Ara Institute of Canterbury Council

AGENDA

Tuesday 24 March 2026 – 9am
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 am and the public meeting commences from 9am.

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 24 February 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
	    b) Educational Performance Indicators and Student Achievement
	    c) Financial Performance
	    d) Safety, Health and Wellbeing
	    e) Highlights and Achievements
	    f) Media Report

3) For Information/ Discussion	**MONTHLY REPORTS** **3.1 Chair** [Verbal]
4) For Information	**STANDING ITEMS** **4.1 Safety, Health and Wellbeing Framework and Policy** **4.2 2026 Council Work Programme**
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	

6) Meeting Business	**6.1** **Confirmation of Council Minutes** Public Excluded
	
	Meeting held 24 February 2026
	    a) Approval of minutes
	    b) Matters arising
	    c) Action List
	6.2 **Correspondence** – Public Excluded
		[s9(2) (f), (i), (j)]

7) For Discussion	**7.1** **Chief Executive Monthly Report -** Summary
	    a) Risk Framework and Monitoring
	    b) Financial
	    c) Strategic Business Priorities
	7.2 **Quarterly Reports from Management**
		[s9(2) (f), (i), (j)]

8) For Decision	**8.1** **Ara Campuses – Capital Intentions**
	    a) C Block Business Case
	    b) L Block
		[s9(2)(i), (j)]

9) For Information	**9.1** **Chair Monthly Report** [Verbal] **9.2** **Risk Register** **9.3** **Academic Committee Quarterly Report**	[s9(2) (i), (j)]
10) General Business		[s9(2)(i), (j)]
**Information Session – **Presented by Hayley Devoy, Director, Strategy, Planning and Performance	• Seven Business Priorities / Links to TES and TEC Expectations • Overview of the South Canterbury VET Provision • Portfolio Review and Evaluation Process	[s9(2) (f), (i), (j)]

NOTE: 1.00pm-2.00pm: Tim Fowler, Chief Executive, Tertiary Education Commission to join the meeting via Teams
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 March 2026

Ara Council Members

Hugh Lindo [Chair]	• Simpson Grierson [Partner]
Michael Rondel [Deputy Chair]	• Christchurch City Holdings Ltd [Independent Chair, Audit and Risk Committee] • 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	Nil

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 24 February 2026 – 9.00am
Ara Council Room, City Campus

These are the **minutes** of the meeting of the Ara Council held on 24 February 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.

Hugh Lindo acted as chairperson of the meeting.

Other attendees present: Christina Yeates (Ara Executive Assistant) and Tilly Mckay [Chief Financial Officer and Director, Corporate Services]**.**

Apologies

Apologies were noted from Darren Mitchell, Chief Executive. Council welcomed Tilly Mckay, Chief Financial Officer and Director, Corporate Services acting as the Chief Executive's Deputy for the duration of the meeting.

1.2. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

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

1.3. Confirmation of Council Minutes [Public]

The Ara Council meetings of 2 and 9 December 2025 were both held with the public excluded. As matters of establishment for Ara to transition to a standalone entity from 1 January 2026 were recorded at these meetings, the Ara Council officially moved such items into the public domain as per the resolution recorded below:

*The Ara Council **resolved to approve that** the matters of establishment records from 2 and 9 December 2025 be moved from the public excluded records into the public domain.*

H Lindo/M Rondel   *CARRIED*

1.4. Correspondence

Nil received.

2. FOR DISCUSSION – Monthly Report

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

a) **All staff hui's** – Council were interested to know how Timaru colleagues are included in these hui's and were advised that these meetings are held both on Teams and in person. This ensures all kaimahi have the opportunity to attend across all Ara campuses.

3. FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION – Monthly Report

3.1. CHAIR

a) The ITP Chairs have agreed a monthly meeting schedule for 2026, with TEC emphasising collaboration and alignment to the Tertiary Education Strategy (TES).

b) It was noted that TEC are holding an Induction Day, scheduled for ITP Chairs and Chief Executives on 23 April 2026 in Wellington.

c) As the Chief Executive will be on leave, Council have agreed that a Deputy will attend on his behalf.

4. FOR INFORMATION – STANDING ITEMS

4.1. Risk Register – no items were raised in the public section of the meeting.

4.2. Health and Safety – no items were raised and Council agreed that future reporting will be moved into the public section of the meeting.

4.3. 2026 Council Work Programme – taken as read and no updates were recorded.

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

5.1. Council Member Appointment Process

a) The Chair advised that it had been agreed to recruit for additional Council members in the latter part of 2026.

b) It was noted that this is consistent with the other ITP's in the sector.

c) Council are keen to have a full understanding of the organisation first to inform recruitment needs going forwards.

Closure

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the public section of the meeting closed at 9.15am.

Ara Council **24 March 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 Priorities • Vision 2030
KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED	Enrolments will need ongoing monitoring with the overall position tracking slightly behind target levels.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	Financial position is positive relative to budget expectations
RISK IMPLICATIONS FOR ARA	-

Chief Executive's Report
Public Meeting

1. CE Overview

The past 4 weeks has been focused on the startup of the Academic year. Several Whakatau events have been held across our campuses to welcome new students into our campus environments to commence their studies. Participation in these events continues to grow and they form an important part of reinforcing our commitment to the Treaty and the setting of expectations for learners.

A significant step towards greater collaboration with University of Canterbury [UC] was achieved through a hui facilitated by the Vice Chancellor with myself and members of the UC and Ara leadership teams. Next steps are to prepare Memorandum of Understandings [MoU's] for closer collaboration in the areas of Engineering, Health, and Creative Arts. We enjoyed a tour of the new UC digital campus and discussed the numerous opportunities of working together that this campus could enable. We both share a strategic goal of wanting to establish Canterbury as a destination of choice for Tertiary Education in New Zealand.

