

UC launch Rotorua distance student-teacher support initiative.



Rotorua student-teachers studying with the University of Canterbury (UC) will receive direct support, including their own kaihautū (leader) from UC, a designated local study space, mentorship through local schools, and lecturers delivering study workshops face-to-face.

UC has a proud history of delivering teacher education programmes in Rotorua and has built strong relationships with local principals, Iwi and the community. With the UC Rotorua Centre recently closed to new enrolments, UC Head of School: Teacher Education, Associate Professor Misty Sato, says it is imperative to continue to offer a tailored support package to Rotorua-based student-teachers studying via the distance pathway.

“The principals and teachers in Rotorua have always been very supportive of us and our graduates. They are keen to continue to be supportive and have a goal to be active in the development of future teachers. That is important to us and we want to continue our commitment to realising that same goal.”

Principal at Western Heights Primary School, Brent Griffin, is highly complementary of UC’s Rotorua-based teaching graduates. “Thank you, University of Canterbury, College of Education for providing such an amazing Teacher’s Training Programme for the City of Rotorua and outlying communities. I have five current staff members out of 19 that came through the University of Canterbury, College of Education, Rotorua Campus. They are outstanding teachers. Hats off to The University of Canterbury for making this happen. So very grateful”,

UC's teaching programmes in Rotorua will be delivered by the distance-learning option. As well as a comprehensive online support package and professional practice teaching placements in the wider-Rotorua area. However, the new support package will allow Rotorua-based students to have curriculum based face-to-face lectures/workshops in Rotorua twice a year with high quality UC lecturers who have specialist knowledge. In addition, students in the Rotorua cohort will be coordinated as an exclusive hub, with a designated study space hosted at a local primary school. They will be visited once a term by their own kaihautū (leader) from UC who will a UC lecturer to provide face-to-face workshops in Rotorua, to mentor and support student teachers as they learn strategies and skills to become effective and dynamic UC teacher graduates. Also, the UC based Kaihautū will provide regular on-line meetings. Additionally, this Rotorua cohort will be supported further through the well-developed, long-term partnerships between local schools and the University of Canterbury.

"The Rotorua cohort will be unique and get an experience unlike any other we offer. Our distance study programmes are robust, and we have hundreds of successful students through this option. Rotorua students will benefit from the partnership with local principals and teachers; people who are invested in their success. Add in the specific kaihautū role that will support them and their learning, and lecturers coming to them to ensure their continued success, and it is an exciting opportunity that we are proud to offer," says Professor Sato.

Otonga Road School Principal, Linda Woon, is excited to be involved in this new initiative. "Rotorua schools have been totally blessed to have wonderful graduates from the locally-based Canterbury University teacher training programme since 1997. We were devastated to think we might lose this valuable programme from our region. We are thrilled to work with UC, the Rotorua Principals Association and Mokoia Intermediate School to keep this high-quality local teacher training programme going, albeit in a different venue. It is great news for our regional schools," she says.

Further information

This initiative will be offered for the first time in 2020. To be a part of the Rotorua cohort, apply for the Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (Primary) distance study option and you will be contacted by the kaihautū before the programmes start date (mid-February). For more information about study options, programme details and applications visit www.canterbury.ac.nz/education