirmation subsequently provided through TEC's Post Board Decisions correspondence on 5 October. This provides Ara with an important three-year planning horizon through 2027-2029 and greater certainty from which to progress our strategic direction.

Alongside the Investment Plan process, considerable work has been undertaken across Ara to develop the 2027 Budget for Council consideration and approval. This has required us to bring together our expected activity, operating requirements and strategic priorities and to make deliberate choices about the resources and organisational capability required for 2027.

The period also included a successful visit to China in October. In particular, the engagements with Liaoning University of Traditional Chinese Medicine (LNU) and Shaanxi Business College (SNBC) strengthened two important international relationships. At LNU, the visit provided an opportunity to review our longstanding joint nursing partnership and discuss its future development. At SNBC, direct engagement with the institution's leadership and facilities increased my confidence in the relationship and gave us a significantly better understanding of the steps required to progress the proposed collaboration.

More broadly, the focus is increasingly moving from strategy formation towards execution. We have a sound institutional platform, clearer strategic direction and improved planning certainty. The challenge ahead is to convert these into sustained improvements in educational performance, learner experience, responsiveness to industry and communities, organisational capability and productivity.

## 1. Learner success and equity

Work has continued to strengthen Ara's institutional approach to learner success and equity.

a) The Ara Equity and Akonga Success Strategy 2026-2029 reframes learner success as a whole-of-organisation responsibility rather than something residing primarily within individual learner-support functions. It focuses on equitable access; participation, engagement and belonging; responsive teaching and support; equitable outcomes; and learner wellbeing.
b) Importantly, this work is increasingly being connected to Ara's normal performance arrangements. Governance will have greater visibility of learner-success performance and equity gaps, while Te Kahui Manukura, faculties and service areas will be expected to translate that information into intervention, improvement and measurable outcomes.
c) One practical initiative being developed for 2027 is a whole-of-Ara digital readiness programme covering digital foundations, skills for study and AI literacy. The proposed approach recognises the considerable differences in digital confidence among learners and the potential for those differences to become barriers to participation and achievement.
d) There have also been positive developments in Pacific learner success. More than 90 learners have participated in the inaugural Pacific course within the Bachelor of Applied Science. Developed alongside Pacific communities and stakeholders, the course strengthens learners' understanding of Pacific histories, cultures, health perspectives, communication and relationships. Pacific Language Week activities have also attracted more than 1,000 learner and staff participants.

These initiatives are examples of the wider shift we are seeking: moving beyond participation alone and paying greater attention to the conditions that contribute to learner belonging, engagement, progression and successful outcomes.

## 2. Investment Plan and preparation for 2027

The approval of a three-year Investment Plan is a significant institutional milestone for Ara.

a) We received initial confirmation from TEC on 25 September that the TEC Board had approved a three-year Plan, with the formal Post Board Decisions correspondence following on 5 October.
b) The approved Plan provides a clearer planning horizon through 2027-2029 and an important framework within which Ara can progress its longer-term direction. The Investment Plan positions Ara as Canterbury's primary regional vocational education provider while recognising our wider national and international contribution.
c) At the same time, TEC's decisions reinforce the importance of maintaining our focus on educational performance. The funding decisions include expectations regarding improvement where qualification completion is below TEC's expectations, alongside specific requirements relating to aspects of nursing clinical placements and plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying provision.

The Investment Plan therefore provides greater certainty, but it also reinforces the importance of disciplined delivery and demonstrable educational outcomes.

## 3. 2027 Budget and organisational planning

Substantial work has also occurred during the period to develop Ara's 2027 Budget for Council consideration and approval.

a) The budget-setting process has required extensive engagement across the organisation to align expected learner activity, workforce and operational requirements, investment decisions and our strategic priorities.
b) Importantly, the work is not simply about establishing an annual financial budget. It forms part of the broader transition towards stronger execution in 2027, ensuring that Ara's priorities are supported by appropriate resources, organisational capacity and clear expectations about delivery.

## 4. Internationalisation and China partnerships

Internationalisation remains an important strategic priority for Ara, and one of the most significant external activities during the reporting period was my October visit to China, accompanied by Deborah Young and Andy Ge. The programme included engagements with LNU, SNBC and other institutions and provided the opportunity to assess existing and prospective partnerships directly.

### a) LNU

The visit to Liaoning University of Traditional Chinese Medicine (LNU) was particularly valuable. Ara's relationship with LNU has now been operating for approximately six years and remains an important component of our international activity.

During the visit we participated in the Joint Management Committee meeting, met university leadership and visited teaching facilities, including the nursing school's aged-care training facilities. We also visited LNU's affiliated hospital.

The discussions allowed us to consider both the operation and future of the existing joint nursing programme and opportunities to broaden the institutional relationship over time.

The visit reinforced the value of what has been built between the two institutions and the potential to develop the relationship further.

### b) SNBC

The visit to Shaanxi Business College (SNBC) in Xi'an on 19 October was also successful and represented an important further step in developing that relationship. It was reciprocal to the SNBC delegation's visit to Ara earlier in the year and allowed us to engage directly with SNBC's leadership, including its President, and to see first-hand the facilities, teaching environment and preparations being made to support potential collaboration with Ara.

Being on site was particularly valuable in developing a much stronger understanding of SNBC's operating environment and of the Chinese regulatory and approval processes that would apply to any future joint programme delivery. The visit also included engagement with SNBC industry partners, giving us further insight into the institution's connections with industry and its approach to applied learning.

The visit gave me increased confidence in the relationship and in the commitment being demonstrated by SNBC. Considerable work has continued since our return to develop the

documentation necessary to underpin the proposed collaboration. Any future delivery remains subject to the necessary agreements and regulatory approvals in both China and New Zealand.

More broadly, the trip reinforced for me the value of direct senior-level engagement with our international partners. Face-to-face engagement provides an opportunity not only to develop relationships but also to assess institutional capability, understand the regulatory environment and satisfy ourselves that prospective partnerships are strategically and academically appropriate for Ara.

## 5. Work-based and industry-connected learning

Work-based learning remains an important area of development for Ara.

a) Our Industry-Based Learning model is intended to establish clearer and more scalable arrangements between Ara, apprentices and employers. It creates greater clarity between the responsibilities of employers providing workplace training, academic staff providing teaching and formal assessment, and the IBL function coordinating employer relationships, apprentice progress and supporting evidence collection.
b) This development is important within the changing national environment for apprenticeships and work-based learning. Ara needs to remain responsive not simply to today's delivery requirements but also to emerging expectations around flexible, employer-connected and skills-focused vocational education.