Ara continues to work closely with Health NZ Canterbury to find sufficient support for clinical placement requirements for nursing provision. We are appreciative of the support Health NZ is providing to assist Ara to resolve the peak in demand that has arisen because of increased student intakes in 2024 and 2025 intended to respond to forecast workforce shortages at that time.
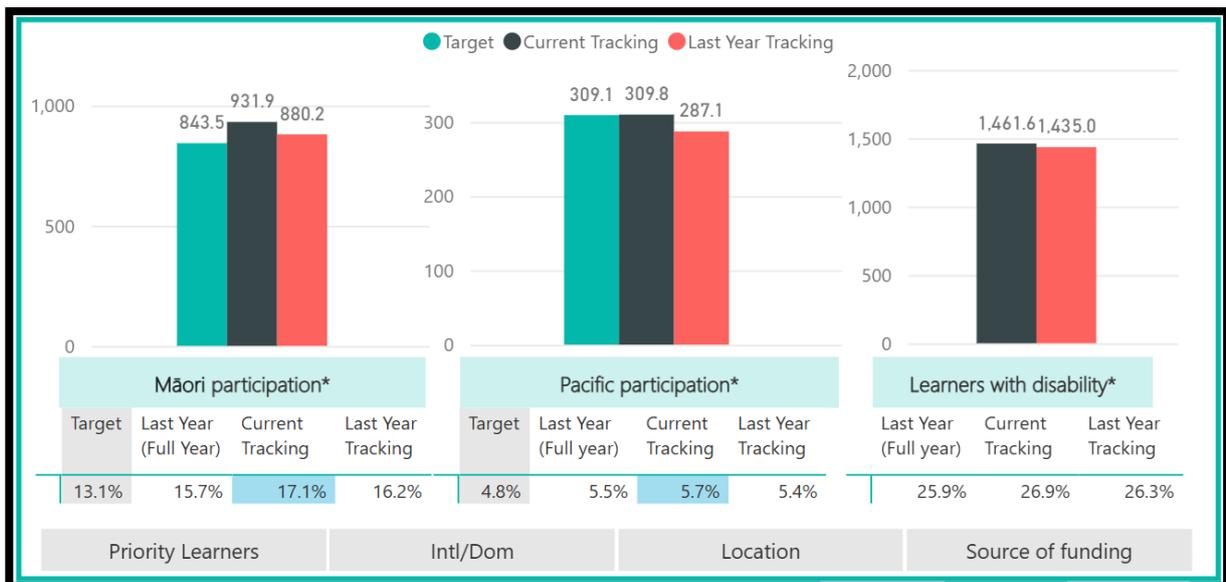
The Autumn graduation ceremonies were held this month and out of a total of 1800 ākonga eligible to graduate, 921 learners chose to attend to receive their certificate, diploma and degree qualifications in person. This included our first graduates from the jointly delivered Nursing programme that we have with Liaoning University of Traditional Chinese medicine. These graduation ceremonies will always be a highlight in our annual calendar. There is a further graduation ceremony coming up in Timaru on 30 April 2026.

Ara has passed back leadership and management oversight of the Tai Poutini Polytechnic business division of NZIST. Ara will continue to provide support for Finance and Systems supports and any additional support needed for people and culture matters.

2. Ara Performance Summary – as at 11 March 2026

	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	6,843.3	5,886.1	5,826.6	3.9%	1.0%
International/Domestic						
Domestic	6,439.3	6,303.0	5,440.2	5,447.8	2.2%	-0.1%
International	670.0	540.3	445.9	378.9	24.0%	17.7%

Location						
⊞ All Other	6,787.0	6,481.4	5,604.7	5,507.4	4.7%	1.8%
⊞ South Canterb…	322.3	361.9	281.4	319.2	-10.9%	-11.9%

Legend: ● Target ● Current Tracking ● Last Year Tracking

	Target	Last Year (Full Year)	Current Tracking	Last Year Tracking
Māori participation*	13.1%	15.7%	17.1%	16.2%
	843.5		931.9	880.2

	Target	Last Year (Full year)	Current Tracking	Last Year Tracking
Pacific participation*	4.8%	5.5%	5.7%	5.4%
	309.1		309.8	287.1

	Last Year (Full year)	Current Tracking	Last Year Tracking
Learners with disability*	25.9%	26.9%	26.3%
	1,461.6		1,435.0

Priority Learners	Intl/Dom	Location	Source of funding

- **Early monitoring of enrolments** against Ara's 2026 EFTS targets indicates **a mixed but manageable position**, noting that figures will continue to stabilise as non-starter withdrawals are finalised.
- **Growth is evident in several areas**, including Youth Guarantee (up 11.5% on the same time last year) and Trades Academy delivery (up 8.5%), with strong demand also enabling additional Te Reo provision within Foundation programmes.
- **Degree-level provision** is expected to exceed target, while priority learner participation is tracking ahead of both target and the same time last year.
- **Areas requiring continued focus** include international enrolments, where current growth of 17.7% sits below the 24% required for 2026, partly influenced by visa processing timeframes, and sub-degree provision, where modest growth of around 3.2% (approximately 100 EFTS) is required.
- **Overall, Ara remains close to target,** with targeted recruitment, conversion, and learner journey initiatives underway to support delivery of the 2026 enrolment objectives.

3. Educational Performance Indicators [EPI] and Student Achievement

3.1   Educational Performance Indicators (EPI)

Please refer to the February 2026 update – the current status remains unchanged since the previous report to the Ara Council.

