

MEMORANDUM

TO	Grant Guilford, Vice-Chancellor
FROM	Madeleine Setchell, Director Communications, Marketing and Engagement
CC	Rawinia Higgins, Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor Engagement
DATE	23 April 2018
PAGES	14
SUBJECT	International Reputation Building

Background

The University is currently looking at a programme of work to improve our international reputation. One idea being discussed is the simplification of the University's name. The Vice-Chancellor is currently engaged in conversations with internal and external groups to explore this idea.

Purpose

If a decision is made to simplify the University's name there will be a significant amount of work required to make the changes required. While no decisions have been made yet, discussions are underway about how this project might be undertaken. This memo outlines the timeline and also the communications and engagement approach for the project.

Time frame

These timings are based on, and work back from, the date that the official use of a simplified name could begin. We are suggesting that any simplified name is used from [REDACTED]

We believe this is the first practicable date given the work that needs to be done in preparation for the change. This work includes brand development and guidelines, changes to the most important web pages, consideration of sub-brand changes and graduation and student recruitment cycles.

It should be noted that further discussion will be needed with other key groups in the University through the project management process to test this timeline.

	Branding	Websites	Communications & Engagement
	Develop an agency brief and choose a partner (Tender?)	Decide on scope.	
	Agency to review and design for brand work, including University seal, sub-brands, architecture, federation branding and house style layouts	Consolidate existing web templates and audit all functionality. Web staff recruitment begins	Approach and messaging developed and agreed Key stakeholder engagement led by the Vice-Chancellor
			Staff engagement through staff forums. Alumni engagement
	Trademarks applied for	Prepare web editors and give them guidelines on changes.	Name simplification discussed by Council
	University brand guidelines work begins University brand guidelines completed Rebrand recruitment collateral Rebrand email newsletter	Clone website and begin to apply new branding and content changes.	Public announcement of name simplification to staff, alumni, stakeholders and media.

	Branding	Websites	Communications & Engagement
	Video rebranding, memorabilia rebranding, Victoria collateral (alumni, events, graduation, recruitment) rebranding, new social media branding introduced, advertising campaign planning, trademarks granted?	Website tested and live end of Web work on live site ongoing	
	Rebranding of graduation programme, degree certificates, transcripts	Web work ongoing on live site	
	New brand campaign launched, subject to funding	Web work ongoing on live site	
		Web work ongoing on live site	

Communications and Engagement

This section proposes a communications and engagement approach to simplifying the University's name. This approach will guide efforts to ensure a variety of internal and external audiences receive the right information, at the right time, in order to encourage buy-in and understand the opportunities and challenges.

This section outlines an approach to communications and engagement for the first phase of activity (until discussion and any decisions are made by the University Council, which is expected to happen at the end of [REDACTED]). If a decision is made it is envisaged that a public announcement will be made in [REDACTED]. Once a decision has been made by the University Council, a targeted action plan will be developed to communicate the decision and begin the programme of work needed to prepare for implementation in [REDACTED].

Approach

The University will take a proactive approach to communication and engagement internally and externally, and within New Zealand and internationally. The messaging will be adapted as the discussions progress and develop.

Initially, the focus will be on:

Discussions with stakeholders (including government, partners, staff, students and alumni) to examine and explain the rationale for change

Feedback by email, or direct to members of the Senior Leadership Team.

Once a preferred option or preferred options is/are developed the focus will be on:

Communicating clearly and widely the options and their potential benefits

Responding quickly to media/public questions and criticisms

Enlisting ambassadors to help people understand what the University is doing and why

We will also follow the below principles of engagement

- People who have the ability to influence the outcome of the decision, or have proven their advocacy and support of the University will be communicated with on a one-to-one basis
- Providing context that is relevant to the audience is essential
- [REDACTED] all interested parties will be able to provide views
- Members of the University community will be provided with relevant and timely information and their feedback will be responded to

Audiences

Council: Provide opportunity for input and keep updated via regular Council meetings. Approvers of the common seal.

Former Chancellors/VCs: Engage early on and ensure they are provided with context and ability to feedback.

SLT and other senior staff: Need to have access to key messages and Q&A. To be responsible for feeding back areas of concern to V-C and identifying opportunities for V-C to further engage key groups.

High influence stakeholders: Identify those who are influential and have a stake in the decision and engage with them to ensure context is understood. This group includes Advisory Board members, SLT managed relationships, funders, and partner institutions.

Staff: Engage with staff in a way that enables them to help identify ways to ensure Victoria's reputation is recognised on the international stage.

Alumni: Engage as key members of the University community, and ensure they are provided with context and ability to feedback. Identify influential alumni for more targeted engagement.