Our direction is therefore to strengthen Ara's capability as both an education provider and a workforce-development partner, with stronger connections between programme design, teaching, employers and changing regional workforce requirements.

## 6. Research and innovation

October's Ara Research Week provided an opportunity to showcase research activity and strengthen Ara's research culture.

a) The programme ran across five lunchtime sessions and included researcher presentations, practical research-development sessions, a panel discussion and a Three-Minute Thesis competition.
b) Research capability remains important to Ara's degree-level provision and to maintaining the connection between teaching, industry practice and applied knowledge.
c) Ara researchers have also continued work in areas directly relevant to the future of vocational education, including the use of generative AI in teaching and learning.

Over time, I expect us to place greater emphasis on applied research that connects directly with our teaching, industry partnerships, innovation and regional contribution.

## 7. Safety, health, wellbeing and organisational resilience

Progress against Ara's Safety, Health and Wellbeing operational plan remains positive, with all four strategic priorities reported as on track.

a) Work is increasingly concentrating on strengthening operational ownership, improving consistency in risk and hazard management and demonstrating that critical controls are effective.

b) An organisation-wide stock take of risk and hazard registers is establishing a stronger baseline for critical risk management. Hazardous-substances management is also being strengthened, including improvements to inventories and the use of the WorkSafe hazardous-substances tool.
c) The SafePlace improvement programme is now substantially complete. During September and October, 69 reports were received, predominantly lower-severity matters, alongside an encouraging increase in proactive safety observations. All reports received during that period were reviewed and closed.
d) Organisational resilience has also been strengthened following learnings from the earlier hoax bomb threat. This has included revision of Ara's Incident Management Plan and emergency guidance, alongside further development of Incident Management Team capability. A four-hour Incident Management Team training workshop on 1 October covered crisis leadership, CIMS roles and practical incident-response decision-making.
e) The next stage is to move beyond having systems and processes in place to consistently demonstrating that significant risks are understood, appropriately owned and effectively controlled.

## 8. Our people and organisational culture

A particular highlight during the reporting period was the 2026 Celebration of Our People, recognising the contribution of kaimahi across Ara.

Awards recognised contributions in safety and wellbeing, equity and inclusion and Ara's values of Aroha, Hihiri and Hono. Examples included improvements to vocational teaching environments, learner-centred practice, contributions to Ara's research culture and leadership in health, safety and wellbeing.

These celebrations are important. Ara's future performance ultimately depends on the capability, commitment and willingness of our people to improve what we do.

Alongside strengthening accountability and organisational performance, it is equally important that we recognise the people and teams demonstrating the behaviours, initiative and practices we want to see more consistently across Ara.

## 9. Communications and external profile

Ara maintained a positive external profile during the reporting period.

a) October media coverage included Ara's industry partnerships, health and nursing, creative industries, research and international activity. Social media continued to perform strongly and Third-party social mentions increased from 76 in September to 93 in October.
b) The strongest stories increasingly reflect the Ara we want external audiences to see: industry-connected, applied, learner-focused, innovative and strongly connected to its communities.
c) Internal communications have also concentrated on keeping kaimahi informed while strengthening leadership communication channels and the expectation that leaders actively reinforce key organisational messages.

## 10. Sector and stakeholder engagement

I have continued to maintain active engagement across the vocational education sector and with key regional, national and international stakeholders.

a) This has included regular engagement with the chief executives of Otago Polytechnic, Southern Institute of Technology and Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology. The monthly South Island chief executives' hui provides a useful mechanism for discussing issues of common interest across the South Island polytechnic network.
b) I have also engaged recently with Business Canterbury, including participating in a workshop series focused on the region's workforce development needs. These sessions provide a valuable connection to Canterbury's employers and business community and an opportunity to hear first-hand about the skills and workforce challenges they face.
c) Separately, I am a member of a small working group focused on workforce development and skills in Canterbury. The group comprises the Regional Public Service Commissioner, the Regional Commissioner for the Ministry of Social Development, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canterbury and myself as Chief Executive of Ara. Bringing together government and tertiary education perspectives supports a more coordinated regional response to workforce and skills needs and is directly relevant to Ara's role as a workforce-development partner.

## 11. Looking ahead

As we approach the end of 2026, my priorities are increasingly centered on ensuring Ara is ready to execute effectively in 2027.

a) The combination of an approved three-year Investment Plan and the work undertaken to establish the 2027 Budget provides a stronger platform from which to undertake this next phase. The task now is to translate our strategic direction and resource decisions into clear organisational priorities, measurable outcomes, ownership, accountability and disciplined execution.
b) I am presently working with Te Kahui Manukura (TKM) to review the seven priority areas identified for Ara. This is not simply a process of carrying the existing priorities forward into another year. We are:
   - ✓ refining the scope of each priority to provide much greater clarity about the specific outcomes we expect to achieve during 2027;
   - ✓ testing whether the existing seven priorities remain the right areas of organisational focus, including whether any new priorities or areas of emphasis should be introduced in response to our emerging operating environment;
   - ✓ clarifying ownership, accountabilities and the key deliverables associated with each priority; and
   - ✓ developing a suite of KPIs and performance measures through which TKM and Council can monitor progress, performance and outcomes during 2027.
c) The intention is to enter 2027 with a much clearer line of sight between Ara's longer-term strategic direction, the Investment Plan, the annual Budget, our organisational priorities and the measures by which we will assess whether we are making the progress expected.
d) This work is also an important part of strengthening Ara's wider performance culture. The objective is not simply to report activity against the priorities, but to establish clear outcomes

and measures that allow us to assess whether our interventions are producing the intended improvements and to respond early where progress is not being achieved.

e) Key areas of focus for 2027 will therefore include:
   - ✓ maintaining enrolment momentum and converting the 2027 pipeline into sustainable EFTS;
   - ✓ improving learner retention, achievement and equity outcomes;
   - ✓ translating the three-year Investment Plan into disciplined delivery;
   - ✓ confirming and progressing Ara's organisational priorities, with clear outcomes, ownership and measures of success;
   - ✓ introducing a more systematic suite of KPIs through which organisational performance and progress can be monitored;
   - ✓ strengthening teaching capability and improving the connection between teaching, learner support and performance information;
   - ✓ further developing work-based and employer-connected learning;
   - ✓ progressing international opportunities where these are strategically, academically and financially appropriate;
   - ✓ strengthening applied research and innovation where it supports Ara's educational and regional role;
   - ✓ continuing to mature our safety, risk and organisational resilience systems; and
   - ✓ ensuring that Ara's financial strength is translated into thoughtful investment in the capabilities required for our longer-term future.