3.2   Tracking to 2026 Equivalent Full-time Students [EFTS] Targets

Early monitoring of enrolments against 2026 EFTS targets indicates a mixed but manageable position. Current figures remain provisional as the enrolment cycle continues to stabilise and non-starter withdrawals are finalised.

a) **Foundation and Youth Guarantee**: Opportunities exist to increase delivery relative to 2026 allocations.
   - ❖ Youth Guarantee enrolments are 11.5% higher than the same time last year (STLY).
   - ❖ Demand for Te Reo provision is strong and additional delivery will be scheduled, supporting achievement of Foundation targets and representing growth on 2025 end-of-year results.

b) **Trades Academy**: Performance is tracking positively against targets.
   - ❖ Enrolments are 8.5% higher than STLY, indicating continued strong engagement with regional secondary school partners.

c) **International**: International enrolments remain a key strategic focus for 2026.
   - ❖ Current growth sits at 17.7%, with 24% growth required to achieve the 2026 target.
   - ❖ Visa processing timeframes are impacting conversion rates. Ara is actively engaging with Immigration New Zealand to support improved processing outcomes.

d) **Diversified revenue (off-job training linked to apprenticeships)**: Growth in this area may be influenced by increasing competition from new Private Training Establishment (PTE) entrants.
   - ❖ Approximately 10 EFTS growth on 2025 end-of-year performance is required to achieve the 2026 target.

e) **Degree provision**: Current performance indicates degree-level delivery will exceed the 2026 target.

f) **Sub-Degree Provision**
   - ❖ Improvement initiatives focused on the internal customer and learner journey are expected to strengthen performance in this area.
   - ❖ 3.2% growth is required, equivalent to approximately 100 EFTS growth on STLY.

g) **Priority learner participation**: Participation rates for priority learners are ahead of target and tracking above STLY, reflecting continued progress in equity-focused enrolment activity.

Overall Position

Overall enrolment performance remains close to target, with clear intervention areas identified. Work programmes across recruitment, conversion, and learner experience are being actively implemented to support delivery of Ara's 2026 enrolment objectives.

4. Financial Performance

Executive Financial Summary as at 28 February 2026

% of EFTS budget enrolled	**65%**	65% of the 2026 EFTS Budget were enrolled by month end. At the same time last year 65% of final 2025 EFTS had been enrolled.
YTD EBITDA	**-$2.8m**	The year-to-date EBITDA is -$2.8m, which is $3.7m better than the budget of -$6.4m. In the prior month, EBITDA was $3.7m better than budget.
YTD Total Revenue	**$14.9m**	Year-to-date revenue is $14.9m, which is -$0.1m lower than the budget of $15.0m. Prior month revenue was $0.2m higher than budget.
YTD Total Personnel Exp [ex annual leave impact]	**$12.9m**	Year-to-date personnel costs [excluding net annual leave] are $12.9m, which is -$0.9m lower than the budget of $13.8m.
YTD Net Surplus / (Deficit)	**-$2.7m**	The net surplus/deficit is -$2.7m, which is $3.5m better than the budget of -$6.2m. The prior month variance was $3.7m better than budget.
Cash	**$95.7m**	Current Cash Position is $95.7m. This has increased by $12.4m from the prior month.
Cash Cover	**9.4 months**	Measures ability to meet costs in absence of funding. TEC benchmark is minimum 2 months.
YTD Capex	**$1.9m**	Capex commitments year-to-date are $1.9m against a full-year budget of $16.6m.

5. Safety, Health and Wellbeing

Despite reduced operational activity during the summer closure, Ara has continued to progress in strengthening its Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHW) framework. Momentum has been sustained in advancing risk awareness, identifying improvement opportunities, and progressing forward planning.

Assurance of risk management remains a key focus. During the reporting period, several organisation-wide compliance reviews were completed, providing a structured self-assessment of Ara's legislative compliance position and identifying priority areas for improvement. Health and safety–related compliance attestations were peer reviewed by the Associate Director SHW, adding an additional layer of assurance. A structured action plan will be co-developed with senior leadership to enable risk owners to systematically address identified gaps and support progress toward full compliance in 2026.

The annual internal health and safety inspection programme is also now underway for 2026, following enhancements to the scope and audit procedures.

Planning has also commenced to strengthen organisational crisis readiness, including targeted Incident Management Team training and scenario-based exercises.

Workforce capability and wellbeing initiatives continue to progress. Key achievements include the delivery of mental health first aid training, the launch of a refreshed online health and safety induction, and the implementation of mandatory refresher training for kaimahi. This training addresses bullying and harassment prevention, bystander awareness, the Pastoral Care Code, cyber security awareness, and core organisational policies.

Following a temporary increase in OCP (employee assistance programme) utilisation in April 2025, usage has returned to expected levels. Targeted engagement with People & Culture to strengthen referral pathways and support managers to provide early assistance was delivered in February.

Communications during the period focused on building trust and confidence in SafePlace reporting, promoting ergonomic awareness, and encouraging participation in national wellbeing initiatives such as the Aotearoa Bike Challenge. The Rainbow Action Network also confirmed its 2026 priorities, with a focus on strengthening support for rainbow ākonga, building community connections, and delivering key visibility events.

A significant milestone was the approval of the 2026 SHW Operational Plan. The Plan sets clear objectives to strengthen leadership capability, mature SHW systems and assurance processes, and enhance critical risk controls, while supporting meaningful worker participation. Priority areas include managing risks associated with work-integrated learning, work-based learning, and offshore delivery, alongside renewed focus on occupational violence prevention. Development of a wellbeing plan and a review of SHW service delivery are also key priorities.

SafePlace reporting volumes increased in February (24), although remained below the comparable period in 2025 (33). Improving learner awareness of reporting channels will be prioritised in 2026.