Donors and prospective donors: Are treated as valued members of the University community, are provided context and given opportunity to feedback on ideas to ensure Victoria's reputation is recognised on the international stage. Identify major donors, key funder organisations/trusts for more targeted engagement. [REDACTED]

Students: Engage with key student leaders to gain their feedback.

Media: Respond to queries as and when required with pre-prepared statements. V-C to be spokesperson.

Key Messages- Draft

The overarching messages, which will be refined and added to depending on the audience, are:

- International research and the interactions of our staff and students show that the very high quality of research and teaching at our University is not as well recognised offshore as it should be.
- A lack of international recognition of our strengths and capabilities is holding the University back in terms of achieving the international reputation that aligns with our excellence.
- Our international standing being out of kilter with our teaching and research quality also affects alumni, staff and students, who are denied the career benefits conferred by studying and working at an esteemed institution.
- It is also problematic in that we are less well positioned to collaborate with top-ranked institutions or compete for international research grants.

- In addition, it compromises our ability to recruit and retrain international staff and students.
- We are exploring the factors that are contributing to our international standing being undermined.
 - One is the need to build deeper partnerships with other prestigious universities around the world and, through these, conduct interdisciplinary, high impact, research programmes.
 - Another is to refine our publishing and dissemination strategies to maximise the reach and visibility of our research.
 - A third is to examine the clarity of our brand – we know that confusion arises around the world because there are a number of other similarly named institutions. This means that the achievements of our staff and students can be attributed to other institutions and countries, dimming our international standing.
- One possible solution to the confusion over our brand is to simplify the University’s name. This has been proposed a number of times in the past, including in 1955 when a vote was taken to name the University, the University of Wellington. It was mooted again in the early 1970s and in 1992 when a member of Council suggested the word Victoria be dropped.
- There is an existing example of another university adopting this approach to deal with the same challenges Victoria is facing—the former Victoria University of Manchester became the University of Manchester in 2004.
- The name the University of Wellington would align us even more closely with our city and our region, something that is central to achieving our goal of being one of the world’s great global-civic universities. Global-civic universities are first and foremost about their city and are prepared to tie their fortunes to their city. There is untapped potential in our relationship with Wellington, and with having our brand aligned more closely with Wellington, could help build our international reputation.

Media Holding Statement

If media queries are received about a possible change to the University’s brand, the following statement will be provided:

International research has shown that the very high quality of our research and teaching isn’t being as well recognised offshore as it should be. We also know that confusion arises with our name because there are a number of other universities around the world that are similarly named. This means the achievements of our staff and students – and for –that matter our City – can be attributed to other institutions and countries – diming our international standing. Given the importance of the clarity of our name, we are considering whether changes are needed.

(Approved by Vice-Chancellor)

We will also develop a set of questions and answers. Work has begun on a list of questions which is outlined in Appendix One.

Channels

The University will use a range of existing channels to communicate and engagement with its audiences including face-to-face meetings, staff forums and other internal communications channels, e-newsletters, feedback forms and university publications.

A key channel for communicating and engaging with all our audiences is the website. Work to date shows that the website will be one of our biggest and most resource-hungry challenges should a decision to simplify the University's name be made. Essentially we will have to clone our websites and make the changes on versions of our websites that are hidden. [REDACTED] these 'hidden' websites would be launched and the existing site taken down.

There are approximately 160 core university websites. Over the coming weeks we need to make further recommendations on a reduced list of our core websites to be updated before [REDACTED] those that will be updated the coming years and those which may never be updated. However, we believe there are some critical pages that must be done including our recruitment content and key Homesite and Faculty content. Our initial resourcing and budget estimates are based on this work.

We also note that there will be other technical costs that are related to the website but part of the ITS budget—for example setting up the clone website, updating our search engine and other external development costs based on existing services. This work would need to be scoped as part of the ITS stream of work.

Targeted engagement plan

We recommend informing high influence stakeholders and major donors of the brand evaluation process at the same time as staff are informed, and shortly before alumni are informed. This is primarily due to the fact that we would like this group to receive the message before they receive the alumni e-news (which many will receive). The list comprises a number of people who have just been involved in the Colmar Brunton research.

As noted in the proposed engagement timeline we recommend the Vice-Chancellor contacts these individuals via phone or email between 1 and 3 May.

The below list is provided for the Vice-Chancellor's consideration.