## 12. Overall assessment

I remain confident about Ara's direction and the platform that has been established during 2026.

- Confirmation during this reporting period of a three-year Investment Plan is an important institutional milestone and gives us greater certainty about our planning horizon.
- The work undertaken to prepare the 2027 Budget for Council consideration, together with our wider planning for 2027, represents the next step in translating that longer-term direction into executable organisational priorities.
- The successful China visit was another significant feature of the period. It reinforced the strength and potential of Ara's international relationships, particularly the established LNU partnership and emerging relationship with SNBC, while also reinforcing the importance of careful due diligence and appropriate regulatory and academic oversight as those relationships evolve.
- Ara has financial strength, committed people, valuable relationships with industry and communities and a clearer strategic direction. There is nevertheless considerable work ahead. As we prepare for 2027, the emphasis is now on sharpening our priorities, being explicit about the outcomes we expect, establishing clearer ownership and accountability, and putting in place meaningful measures through which we can monitor performance and intervene when progress is not sufficient.
- Our challenge is increasingly less about determining what Ara needs to do and more about our collective ability to execute consistently, at pace and with clear accountability, while keeping learner outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning at the centre of our decisions.

The progress made during the past two months, together with the work now underway with TKM to establish a clearer performance and execution framework for 2027, gives me confidence that we have a sound platform from which to enter the new year.

## Recommendation

That the Ara Council:

**receives** the Chief Executive's update; and
**notes** the significant institutional activities, developments and highlights during the reporting period.

# Quarterly Report November 2026

## Sua Tauti, Associate Director Pacific Success

## 1. Activities

### Strengthening Pacific Success Through Culture, Identity and Community

This quarter saw significant progress in advancing Pacific learner success through initiatives that strengthened cultural identity, belonging, and community connection across Ara. Highlights included the launch of the new Pacific Culture and Health Programme, developed in partnership with Pacific communities and industry, and the continued success of Pacific Language Weeks, which engaged more than 1,000 learners and staff across multiple campuses and learning spaces.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate Ara's commitment to embedding Pacific perspectives, elevating learner voice, and creating environments where Pacific learners feel seen, valued, and empowered to succeed.

### Pacific Course – Bachelor of Applied Science

Ara launched its new Pacific Course under the Bachelor of Applied Science which feeds into the Health Promotion, Nutrition and Sports Science degree following extensive collaboration with Pacific communities, health providers, government agencies, and industry partners. Developed in response to feedback from Pacific stakeholders, the programme aims to strengthen graduates' ability to work effectively alongside Pacific peoples and communities.

The course has been introduced into the Bachelor of Applied Science programme, with more than 90 learners enrolled in its inaugural delivery. Through learning focused on Pacific histories, cultures, health perspectives, communication, and relationship-building, students are developing greater cultural understanding and capability for the communities they will serve.

Guided by Ara's Pacific Strategy, the programme is a strong example of community-informed curriculum design. The Pacific Success team worked closely with academics and Pacific partners to ensure Pacific voices, values, and lived experiences were embedded throughout the programme.

**Impact**

- Strengthens culturally responsive practice within the health and wellbeing workforce.
- Builds stronger connections between Ara, Pacific communities, and industry partners.
- Demonstrates the value of co-design and community voice in shaping curriculum.

This initiative reflects Ara's commitment to working collaboratively with Pacific communities to create meaningful learning experiences that contribute to both learner success and better community outcomes.

### Pacific Language Weeks: Strengthening Belonging, Identity and Inclusion

Pacific Language Weeks continue to be a significant contributor to Pacific learner and staff belonging, identity, and visibility across Ara. Through a coordinated programme of cultural activities, language learning opportunities, and community engagement, these celebrations

create meaningful spaces where Pacific learners can see themselves reflected, valued, and celebrated.

During the reporting period, Pacific Language Week activities attracted participation from more than 1,000 learners and staff across the Pacific Hub, Te Puna Wānaka (TPW), and the Library. The strong level of engagement highlights the growing interest in Pacific cultures and the important role these initiatives play in fostering an inclusive and connected learning environment.

The Pacific Hub has developed an interactive and accessible experience for each language week, enabling learners and staff to explore Pacific languages, key phrases, cultural history, traditional attire, music, significant historical figures, and contemporary Pacific role models. This approach supports both Pacific and non-Pacific participants to build cultural understanding while encouraging learners to take pride in their own identity and heritage.

A key strength of the programme is the partnership between the Pacific Success team and the Pacific Islands Students' Association (PISA). This collaboration ensures activities are informed by learner voice and reflects what students want to experience and engage with during each language week. Demand has continued to grow, requiring adjustments to activities and spaces to accommodate the increasing number of participants.

Feedback from learners demonstrates the positive impact of the initiative. Pacific learners report a strong sense of pride and belonging when they see their cultures represented through artwork, language, attire, and cultural practices. Some learners have shared that these experiences have helped them reconnect with aspects of their culture that they had limited exposure to growing up. Non-Pacific learners have described the experience as welcoming, rewarding, and an opportunity to better understand their classmates and the diverse cultures that contribute to the Ara community.

Staff have also highlighted the value of Pacific Language Weeks in bringing the Ara community together, creating opportunities for deeper cultural understanding and providing learners with authentic experiences that strengthen connection, inclusion, and appreciation of diversity.

**Impact**

- Strengthens Pacific learner identity, belonging, and cultural pride.
- Increases visibility of Pacific cultures across the Ara community.
- Supports learner wellbeing through positive, culturally affirming experiences.
- Ensures learner voice remains central through ongoing collaboration with PISA.

Together, these initiatives highlight the growing impact of Ara's Pacific Success work in creating culturally responsive learning environments, strengthening community partnerships, and supporting learner success through identity, belonging, and connection.

# Quarterly Report November 2026

## Tate Tatia, Associate Director Māori Success

## 1. Activities

### Strengthening Māori Success through the Framework for Māori

This quarter has shown good progress in advancing continuous improvement, Māori learner success, learning and teaching practice and organisational capability. **Matariki Hunganui,** the refreshed **Framework for Māori Success**, the **Whiria Te Muka Tangata Reweave** report and closer work with programme teams all show movement.
Much of this progress still relies on individual relationships and on early advice from the Māori Success team. The next step is to make this the expected way of working and to show evidence of impact. This supports Te Pae Tata: more Māori come, stay and succeed as Māori at Ara.