Worker engagement and participation remained strong through established governance and representative forums, including the Health and Safety Working Group and the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Leadership Group. Digital engagement via Waituhi and Yammer was lower than usual due to the summer shutdown; however, SHW communications remained active, with steady online engagement maintained.

6. Highlights and Achievements

6.1   Faculty of Culture and Services

a) Adelle Hingston, a SASM the Hospitality & Services portfolio was profiled by Restaurant & Cafe magazine ([Women in Business | Adele Hingston, Ara Institute - Restaurant & Café](#)).

b) International student, Maira Scalco, studying for a Masters of Creative Practice, was featured in The Press. Mairi comes from an architecture and landscape background, and she hoped the Master's degree would help her make a career change to visual art. Maira liked that the course was not limited to just one creative area and allowed people from different backgrounds to study together and share ideas. She said Ara was one of the few places offering such a course. ([Ara polytechnic banks on more international students like Maira | The Press](#)).

6.2   Faculty of Applied Technology

a) A Mihi Whakatau was held for Architecture at Te Puna Wanaka. This gathering brought together Year 1,2 and 3 learners, along with industry representatives, reinforcing Ara's commitment to building strong connections across all cohorts and aligning to industry requirements.

b) It was also pleasing to note the largest attendance to date at the Mihi Whakatau held at Woolston. This demonstrates the growing significance of the occasion, to acknowledge and welcome our new learners in a culturally meaningful way.

c) Another milestone was the close-out of the SIT transition group, marking the completion of a significant piece of work to transfer all SIT Hornby delivery to Trades Woolston. This achievement represents a considerable operational shift that will benefit our learners and staff.

d) Initiated work on re-establishing Research Committees within the faculty. We are currently seeking nominations for new Research Chairs and are in the process of rebuilding a robust research community of practice.

e) Work is progressing with the University of Canterbury to establish clearer Engineering pathways, improving learner mobility and regional collaboration.

f) External investment has been secured from Taits to upgrade to industry-standard equipment, enhancing programme relevance and learner outcomes.

6.3   Faculty of Health and Science

a) The Manawa partnership agreement with Te Whatu Ora has now been finalised, enabling shared use of clinical training facilities and strengthening our presence in the Health Precinct.

b) A new Child Health & Development micro-credential has been developed, endorsed by the Portfolio and Assurance Committee and is currently progressing through Academic Committee approval. This micro-credential addresses a clear skills gap and reflects our responsiveness to sector needs.

c) Enrolments are strong with the Health and Community portfolio over target.

7. Media and Communications

7.1. Media engagement and coverage

Media sentiment in February was neutral, with coverage relating to national reporting on the financial settlement for newly independent polytechnics.

Coverage included:

- RNZ: Newly independent polytechnics given $325m from former owner
- The Press: Te Pūkenga gives $325m to newly separate polytechs
- Southland Times: Polytechs get $325m from former owner
- The Timaru Herald: Ara pauses decision on future of Timaru's art and design department
- Tertiary Insight: coverage included links to Ara's website news and council papers.

The team continued to maintain proactive relationships with regional journalists and stakeholders, including meeting with The Press and The Timaru Herald.

7.2. Storytelling and campaigns

Website stories included:

- *Get Set for '26 helps learners make confident start* (563 views)
- *Trifecta of awards for NZBS journalism ākonga* (258 views)
- *Warm welcome for learners in vital profession* (479 views).

Social media activity emphasised learner achievements, industry partnerships and early-year campus activity.

The team also began work supporting **several strategic programmes**. Highlights included:

- A communications and engagement plan outlining how the team will support Ara Strategic Priority 5 – the campaign to position Ara as Canterbury's vocational education leader
- A communications plan supporting NZIST's property team with the sale of Bluestone House in Timaru
- Planning for a year-long campaign marking 50 years of Ara's Bachelor of ICT, highlighting alumni impact and industry connections
- A communications plan supporting staff completion of compulsory annual learning
- Planning to launch the Ara writing style guide and te reo Māori style guide.

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Safety, Health and Wellbeing Framework

Incoming Brief and Current State

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1   Purpose and Overview

This document gives an overview of how Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHW) is governed at Ara, how the SHW framework works in practice, and how assurance is provided to TKM, Council, and regulators.

1.1   Briefing Summary [at a glance]

a   **Current state:** Core SHW systems and structures are in place, but implementation and capability aren't consistent across faculties and services.

b   **Next 12 months focus:** Strengthen leadership capability, clarify critical risk ownership, and implement a structured critical control verification programme.

c   **What will improve:** Sharper accountability, more consistent minimum expectations, and assurance reporting that is more focused on critical risks and legal compliance.

d   **Governance focus:** TKM and Council oversight will be important to reinforce accountabilities, challenge areas of weak assurance, and support prioritisation of capability/resourcing where risk is highest.

1.2   Ara has core systems and structures in place to support SHW. The SHW framework provides an integrated approach to preventing harm and supporting wellbeing across the organisation. It is based on policies, clear roles and responsibilities, and leadership and learning. The SHW framework operates across a complex, multi-campus vocational education environment, including some higher-risk activities.

1.3   **Key message:** SHW is established at Ara, but the application is not yet consistent across the organisation. The priority is to clarify ownership of critical risks, verify that critical controls are in place and effective, and strengthen leadership capability to ensure safe practice is consistent. TKM and Council oversight will support clear accountability and sustained focus on the highest risks.

