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7 August 2024

Professor Dawn Freshwater  
Vice Chancellor  
Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland

Dawn, tēnā koe

I write as the representative of staff who belong to Te Hautū Kahurangi | Tertiary Education Union at Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland.

In the last week, the TEU has fielded innumerable alarmed queries from members related to the messaging that some are receiving from their Deans regarding a substantial directive to cut courses. Members are further alarmed to find that communication is coming from some but not all Deans.

I take this opportunity to remind the Vice Chancellor of your obligations under Part 1 Clauses 2.4 -2.6 of the Academic Staff Collective Agreement 1 September 2022 – 31 August 2024:

- 2.4 The Employer recognises that employees covered by this agreement are entitled to participate in the academic governance of the University as provided in this clause, both individually and collectively as members of the union, acknowledging that the University is governed by its Council.
- 2.5 The Employer recognises that such collective participation is particularly important in relation to academic matters, complementary to the role and responsibility of the Senate for academic matters.
- 2.6 In order to ensure that such collective participation in the academic governance of the University is effective, the Employer shall comply with the following participatory processes when reviewing University policies relating to research and study leave, outside activities undertaken by academic staff, and academic standards.

The directive to cut courses across the University on the scale proposed has not involved employees under this collective and will have a significant effect on academic matters as set out

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in the above clauses. The rationale for new, accelerated set of directives have not been adequately conveyed to staff. Participation is important prior to decisions being made.

In a short time, a range of concerns are being highlighted by our members including:

- There are few details to support the plans, or how they would rationalise or optimise academic offerings.
- There are few details of the criteria to be applied to courses or programmes.
- The effects on staffing are unclear.
- There are few details as to how this process will enhance the quality of the education we offer students.

Staff who have been given directives but little information will be concerned about the effects this will have on their students, their courses and their programmes.

On behalf of our members, we ask that, as the employer, you

- abide by the terms of the collective agreements in this matter, especially but not only those provisions for participatory academic governance and collective participation in academic matters. The branch is happy to provide union representatives for this process.
- take these plans to Senate, directly or via the Education committee.
- demonstrate the openness, trustworthiness and respect for each other that you refer to in Taumata Teitei.

We also remind you that consultation is required with the Union if a review has the potential to affect staff job security.

Nā



Nicole Wallace

Organiser

Te Hautū Kahurangi | Tertiary Education Union