## 2. Performance

### Continuous improvement

**a) Matariki Hunganui**

Both a celebration and a way of reporting alongside and back to our community to showcase how we are collaborating. A message received from Whitiora mana whenua attendee to congratulate the team on a successful event and positive movement in Māori achievement at Ara. Māori success now has stronger visibility, confidence and momentum across Ara. Themes included Māori voice at decision-making tables, centre ākonga (learner) voice and co-design, hold firm to te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, sustain partnerships and move from momentum to systems change. We took a “you said, we did” approach, sharing how kōrero from 2025 is shaping planning and reporting in 2026. Our message was Mātāmua ko te kōkenga, mātāmuri ko te hapa-kore. Progress over perfection. See news item. We shared the refreshed Framework at Matariki Hunganui. It remains grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and in the vision of whānau transformation through education. The refresh continues the mahi of many people over many years. It now needs implementation plans, practical tools, clearer accountability and alignment with the aspirations of iwi, hapū, rūnanga and Māori entities.

b) **Whiria Te Muka Tangata Reweave report**

We completed the Reweave report with Tokona te Raki. The report finds that Ara already has many of the people, values, systems and commitments needed to advance equity and Te Tiriti. The next step is to reweave these threads more deliberately through four whiri (strands): Kawa, Tikanga, Ritenga and Putanga. Implementation will need a senior mandate, clear ownership, partnership with mana whenua, continued support for the Kaikōkiri Group and proper resourcing. We look forward to a presentation to Te Kāhui Manukura next month.

c) **Policy and planning foundations**

Internal discussion about a Te Tiriti o Waitangi Policy has progressed, delivery of the Te Reo Māori Engagement Plan was launched during Māori Language Week. We have also called

Māori post-graduate and researchers together to draft a rangahau (research) strategy to strengthen Māori research capability, leadership and representation toward ako excellence.

d) **What we are learning about timing.**
Advisor reporting shows, input being sought after key design or approval work was already under way. In one recent review, Māori consultation was still happening when material went for approval. Research, programme design and partnership decisions carry similar risks. Involving Māori and Te Tiriti expertise early lets that advice shape the work, while the accountable business area keeps ownership.

## Māori learner success

e) **Learner journey and engagement review**
Ākonga connect events hosted across campuses strengthen belonging, with tikanga informing the experience. Wellbeing events are shaped for demographic, ākonga preferences, and support connection across disciplines. See news item. We continue to review how Māori ākonga experience Ara, drawing on Whiria Te Muka Tangata process and insights to influence improvements. It shows where faculties, services and Māori Success can respond in a more coordinated way while providing design assets to increase visibility and connection. Kaimahi citing that ākonga engagement in events and initiatives beyond core programme is low.

f) **Learner voice**
Learner feedback this period is limited but positive. After a programme wānanga (learning forum), one ākonga described the learning as engaging and impactful and said it helped them understand their own identity journey. In another programme, ākonga used Te Korekoreka to reflect on their experience of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) and how it could shape their future practice. These examples suggest that culturally grounded learning supports identity, reflection and professional practice.

g) **2025 completion and retention**
Tertiary Education Commission data shows Ara had the highest Māori first-year retention and Māori course completion results in the institute of technology and polytechnic sector. See news item. **2026 participation.** Current tracking 1957 ākonga – 16.6% of total enrolled ākonga.

## Learning and teaching practice

h) **A shift in practice**
Māori Success support is moving beyond general cultural awareness into programme and teaching design. Last month we worked with Sustainability, Architecture, Health and Wellbeing, BBC and BAM on how mātauranga Māori, values, Te Tiriti and cultural capability show up in learning activities, programme outcomes, assessment and learner experience.

i) **Examples**
Health and Wellbeing work highlighted an opportunity to lift uara Māori (Māori values) alongside Western approaches, and a cultural safety concern that needs careful programme leadership. BAM documentation shows strong intent. The next task is to trace that intent through learning outcomes, teaching, assessment and graduate expectations. BBC

capability work shows committed practice development, but leadership support, resourcing and follow-through remain important. We want learning that is culturally safer, more relevant to place and identity, and more clearly connected to professional practice. The strongest evidence of direct learner impact so far is the Sustainability feedback.

## Organisational capability

j) **Shared language and tools**

Demand is growing for shared language, connected frameworks and more consistent practice across Te Tira ki Tua, Kaiako Capability, Educational Development and programme teams. Recent work used Ngā Hau e Whā resources, Te Korekoreka, Framework for Māori Success language, Te Arataki and Ara Taurite – our suite of indigenous approaches. Te Tiriti education and the community of practice continue. We are also progressing tools for programme review and for integrating mātauranga Māori. This training is critical to our next phase of assessment, integration, and impact. Feedback received from workshops is positive.

k) **Kaimahi Māori and staff capability**

We continue to build Te Tiriti capability, te reo Māori confidence, Communities of practice and Māori representation in research. We are also working to strengthen kaimahi Māori engagement, and wellbeing, including through the Ara Māori forum. Pastoral care for Māori staff is supported through the team and will be monitored. We continued to support whakatau for new kaimahi, governance representatives, partners and visitors. These events express manaakitanga (care for others) and strengthen relationships between Ara and the community, with mana whenua.

l) **Te reo and tikanga Māori**

The Te Reo Māori Engagement Plan supports consistent, confident and quality use of te reo Māori in communications, resources, naming, events and everyday practice. We have completed and approved more than 350 translation items, more than 100 names, written 45 kaupapa narratives and delivered more than 50 reo advice and support activities. Liaison continues with mana whenua on appropriate use of terms and designs. Karakia for building sites is facilitated and succession supported through wānanga.

# 3. Outcomes

We continue to work toward the following:

- Support momentum and mitigate risks to the current programme of work through the appointment of representatives at Council and Te Kāhui Manukura.
- Enable a Te Tiriti policy development and implementation through strengthened partnerships with Māori community.
- Endorse the Framework for Māori Success and associated implementation process and tools to advance impact including any resourcing requirements.
- Māori Success will continue to develop capability pathways with a focus on teaching and learning practice.
- Māori Success will continue to strengthen learner voice, communications and engagement through reinforcement of Māori centred design and outcomes.

# Common Seal

The Ara policy on affixing the common seal calls for a quarterly report to the Ara Council recording the number and type of document to which the common seal has been added.

This report covers the period from 26 May 2026 to 12 November 2026 and includes the list of the degree and diploma documents signed and sealed by the Ara Chief Executive and Council Chair for the Spring 2026 Graduation ceremony held on 17 September 2026 in Christchurch.

The data also includes qualifications achieved for learners who are scheduled to graduate in 2027. This is because the Common Seal is used each time the qualification is printed and these are now issued to learners as they achieve.