1.4   The SHW framework is designed to:
a)   meet statutory and regulatory obligations
b)   embed Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and Te Ao Māori perspectives on hauora
c)   support safe and healthy learning and working environments for kaimahi and ākonga

d) provide Council and TKM with visibility of risk, performance, and areas requiring intervention

1.5 Ara is recognising that safe outcomes depend not just on documented controls, but also on how well the organisation responds to complexity, change, and competing demands. Compliance remains essential, and as the SHW framework becomes more embedded, more focus will be placed on leadership behaviours, everyday decision-making, and practical ways of working safely and sustainably.

1.6 **What this means in practice:** leaders and managers will be expected to routinely check that key controls are working (not just documented), and to act early when risk indicators show emerging pressure or change.

1.7 Assurance comes from several reinforcing sources. The strength of these assurance mechanisms varies across the organisation and is being improved.

2   How the SHW framework operates in practice

2.1   Policies, procedures and planning

a) Ara's SHW policy and procedures set expectations for managing risk. These procedures are at varying levels of development, maturity and implementation. The SHW framework includes procedures aligned to ISO 45001 (occupational health and safety management systems standards), covering:

- ❖ leadership and responsibilities
- ❖ planning and compliance
- ❖ records management and competency
- ❖ worker participation
- ❖ performance measurement, review, and assurance
- ❖ hazard and risk management
- ❖ management of change
- ❖ injury prevention and management
- ❖ contractor safety
- ❖ facilities design and construction
- ❖ fleet, plant, and equipment
- ❖ incident management
- ❖ emergency response

b) Strengthening consistency of application across faculties and services is a key focus area. Addressing these inconsistencies is a priority focus of the 2026 SHW operational plan.

c) The 2026 SHW operational plan prioritises system strengthening, leadership capability, staff and learner engagement, proactive risk management, and continuous improvement.

2.2 Risk identification, monitoring and learning

a) Ara uses a combination of local engagement and centralised systems to identify and manage risk. Assura (branded as SafePlace) is the organisation-wide system for reporting incidents, near misses, safety observations, pain and discomfort, and wellbeing concerns. Data is integrated into Power BI dashboards to monitor trends and emerging risks. Strengthening governance and assurance over critical risks is a priority area of systems development.

b) Ara's approach is increasingly focused on resilience. Through engagement with staff and learners, the organisation is identifying work pressures, competing demands, and the practical strategies people use to manage them. These insights are being used to better anticipate how change may impact Ara's ability to deliver work safely and to refine how work is planned and executed.

c) Ara's digital Critical Risk Campaign has increased awareness of key hazards, including hazardous substances, driving/vehicle accidents, outdoor exposure (e.g. drowning, hypothermia), falls from height, machinery, electricity, violence and aggression incidents, fire, earthquake or other natural disasters, and psychological harm. The campaign will continue through 2026.

d) Further work is required to:
   - ❖ clarify ownership of critical risks
   - ❖ establish a structured critical risk control verification programme
   - ❖ systematically test whether critical controls are present and effective

e) Over the next 12 months, internal audits and verification activities will be refined to focus on critical risks and legal compliance, ensuring resources are directed to areas of greatest risk.

2.3 Worker and learner participation

a) Worker and learner participation is a core element of the SHW framework.

b) Health and Safety Working Groups, Coordinators, and Representatives provide local insight, particularly in higher-risk environments.

c) Learner voice informs SHW priorities and system improvements.

d) Ongoing feedback from staff and learners continues to shape the evolution of Ara's SHW approach.

2.4 Incident, emergency and critical event management

a) Ara has an established Incident Management Plan supported by the Iluminr platform and New Zealand Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) structures. While core capability exists, ongoing exercises, reviews, and leadership engagement are required to ensure preparedness is effective and consistently applied.

b) Any notifiable health and safety events reported to the Associate Director SHW will also be reported to the Director of People and Culture, the Chief Executive, and WorkSafe. The Chief Executive is responsible for informing

Council and legal counsel.

2.5 Assurance

a) Assurance comes from a mix of reporting, executive oversight, independent review, and engagement with operational areas. These layers are designed to reinforce each other. The strength and consistency of assurance still vary across the organisation and are being strengthened.

b) **Current assurance:** reporting, escalation through leadership forums, and audits/compliance reviews provide visibility of activity and emerging issues.

c) **Strengthening:** more direct testing/verification of critical controls, clearer ownership of critical risks, and more consistent assurance across faculties and services.

d) TKM and Council receive assurance through:
   - ❖ regular performance and risk reporting
   - ❖ oversight and escalation via the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Leadership Group
   - ❖ internal audits and compliance reviews, with increasing focus on critical risks
   - ❖ advice from the Associate Director SHW
   - ❖ incident investigations or learning reviews
   - ❖ independent advice
   - ❖ direct engagement with people and operational environments.

3 Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities

3.1 Council

a) Council holds ultimate governance accountability for safety, health and wellbeing at Ara.

b) Council's role is to govern, not manage. In practice, this means setting expectations, seeking assurance, and ensuring that risks are being identified, controlled, and reviewed in a way that is proportionate to the organisation's risk profile.

c) Council meets its due diligence obligations by:

❖ Setting a clear tone for safe, healthy, and ethical operations

❖ Ensuring appropriate resources, capability, and governance structures are in place

❖ Seeking evidence-based assurance on critical risks and system effectiveness

❖ Challenging performance, capability gaps, and areas of weak assurance

3.2 Executive Leadership

a) Executive leaders (TKM) are responsible for integrating safety, health and wellbeing into strategic decision-making, operational delivery, change management, and resource allocation.

b) Executive oversight occurs through regular reporting and leadership forums.

c) With Ara's new status as a standalone PCBU, continued focus on strengthening leadership capability and consistent engagement will support clearer accountability and more effective integration of safety, health and wellbeing across the organisation.

d) The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Leadership Group is Ara's primary executive-level assurance forum. It oversees major risks, wellbeing outcomes, and system performance, and provides a mechanism for escalation and challenge. The group meets bi-monthly and draws on reports from operational working groups and the Associate Director.

e) Executive leaders are accountable for the ownership of safety, health and wellbeing risks within their portfolios, including ensuring that critical controls are defined, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness.

3.3 Operational Leadership

a) Managers and leaders are responsible for implementing the SHW framework in practice. This includes identifying and managing risks, planning work safely, building team capability, and responding effectively to incidents and concerns.

b) Operational leaders are responsible for the day-to-day management of risks and controls, and for providing assurance to executive leaders on how critical risks are being managed in practice.

c) Safety and compliance responsibilities are often assigned to designated roles within faculties and services, supported by corporate SHW advisors. However, internal resourcing for safety and compliance is uneven across portfolios, and not all areas currently have sufficient capability or capacity to meet expectations

consistently. Addressing this is a key organisational risk.

3.4 Associate Director, Safety, Health and Wellbeing

a) The Associate Director SHW acts as system steward and chief advisor for SHW.

b) The role provides strategic leadership, maintains organisational frameworks and assurance systems, and advises TKM and Council.

c) Responsibilities also include emergency management and child protection oversight.

d) The Associate Director leads a small generalist SHW team.

3.5 Guideline – roles, responsibilities and accountabilities under HSWA [submitted for approval]

a) The guideline document translates policy intent into clear accountability across the organisation. Its core purpose is to define who is responsible for what in relation to safety, health and wellbeing.

b) The guideline:

❖ sets out the respective responsibilities of Council, officers, workers and others (students, visitors, casual volunteers)

❖ clarifies how safety and wellbeing responsibilities are distributed across governance, leadership and operational levels

❖ describes expectations for resourcing, capability, planning, risk management, incident management, emergency management and performance monitoring

❖ supports consistency by providing a common reference point for role expectations across faculties and services

Unlike the policy, this document is operationally explicit. It is designed to be used:

❖ by leaders and managers to understand their obligations

❖ in induction, capability development and performance conversations

❖ to reduce ambiguity about ownership of risks, actions and decisions

The document does not provide strategic commentary or system maturity assessment. Its function is practical and enabling.

4 Recommendation

That the Ara Council **receive** the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Framework and **note** its' contents.

Safety, Health and Wellbeing Policy

First Produced:	April 2016	Authorisation:	Te Kāhui Manukura and Council
Current Version:	dd/mm/yy [date when approved]		
Past Revisions:	31/10/22	Officer	Chief Executive
Review Cycle:	3-year cycle	Responsible:	
Applies From:	Immediately		

All policies on Waituhi are the current version. Please check date of this hard copy before proceeding.

1   Introduction

1.1   Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

a. Set out Ara's commitment to providing a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for all learners, staff, contractors, visitors, and partners.
b. Establishes the principles and expectations that guide how we identify, manage, and continuously improve safety, health, and wellbeing across our organisation.
c. Outline the responsibilities of all people at Ara in proactively contributing to a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where everyone can thrive.

1.2   Scope and Application

This policy applies to all Ara colleagues and learners

For the purposes of this policy, and for the avoidance of any doubt, the term "colleagues" is defined in the definitions section below and includes volunteers, contractors, external partners or third-party providers who may interact with Ara

1.3   Formal Delegations

Ara's Chief Executive and Council retain primary responsibility as the PCBU under the Health and Safety at Work Act for ensuring the effective implementation of this Policy.

1.4   Leadership and Responsibilities

At Ara, creating a safe, healthy and inclusive work and learning environment is a shared responsibility. Every member of our community- learners, colleagues and leaders- has a role to play. This means taking care of your own health and safety, looking out for others, following lawful and reasonable instructions, and actively contributing to a respectful and supportive community where everyone feels safe to participate and succeed.

Ara's Council and Executive Leadership Team (Te Kāhui Manukura) provide leadership and oversight for safety, health and wellbeing and are accountable for ensuring appropriate capability, systems, and resources are in place.

Leaders and managers are responsible for creating safe and supportive environments, managing risks within their area of responsibility, and responding appropriately to issues and concerns.

1.5   Definitions

* **Colleagues:** Refers to any person working at, for, with, or on behalf of, Ara, and includes, but is not limited to, staff employed directly by Ara, irrespective of whether they are paid or voluntary, or whether they are working on a full time, part time, causal or temporary basis, as well as any persons contracted or invited to provide services to Ara.

- **Wellbeing:** The holistic state of an individual's cultural, spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, and social health in relation to their work or learning environment.

- **Safety:** A state of being free or protected from harm or danger.

- **Health:** A state or dynamic balance of physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

- **Hazard:** Any source, situation, or act with the potential to cause harm, including injury, illness, or damage to property and equipment.

- **Near miss:** An unplanned, unpredicted event that does not result in injury, illness, or damage- but had the potential to do so.

Related Ara Procedures	Related Ara Policies
• CPP222a Guidelines bullying harassment and discrimination.pdf.url • Safety, Health and Wellbeing Procedures on Waituhi	• CPP117 Raising Problems or Complaints • CPP208 Resolving Staff Performance or Conduct Issues • CPP211 Code of Professional Practice • CPP222 Addressing Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination • Privacy Policy
Related Legislation or Other Documentation	**Good Practice Guidelines**
• Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 • Privacy Act 2020 • Health and Safety at Work Act 2015	
References	
Notes	

2   Principles

2.1   Ara has a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of all people it serves. We provide a safe, healthy and supportive environment for everyone who learns, works, visits, or engages with us.