**In total, there were 379 qualifications awarded carrying the Ara Institute of Canterbury Common Seal:**

| Qualification Title | Quantity Awarded |
|---|---|
| Bachelor of Accounting (Level 7) | **10** |
| Bachelor of Applied Management | **16** |
| Bachelor of Applied Science | **7** |
| Bachelor of Broadcasting Communications | **35** |
| Bachelor of Construction | **11** |
| Bachelor of Design | **3** |
| Bachelor of Engineering Technology | **9** |
| Bachelor of Information and Communication Technologies | **15** |
| Bachelor of International Tourism and Hospitality Management | **3** |
| Bachelor of Nursing | **91** |
| Bachelor of Sustainability and Outdoor Education | **2** |
| Graduate Certificate in Building Information Modelling (BIM) | **5** |
| Graduate Certificate in Nursing | **1** |
| Graduate Diploma in Applied Management | **3** |
| Graduate Diploma in Construction Management | **6** |
| Graduate Diploma in Information and Communication Technologies | **1** |
| Graduate Diploma in Innovation and Entrepreneurship | **1** |
| Graduate Diploma in Quantity Surveying | **9** |
| Master of Creative Practice | **1** |
| Master of Health Science | **2** |
| Master of Sustainable Practice | **6** |
| New Zealand Diploma in Applied Science (Level 5) | **8** |
| New Zealand Diploma in Business (Level 5) | **24** |
| New Zealand Diploma in Construction (Level 6) | **18** |
| New Zealand Diploma in Cookery (Advanced) (Level 5) | **7** |
| New Zealand Diploma in Engineering (Level 6) | **10** |
| New Zealand Diploma in Enrolled Nursing (Level 5) | **44** |

| | |
|---|---|
| New Zealand Diploma in Information Technology Technical Support (Level 5) | **23** |
| Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Practice | **2** |
| Te Pokaitahi Reo (Rumaki) (Te Kaupae 5) | **6** |
| **Total** | **379** |

*Scope: Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Master, New Zealand Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma awards. New Zealand Certificates are excluded.*

Darren Mitchell

**Chief Executive**

# Ara Council
# Audit and Risk Committee Minutes
# 27 October 2026

Minutes of a meeting of the Ara Council Audit and Risk Committee held on Tuesday 27 October 2026 at 9am in the Council Room G202, City Campus and via Teams.

## 1 Welcome and Attendance

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all members.

### 1.1 Present

a **Voting Members**
Michael Rondel [Chair], Rick Hellings and Andrea Leslie.

b **Non-Voting Members**
Darren Mitchell [DM – Chief Executive], Tilly Mckay [TM – Chief Financial Officer] and Christina Yeates [CY – Minute Secretary].

### 1.2 Apologies

Hugh Lindo [Chair of Council].

## 2 Confirmation of Minutes

### 2.1 Minutes of Council Audit and Risk Committee Meeting – 2 September 2026

*It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on Wednesday 2 September 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of the meeting.*

*M Rondel/R Hellings* *Carried*

### 2.2 Action List

a **Action #2 – Work Schedule 2026**

This action was noted as completed. The work schedule and programme for 2027 was discussed in Agenda Item 3.

## 3 Work Schedule and Meeting Dates – 2027

3.1 The draft work programme and meeting schedule was reviewed. It was agreed that programme quality assurance, academic audit assurance and risk would remain areas of ongoing ARC oversight. Noting that a focus area for Management is to continue lifting quality assurance capability.

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3.2 The annual monitoring cycle will include reflection on the prior year and annual performance measures in March, progress tracking in June, and year-end review in October.

3.3 Rolling forecasts will support Council awareness, and property progress against timetable, budget and milestones will remain a standing item.

3.4 The meeting dates for 2027 were agreed in principle and can be added to the Committee's calendars. **[Action #17: CY]**

*It was **resolved** that the draft work programme and meeting dates for 2027 be **approved, subject to** the addition of programme **quality** assurance and property progress as standing items.*

*M Rondel/Carried*

## 4 Public Excluded

*It was **resolved** that the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.*

M Rondel Carried

The general subject of the matters considered while the public was excluded was:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1 | Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 September 2026 | s9(2)(i) |
| 4.2 | Budget 2027 | s9(2)(i) |
| 4.3 | Outyear Financial Modelling Pathway to 2030 | s9(2)(i) |
| 4.4 | Annual Report | s9(2)(i) |
| 4.5 | Risk Report and Register | s9(2)(i) |
| 4.6 | Treasury Performance Report | s9(2)(i) |

This resolution was 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 section of the Official Information Act which applies is shown beside each item considered while the public was excluded:

- *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

At the conclusion of the Public Excluded section of the meeting, the Committee moved back into open meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.45am.

**READ AND CONFIRMED** Chair: .....

Date: .....

# Audit and Risk Committee Minutes [Public] – Action List as of 27 October 2026

| Action Number | Date | Agenda Item | Topic | Action | Responsibility | Status | Due |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | 27 Oct 26 | 3.4 | 2027 Meeting Dates | Christina to send calendar appointments for 2027 Committee meeting dates | CY | In progress | 24 Nov 26 |

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| **Ara Council**<br>**24 November 2026** | **Agenda Item** **3.5**<br>**Information Item** |
|---|---|
| **PUBLIC** | **Presented by** Deborah Young, Chair of Academic Committee |

| **ARA COUNCIL REPORT SUMMARY** | |
|---|---|
| **TITLE OF REPORT** | Academic Committee Report (Open) – Quarter 3 |
| **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE** | To provide Council with a summary of the matters discussed by the Academic Committee at its meetings in Quarter 3 of 2026. |
| **RECOMMENDATION(S)** | That the Ara Council<br>1. **Receive** the report titled "Academic Committee Report (Open) – Quarter 3".<br>2. **Note** that the Academic Committee approved changes to three existing policies, five new products and changes to 18 existing programmes of study, as detailed in the report. |
| **KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED** | This report summarises the matters considered by the Academic Committee at its Quarter 3 meetings. The key items are:<br>1. Approval of changes to three policies: APP510 Aegrotat Pass Regulations, APP503 Naming and Awarding Qualifications and Recognising Achievement, and APP514 Withdrawals, Refunds and Compassionate Consideration.<br>2. Approval of five new products and changes to 18 existing programmes of study.<br>3. Reports from the Portfolio and Assurance Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee.<br>4. NZQA consultation on describing tertiary education provider quality under the Integrated Quality Assurance Framework. |
| **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA** | No specific financial implications are identified in this report. |
| **RISK IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA** | There are no new or emerging risks identified in this report. |
| **RATIONALE FOR EXCLUDING PUBLIC** | Not applicable. |

# Academic Committee Report

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of the matters discussed by the Academic Committee on the agenda of its meetings taking place in quarter three of 2026.