2.2   Safety, health, and wellbeing are fundamental to learner success, colleague capability, and public trust, and are integral to how Ara fulfils its role as a vocational education provider in Aotearoa New Zealand.

2.3   Ara meets its obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act, and the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice.

2.4   Ara upholds the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in its approach to safety, health, and wellbeing by working in partnership with Māori, enabling participation in decisions that affect wellbeing, and proactively protecting people from harm and inequity.

2.5   Beyond compliance, Ara strives to create environments where people feel safe to learn, work, speak up, and belong.

3   Our Approach to Safety, Health and Wellbeing

3.1   Ara adopts a proactive, integrated and preventative approach to safety, health and wellbeing. We recognise that harm can arise not only from physical hazards, but also from the way work and learning are designed, resourced and experienced.

3.2   Risks to health and safety are eliminated where reasonably practicable. Where elimination is not possible, risks are minimised so far as is reasonably practicable.

3.3   This approach includes designing safe, inclusive and accessible environments; identifying and managing physical, health and psychosocial risks; supporting positive mental health and wellbeing; responding early to concerns; and learning from experience. Safety, health and wellbeing are embedded in planning, decision-making and organisational change.

3.4   Ara values the knowledge and experience of those closest to the work and learning environment. Meaningful engagement and participation are essential, and concerns are listened to respectfully. Health and Safety Representatives, learner voice mechanisms, and pastoral care supports are integral to this approach.

3.5   Learning environments are designed to support learner safety, wellbeing and success in line with the Pastoral Care Code. This includes safe and respectful physical and online environments, clear pathways to support services, and appropriate responses to learners experiencing distress, harm, or disadvantage. Learner wellbeing is a shared responsibility across teaching, support services, and leadership.

3.6   Prompt reporting of incidents, injuries, hazards and near misses is expected. Reporting is viewed as a positive act that supports learning and improvement. Learners, colleagues, and visitors are supported to speak up without fear of blame, and to contribute to improving safety and wellbeing.

3.7   Incidents are investigated to understand contributing factors, address underlying causes and reduce the likelihood of recurrence. Learnings are shared where appropriate to strengthen organisational capability.

3.8   Emergency procedures are maintained to support the safety of people in the event of an emergency. These procedures are communicated, practiced and reviewed to ensure they remain effective and well understood.

3.9   Ara continuously improves its safety, health and wellbeing performance by monitoring outcomes, seeking feedback, reviewing systems and adapting its approach as the organisation, sector, and community evolve.

3.10   This policy provides the foundation for setting safety, health and wellbeing objectives and monitoring performance across Ara. It is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant, effective and aligned with good practice and legislative requirements.

Safety, Health, and Wellbeing   Click here to enter a date.   CPP501

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Chief Executive Signature   Council Signature

CPP501a - Safety, Health and Wellbeing Guidelines

Guideline: Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities under HSWA			
First Produced:	XX	Authorisation:	Te Kāhui Manukura
Current Version:	dd/mm/yy [date when approved]	Officer Responsible:	Associate Director-Safety, Health and Wellbeing
Past Revisions:	XX3 year cycle		
Review Cycle:	Immediately		
Applies From:			

1   Introduction

1.1   Purpose

To ensure that the responsibilities and accountabilities of relevant roles within Ara's Health and Safety Management System are documented, assigned, and communicated at all levels of the organisation. This guideline aligns levels of management to key Duty Holders within the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA), and provides guidance for officers, colleagues and others on their health and safety responsibilities and accountabilities.

1.2   Application

This guideline serves as a supplement to the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Policy and is applicable to Ara (as the PCBU), all officers, staff members, and others with responsibilities related to health and safety. Please note that this guideline is not exhaustive, does not constitute legal advice, and should be considered alongside relevant delegated authorities and role descriptions.

This document should be reviewed periodically by officers and colleagues to ensure familiarity with duties under HSWA and alignment with individual role descriptions.

1.3   Definitions

a   **Accountability:** Is the ownership of actions, decisions, outcomes and their consequences. The accountability of the PCBU and its officers cannot be delegated.

b   **Active Engagement:** Focus on continual improvement of health and safety procedures and processes. Officers and colleagues demonstrate ownership, leadership, initiative, and proactive monitoring to ensure health and safety obligations are met.

c   **Due Diligence:** The exercise of care that a reasonable person is expected to take. Under HSWA, officers must take proactive steps to ensure the PCBU complies with its duties.

d   **Officer:** An individual who holds a very senior leadership position and has the ability to significantly influence the management of a business or undertaking. People who provide health and safety or other advice or make recommendations to senior leadership are not officers solely on that basis.

e   **Other Persons**: Individuals who are present at a workplace but are not workers, e.g., visitors, customers, clients, passers-by, children visiting a parent at their workplace, casual volunteers.

f   **PCBU**: Means a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking. It is a concept used throughout the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 to describe all types of working arrangements which are commonly referred to as businesses. The difference between a business and an undertaking is that businesses are usually conducted to make a profit, while undertakings are not usually profit making or commercial in nature e.g. government department or agency, local council, schools or early childhood education service, charities. Volunteer associations, home occupiers, and home workers are not PCBUs.

g   **Reasonably Practicable**: Determining what risks are caused by work, how likely they are to occur, and taking proportionate action using effective industry practices and worker involvement.

h   **Responsibility**: The duty or obligation to complete assigned activities to the best of one's ability. Responsibilities, authority and control may be delegated by the PCBU and its officers to workers and others, but they remain ultimately accountable for any actions, decisions, outcomes and consequences.

i   **Worker**: An individual who carries out work in any capacity for a PCBU. Includes employees, contractors, subcontractors, sole traders, labour-hire staff, apprentices, trainees, outworkers and volunteers (excluding casual volunteers).

2   Goals

2.1   Define Duty Holder roles under health and safety legislation and connect these to roles at Ara where appropriate.

2.2   Ensure colleagues understand their level of accountability and responsibility under HSWA in the context of Ara.

2.3   Improve engagement and understanding, particularly at senior leadership levels.

2.4   Educate current officers and colleagues as well as onboarding and training new colleagues in health and safety roles.

Related Ara Procedures	Related Ara Policies
• CPP222a Guidelines bullying harassment and discrimination.pdf.url • Ara Safety, Health and Wellbeing Procedures and Guidelines (Waituhi)	• CPP117 Raising Problems or Complaints • CPP120 Delegations Policy • CPP120a Delegations Register

• Health and Safety Coordinator and Representatives Functions Documents • Health, Safety and Wellbeing Leadership Group Terms of Reference • Ara Safety, Health and Wellbeing Operational Plan	• CPP208 Resolving Staff Performance or Conduct Issues • CPP211 Code of Professional Practice • CPP222 Addressing Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination • CPP109 Privacy Policy
Related Legislation or Other Documentation • Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 • Privacy Act 2020 • Health and Safety at Work Act 2015	**Good Practice Guidelines**
References	
Notes	

3   Categories of Duty Holders

Duty Holder under HSWA	Who	Responsibilities
PCBU	Ara Institute of Canterbury	A broad term to categorise businesses, large corporates, and sole traders. Holds the primary Duty of Care and is responsible for the health and safety of workers. Must take reasonable care to keep everyone in the workplace healthy and safe. Responsibilities may be delegated, but accountability cannot.
Officer	Senior leaders with significant influence (e.g., Chief Executive, Council, TKM)	Must exercise Due Diligence to ensure the PCBU meets its duties. May be personally liable if due diligence obligations are not met. All officers have the same level of due diligence required of them i.e., there is no rank among officers. Officer FAQs | WorkSafe
Workers	Colleagues and contractors	May be involved in the day-to-day management of health and safety matters within the remit of their function, faculty, division or department. Must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and ensure their actions do not harm others. Have the right to stop unsafe work. Some workers may have

		additional legal obligations and functional health and safety responsibilities, (e.g. Laboratory Managers); however, this does not make them officers under HSWA unless they meet the statutory definition.
Other Persons	Students, visitors, casual volunteers	Must act responsibly to protect their own health and safety, ensuring that their behaviour does not cause harm to themselves or others. Must follow any reasonable instructions from the PCBU or a worker, including wearing personal protective equipment.

4   Duties of Officers

4.1   Under the HSWA, an officer is a person who holds a very senior leadership position and can significantly influence the management of a PCBU. Every officer has a duty under section 44 (4) of HSWA to exercise due diligence to ensure the PCBU complies with its health and safety obligations. Officers must understand how the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Management System operates and verify that it is effective. This accountability cannot be delegated.

Officers (except volunteer officers) can be found personally liable by WorkSafe if they fail to meet their due diligence requirements. Officers need to consider the role they have within a PCBU, as context is critical. What is required of an officer will depend on their circumstances, such as their ability to influence and control. This will be determined by the nature of the business operations and the nature of the work being carried out.

Officers retain ultimate accountability, even if they delegate the day-to-day management of health and safety to others. Delegating these operational responsibilities to management or colleagues does not transfer or diminish their overall accountability.

People providing advice to the PCBU or its officers are not officers solely because of that advisory role. Some examples of people who are not officers (unless they also fall into the officer categories described above) include:

- Associate Director Safety, Health and Wellbeing
- Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisors
- Health and Safety Coordinators and Representatives
- Team leaders, line managers and supervisors
- People that have 'officer' in their job title, such as Administration Officer.

5   Officer Due Diligence – Practical Examples

The following examples illustrate how officers at Ara may practically demonstrate due diligence.

Duty	Practical Application
Keep up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters	Hold regular health and safety meetings, review reports, and engage with Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisors.
Understand operations and associated hazards and risks	Review risk registers, conduct site visits, and engage with workers.
Ensure appropriate resources and processes are available to eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety from the work or activities of the PCBU	Provide adequate training, procedures, emergency planning and resourcing.
Ensure processes for reporting and responding to incidents	Review incident reporting systems and follow up on corrective actions.
Ensure processes for complying with any duty or obligation of the PCBU	Review compliance requirements and follow up on non-conformances.
Verify implementation of resources and processes	Review data dashboards, attend SHW committee meetings, ensure annual planning and budgeting includes health and safety.
Continuous improvement and learning	Independent assurance, audits and external benchmarking

Ara Council Meeting Schedule - Work Programme 2026

as at 24 March 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	
	26	Academic Committee	
April	28	**Council Meeting [Christchurch]** • STRATEGY TOPIC • Health and Safety Walkabout	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 • Health and Safety Walkabout [Timaru]	
June	?	Remuneration Committee	Chair 28/5 to 20/6
	3	Audit and Risk Committee	
	18	Academic Committee	
	23	**Council Meeting (Christchurch)** • Quarterly TKM Reports • Health and Safety Walkabout	
July	22	Ara Whakatau Semester Two – City	
	23	Academic Committee	
	28	**Council Meeting (Christchurch)** • Fee Setting	
	29	Ara Whakatau Semester Two – Timaru	
August	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	**Council Meeting (Timaru)**	
		• Annual Report 2025 – content/format	
		• Report on Affixing of Common Seal	
		• Health and Safety Walkabout – Timaru Campus	
November	4	Audit and Risk Committee	
	?	Remuneration Committee	
	19	Academic Committee	
	24	**Council Meeting (Christchurch)**	
		• Planning 2027	
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, Boardroom, Timaru 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