Meeting dates included:

- 23 July 2026
- 27 August 2026
- 8 October 2026

## 2. Recommended resolutions

It is recommended that the Ara Council:

| | |
|---|---|
| a) | **Receive** the report titled "Academic Committee Report (Open) – Quarter 3**";** |
| b) | **Note** that the Academic Committee approved:<br>• **Changes to three existing policies**<br>▪ APP510 Aegrotat Pass Regulations<br>▪ APP503 Naming and Awarding Qualifications and Recognising Achievement<br>▪ APP514 Withdrawals, Refunds and Compassionate Consideration<br>• **Five new products**<br>▪ NZ4859 New Zealand Certificate in Automotive Refinishing (Level 3)<br>▪ NZ2730 New Zealand Certificate in Manufacturing (Level 3) with optional strand in Productivity Improvement<br>▪ NZ4373 New Zealand Certificate in Skills for Learning and Working, for Supported Learners (Level 1)<br>▪ NZ4998 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 3)<br>▪ NZQCF Diploma in Business (Level 5)<br>• **Changes to 18 existing programmes of study**<br>▪ NZ2661 New Zealand Certificate in Drainlaying with optional strand in Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (Level 4)<br>▪ NZ2662 New Zealand Certificate in Gasfitting (Level 4)<br>▪ NZ2663 New Zealand Certificate in Plumbing (Level 4)<br>▪ NZ2738 New Zealand Certificate in Carpentry (Level 4) with an optional stand in Metal Roof Cladding Installation<br>▪ NZ2860 New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Level 4)<br>▪ NZ3414 New Zealand Certificate in DJ and Music Production (Level 4)<br>▪ NZ3418 New Zealand Certificate in Music (Level 4)<br>▪ NZ3420 New Zealand Certificate in Performing Arts (Level 4) |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ▪ NZ3423 New Zealand Diploma in Audio Engineering and Production (Level 6)<br>▪ NZ3765 New Zealand Certificate in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Multi-skilled) (Level 4)<br>▪ NZ1879 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Foundation) (Level 1)<br>▪ NZ1880 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Level 1)<br>▪ NZ1881 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Level 2)<br>▪ NZ1882 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (General) (Level 3)<br>▪ NZ3667 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Applied) (Level 3)<br>▪ NZ3669 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (General) (Level 4)<br>▪ NZ1883 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 4)<br>▪ NZ1884 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 5) |

## 3. Sub-delegations exercised

### 3.1. Courses/programmes of study

- **NZ4859 New Zealand Certificate in Automotive Refinishing (Level 3)**
  *The approval minute of NZ4859 New Zealand Certificate in Automotive Refinishing (Level 3) was received.*

This programme is replacement of the New Zealand Certificate in Collision Repair and Automotive Refinishing (Level 3). The aim of the New Zealand Certificate in Automotive Refinishing (Level 3) programme is to provide the automotive refinishing industry with individuals who have attained the fundamental knowledge and skills required to work as refinishing preparers, under limited supervision.

- **NZ2661 New Zealand Certificate in Drainlaying with optional strand in Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (Level 4)**
  **NZ2662 New Zealand Certificate in Gasfitting (Level 4)**
  **NZ2663 New Zealand Certificate in Plumbing (Level 4)**

*The approval minutes of NZ2661 New Zealand Certificate in Drainlaying with optional strand in Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (Level 4), NZ2662 New Zealand Certificate in Gasfitting (Level 4) and NZ2663 New Zealand Certificate in Plumbing (Level 4) were received.*

The qualifications for the New Zealand Certificates in Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying have moved to version three. The associated programmes of study must therefore be updated to enable delivery of the latest version in 2027. The principal changes involve the removal and addition of a substantial number of unit standards within the qualifications.

- **NZ2730 New Zealand Certificate in Manufacturing (Level 3) with optional strand in Productivity Improvement**
  *The approval minute of NZ2730 New Zealand Certificate in Manufacturing (Level 3) with optional strand in Productivity Improvement was received.*

Ara is seeking programme accreditation for the New Zealand Certificate in Manufacturing (Level 4) with optional strand in Productivity Improvement, using Wintec's programme of study. This follows support from industry and central government for introducing the earn-as-you-learn

qualification to the South Island. Delivery is expected to commence in early 2027. Ara has prepared an addendum to Wintec's programme of study to support delivery at Ara.

- **NZ2738 New Zealand Certificate in Carpentry (Level 4) with an optional stand in Metal Roof Cladding Installation**
  *The approval minute of NZ2738 New Zealand Certificate in Carpentry (Level 4) with an optional stand in Metal Roof Cladding Installation was received.*

The qualification for the New Zealand Certificate in Carpentry (Level 4) has moved to version three. Ara currently delivers version one and has developed a new programme leading to the award of version three. The new programme has shifted from an outcomes-based approach to full skills standards, as required by the updated qualification.

- **NZ2860 New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Level 4)**
  *The approval minute of NZ2860 New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways (Level 4) was received.*

Following version updates to NZ3765 New Zealand Certificate in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Multi-skilled) (Level 4), a Type 2 change to NZ2860 was required to maintain alignment.

The Type 1 changes update policy and organisational references, programme details, delivery codes, learning hours, consultation information, and self-assessment and review content. The Type 2 change updates the programme structure, assessment mapping and course descriptors, in response to stakeholder feedback.

- **NZ3414 New Zealand Certificate in DJ and Music Production (Level 4)**
  *The approval minute of NZ3414 New Zealand Certificate in DJ and Music Production (Level 4) was received.*

The transition of the MAINZ programme into Ara in 2026 has created an opportunity to strengthen alignment across Ara's music-related programmes. The proposed change replaces CIBS402 Professional Practice in DJ Industry with CMDJ432 Contemporary Music Industry. This course will be shared between NZ3414 and NZ3418 and aligned with the graduate profile outcomes of each programme. Minor amendments have also been made to the programme schedule, reducing delivery from 34 to 32 teaching weeks.

- **NZ3418 New Zealand Certificate in Music (Level 4)**
  *The approval minute of NZ3418 New Zealand Certificate in Music (Level 4) was received.*

The qualification for the New Zealand Certificate in Music (Level 4) has moved to version two. Ara currently delivers version one and has developed a new programme leading to the award of version two. The principal changes include an updated strategic purpose and revised graduate profile outcomes to align with music and related industries. These changes have required a programme-level review of courses and learning outcomes to ensure alignment with the updated qualification.

- **NZ3420 New Zealand Certificate in Performing Arts (Level 4)**
  *The approval minute of NZ3420 New Zealand Certificate in Performing Arts (Level 4) was received.*

The qualification for the New Zealand Certificate in Performing Arts (Level 4) has moved to version two. Ara currently delivers version one and has developed a new programme leading to the award of version two. The principal changes include the incorporation of qualification conditions and revised course codes, learning outcomes, assessment plans and mapping. Guidance on moderation, academic integrity and generative artificial intelligence has also been updated. Transition arrangements have been added to ensure that ākonga moving between versions are not disadvantaged.

- **NZ3423 New Zealand Diploma in Audio Engineering and Production (Level 6)**
  *The approval minute of NZ3423 New Zealand Diploma in Audio Engineering and Production (Level 6) was received.*

The proposed changes to the New Zealand Diploma in Audio Engineering and Production (Level 6) replace electives with a fully compulsory course structure and update course aims, learning outcomes, content and assessments. A transition plan has been provided for ākonga who do not successfully complete the programme in 2026. The changes respond to industry and education developments by addressing the local live sound training gap following discontinuation of the Level 4 Entertainment and Event Technology pathway, reducing overlap with local and internal screen sound and broadcasting programmes, and strengthening applied audio production.

- **NZ3765 New Zealand Certificate in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Multi-skilled) (Level 4)**
  *The approval minute of NZ3765 New Zealand Certificate in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Multi-skilled) (Level 4) was received.*

The qualification for the New Zealand Certificate in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Level 4) has moved to version two. The principal changes include an updated strategic purpose statement, amended general conditions and minor wording changes to the graduate profile outcomes to align with industry feedback.

- **NZ4373 New Zealand Certificate in Skills for Learning and Working, for Supported Learners (Level 1)**
  *The approval minute of NZ4373 New Zealand Certificate in Skills for Learning and Working, for Supported Learners (Level 1) was received.*

The qualification for the New Zealand Certificate in Skills for Learning and Working, for Supported Learners (Level 1) will transition from version one to version two from 2027. Ara currently delivers the qualification under accreditation to WelTec's programme. WelTec will no longer support further programme amendments or delivery requirements. Ara is therefore seeking NZQA approval and accreditation for its own programme to enable continued delivery from 2027.

- **NZ4998 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 3)**
  *The approval minute of NZ4998 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 3) was received.*

Ara is seeking programme approval and accreditation for the New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 3) to complement its existing suite of English language qualifications. The proposed programme responds to identified learner demand and provides an additional progression pathway within Ara's English language portfolio. It is intended to support ākonga who require further development of their academic English language capability before

progressing to higher-level study, vocational education or employment. The programme develops reading, writing, listening, speaking, study and communication skills in academic contexts, enabling ākonga to build confidence and proficiency in English and to work towards their educational, employment and personal aspirations.

- **NZ1879 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Foundation) (Level 1)**
  **NZ1880 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Level 1)**
  **NZ1881 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Level 2)**
  **NZ1882 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (General) (Level 3)**
  **NZ3667 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Applied) (Level 3)**
  **NZ3669 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (General) (Level 4)**
  **NZ1883 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 4)**
  **NZ1884 New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 5)**
  *The approval minute of the English Language suite of programmes was received.*

The qualifications for the New Zealand Certificates in English Language have moved from version two to version three. Ara currently delivers version two of these qualifications and has submitted Type 2 change applications to transition the programmes to version three. A comprehensive review has been undertaken to ensure that the programmes remain current, coherent and aligned with the revised qualification requirements and relevant English language guidance.

- **NZQCF Diploma in Business (Level 5)**
  *The approval minute of the NZQCF Diploma in Business (Level 5) was received.*

Ara has developed the NZQCF Diploma in Business (Level 5) for exclusive delivery through its transnational education partnerships. The qualification equips eligible learners with the knowledge, practical skills and capabilities required to contribute effectively to organisational performance in contemporary and evolving business environments. It provides a structured pathway for applying business knowledge within a New Zealand context, which can be transferred to offshore business environments.

## 3.2. Academic Policies

- **APP510 Aegrotat Pass Regulations**
  *It was moved that APP510 Aegrotat Pass Regulations, APP510a Aegrotat Learner Information, APP510b Aegrotat Application, APP510c Aegrotat Practitioner Statement and APP510d Aegrotat Bereavement or Childbirth Form, with minor amendments, be approved.*

The amendments to the policy are intended to strengthen consistency, clarity and intent. The Committee was advised that the policy had undergone a robust consultation process involving colleagues from across the institution.

- **APP503 Naming and Awarding Qualifications and Recognising Achievement**
  *It was moved that the APP503 Naming and Awarding Qualification and Recognising Achievement policy and attachments, with minor amendments, be approved.*

The review updates the policy to improve clarity, align it with current Ara structures and ensure consistency with current NZQA terminology and requirements. The core purpose of the policy is

unchanged: to ensure that qualifications and other awards issued by Ara accurately reflect learner achievement and meet relevant requirements.

- **APP514 Withdrawals, Refunds and Compassionate Consideration**
  *It was moved that the APP514 Withdrawals, Refunds and Compassionate Consideration policy and attachments, with minor amendments, be approved.*

The review updates APP514 and its associated forms and refund tables to clarify the provisions on withdrawal, refunds, compassionate consideration and non-engagement. It also strengthens definitions and delegations and aligns the documents with current Ara roles and practice. The core purpose of the policy is unchanged: to provide fair, equitable and clear processes for learners.

- **APP516 Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)**
  *It was agreed that further work was required before the policy could be approved, due to inconsistencies between sections of the policy.*

The review proposes amendments to the APP516 Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy to clarify expectations for equitable access, early communication of compulsory device and software requirements, user responsibilities, available support and Faculty planning. The proposed changes also remove outdated references and include minor wording updates to improve clarity and practical implementation.

## 4. Key risks

There are no new or emerging risks.

## 5. Other Matters

**Subcommittee Reports**

**a) Portfolio and Assurance Committee**

The Committee received the Portfolio and Assurance Committee reports from its meetings of 16 July, 13 August, 3 September and 24 September 2026. It discussed the 'Curriculum in a Box' approach, noting that some teams may lack the capability to develop their own materials and that the approach could provide a solution. It also noted that actions from the Built Environments Portfolio Audit action plan remain outstanding and are due to be reported to the Portfolio and Assurance Committee before the end of the year. The Committee discussed the controls in place to minimise the use of outdated unit standard assessments and noted that a working group had been established to investigate the matter.

**b) Learning and Teaching Committee**

The Committee received the Learning and Teaching Committee report from its meeting of 30 July 2026 for discussion. It noted that the Kaiako Capability team has strengthened the process for new teaching staff to gain teaching qualifications by embedding this requirement within recruitment and appointment, providing clearer expectations for new kaiako. The Committee queried how the proportion of teaching staff with teaching qualifications would be measured and reported, noting that current systems may not capture this information reliably. It was noted that students need clear and accessible guidance on the appropriate use of artificial intelligence, and a central location on the Ara website was suggested for information, expectations and support

material. The Committee also discussed ongoing concerns about students' digital literacy and the need for clear ownership of this work.

## 6. General Business

**NZQA Consultation – Describing tertiary education provider quality under iQAF**

The Committee received an overview of NZQA's consultation on describing tertiary education provider quality under the Integrated Quality Assurance Framework. It noted concerns that the proposed quarterly review approach could reduce institutional agility and that fluctuating scores may limit their usefulness as a measure of quality. Seven of the 10 points focus on delivery and assessment, which is appropriate but a large share of the overall rating. The Committee noted that Ara should continue to strengthen assessment and moderation practice, and that a clear communication plan will be needed to help staff understand the expectations.

# Ara Council Meeting Schedule - Work Programme 2026

**as at 23 September 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)**<br>• Quarterly TKM Reports<br>• Health and Safety Walkabout<br>• Academic Committee Quarterly Report | |
| | 26 | Academic Committee | |
| April | 28 | **Council Meeting [Christchurch]**<br>• 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)**<br>• Report on Affixing of Common Seal<br>• 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)**<br>• Draft Investment Plan 2027-2029<br>• Quarterly TKM Reports<br>• Fee Setting<br>• 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]**<br>• Academic Committee Quarterly Report | |
| | 11 | Ara Whakatau Semester Two – Woolston | |
| | 12 | Ara Whakatau Semester Two – Manawa | |
| | 25 | **Council Meeting (Christchurch)**<br>• STRATEGY TOPIC | |
| | 27 | Academic Committee | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| September | 2 | Audit and Risk Committee | |
| | 17 | **Spring Graduation (Christchurch)** | |
| | 22 | **Council Meeting (Christchurch)**<br>• Quarterly TKM Reports<br>• Ōtautahi House Site Visit | |
| October | 15 | Academic Committee | Chair 23/10 to 1/11 |
| | 27 | **Audit and Risk Committee**<br>• 2027 Budget -pre Council review<br>• Annual Report 2026 – content/format | |
| November | 19 | Academic Committee | |
| | 24 | **Council Meeting (Christchurch)**<br>• 2027 Budget Sign Off<br>• Planning 2027<br>• Report on Affixing of Common Seal<br>• 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 <u>Proposed</u> Meeting Dates for the Ara Council: Tuesdays 9-12 [Council only time 8.30-9am]***
*23 Feb*
*23 March*
*April – no meeting*
*4 May – Timaru Graduation and Council meeting [venue Timaru Campus]*
*25 May*
*22 June*
*27 July*
*24 August*
*28 September*
*26 October – noting 25 October is Labour Day*
*23 November*
*7 December [if required]*

# Ara Council Meeting Schedule - DRAFT Work Programme 2027

**as at 9 November 2026**

| Month | | Topics | Notified Non-availability |
|---|---|---|---|
| **February** | ? | Academic Committee | |
| | 23 | **Council Meeting (Christchurch)** | |
| | 24 | Ara Whakatau Semester One – Woolston | |
| **March** | 3 | Ara Whakatau Semester One – City | |
| | 9 | Audit and Risk Committee | |
| | 11 | **Autumn Graduation (Christchurch)** | |
| | 17 | Ara Whakatau Semester One – Manawa | |
| | 23 | **Council Meeting (Christchurch)**<br>• Quarterly TKM Reports<br>• Health and Safety Walkabout<br>• Academic Committee Quarterly Report<br>• Annual Report Sign off<br>• Strategic Focus: Teaching and Learning Performance and Quality Assurance and Future Directions<br>• TEC planned attendance | |
| | 24 | Ara Whakatau Semester One – Timaru | |
| | ? | Academic Committee | |
| **April** | | No Council meeting<br>• Note: Annual Report Sign off is required end April | CE 12/4 to 30/4 |
| **May** | 4 | **Council Meeting - 9am [Timaru]**<br>• Health and Safety Walkabout [Timaru]<br>• Strategic Focus: Campus Planning - Timaru<br>**Timaru Graduation Ceremony – 2pm** | |
| | ? | Academic Committee | |
| | 25 | **Council Meeting???** | |
| **June** | 8 | Audit and Risk Committee | |
| | ? | Academic Committee | |
| | 22 | **Council Meeting**<br>• Report on Affixing of Common Seal<br>• Quarterly TKM Reports<br>• Fee Setting<br>• | |
| **July** | ? | Academic Committee | |
| | 27 | **Council Meeting (Woolston)**<br>• Health and Safety Walkabout [Woolston] | |
| | 28 | Ara Whakatau Semester Two – City | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **August** | ? | Academic Committee | |
| | 4 | Ara Whakatau Semester Two – Woolston | |
| | 18 | Ara Whakatau Semester Two – Manawa | |
| | 18 | Ara Whakatau Semester Two – Timaru | |
| | 24 | **Council Meeting [Christchurch]**<br>• Academic Committee Quarterly Report<br>• Strategic Focus: International Growth and Development | |
| **September** | 24 | **Spring Graduation (Christchurch)** | |
| | 28 | **Council Meeting (Christchurch)**<br>• Quarterly TKM Reports<br>• Ōtautahi House Site Visit | |
| **October** | ? | Academic Committee | Chair 23/10 to 1/11 |
| | 12 | **Audit and Risk Committee**<br>• 2028 Budget -pre-Council review<br>• Annual Report 2027 – content/format | |
| | 26 | **Council Meeting [Christchurch]**<br>• Report on Affixing of Common Seal<br>• Academic Committee Quarterly Report | |
| **November** | ? | Academic Committee | |
| | 23 | **Council Meeting (Christchurch)**<br>• 2028 Budget Sign Off<br>• Planning 2028 | |
| | 23 | Remuneration Committee | |
| December | 7 | **Council Meeting (Christchurch) (if required)** | |

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Easter Tuesday – Tues 30 March
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DRAFT