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Engagement timeline

This table sets out proposed timings for communicating the process engaging people in the discussion about the name simplification, up until a decision is made about future initiatives at the University Council meeting [REDACTED]

Timeframe	Task / Event	Responsibility	Other Considerations
Complete via letter	Inform Minister	VC	Awaiting meeting
	Make University Council, SLT, Deans and Directors aware of proposals	VC	
Ongoing	Discuss at HoS/CSU Directors meeting and at visits to Schools/CSUs	VC	
	Inform VUWSA	VC	
	Inform Mayor and WCC CEO	VC	
	Inform TEC	VC	
	Inform other VCs via Universities NZ	VC	
April			
Mid-April	Inform Education New Zealand [REDACTED]	VC	
Mid-April	Inform former Chancellors and VCs (email/phone)	VC	
17-Apr	Verbal update at Academic Board meeting	VC	
17-Apr	Verbal update at Foundation Board meeting	VC	
Last week of April - Early May	Inform individuals listed under targeted engagement	VC	18-29 April VC travel to US
Last week of April - Early May	Inform US and UK friends	VC/Development Office	
Last week of April - Early May	Inform Regional Ambassadors	E&A/VC to join phone conference	
30-Apr	University Council meeting		
May			
2-4 May	Staff forums	VC (assisted by E&A)	
7 May	VicNews (VC Column)		
7-May	Alumni e-news (intro from VC)	E&A	Feedback to alumni@victoria.ac.nz

8-May	SLT and Deans and Directors meeting	SLT members	
9-May	VC visit to School of Law	VC	Regularly scheduled school visit
15, 16, or 17 May	Inform [REDACTED]	E&A	14-18 May Graduation Week
23-May	VC visit to HPPI	VC	Regularly scheduled school visit
23-May	CSU / HoS Forum		
31-May	VC visit to Health Services CSU	VC	Regularly scheduled CSU visit
Ongoing throughout May	Alumni focus groups	E&A	
Ongoing throughout May	Inform other organisations with Victoria in name (eg. VicBooks, Victoria Law Students Society etc)	E&A	
June			
1-Jun	VC visit to SoG	VC	Regularly scheduled school visit
7-8 June	Universities NZ Away Days for VCs		
12-Jun	VC quarterly meeting with [REDACTED]	VC	
13-Jun	Benefactors Circle	VC / Development Office	
15-Jun	VC regular meeting with Experience Wellington	VC	
15-Jun	VC meeting with MacDiarmid Board Chair	VC	
			18-24 June VC at EDUData Summit (incl meeting with QS)
25-Jun	University Council meeting		
28-Jun	NZ-China Board meeting	VC	
29-Jun	VC visit to School of Architecture	VC	Regularly scheduled school visit
Late June	University Stakeholder Briefing(s)	VC (assisted by E&A)	
July			
5-Jul	Speech to secondary school principals	VC	
6-Jul	VC visit to School of Economics and Finance	VC	Regularly scheduled school visit

10-Jul	SLT meeting (review Council paper?)	SLT members	
10-Jul	VC visit to Wai-te-ata Press	VC	Regularly scheduled CSU visit
11-Jul	VC visit to School of Management	VC	Regularly scheduled school visit
19-Jul	VC visit to Student Counselling	VC	Regularly scheduled CSU visit
20-Jul	University Council papers due		
27-Jul	University Council meeting		
August - September			
	Victorious (postponed from currently scheduled July date)	Comms	
General			
	Inform key stakeholders in course of regular catch-ups	SLT members	
11-May	Catch-up with [REDACTED]	VC	
30-May	Catch-up with [REDACTED]	VC	
14 June (TBC)	Meeting with Department of Internal Affairs	VC	

Appendix One Questions (and Answers) - DRAFT

What are you doing?

We are exploring a range of initiatives that will help improve Victoria University's international reputation and ensure our world-class research and teaching is properly recognised.

Why are you doing it?

There is quite a lot of research that shows that the very high quality of research and teaching at our University is not as well recognised offshore as it should be. This is problematic for the University in a number of ways—it affects our international rankings, it means our alumni, staff and students are denied the career benefits conferred by studying and working at an esteemed institutions and it makes it harder for us to collaborate and partner with top-ranked institutions and to compete for international research grants.

How long have you been planning this?

This problem has become increasingly apparent over the last year or so as a result of research and conversations with visitors to the University, with colleagues at overseas institutions and with ranking agencies.

When will this happen?

We are still in the research and discussion phase but if it is decided that we should make a change, we will aim to do that as soon as is practical.

How long will it take?

It will take at least six months for the University to be ready for any name simplification to take effect. This is because of the significant work required to engage with alumni, stakeholders, staff and students, to change our website and to consider other ramifications of a name simplification.

Is this a done deal or is it up for discussion?

The small group of people who have been involved in research and discussion on this matter are convinced that a name simplification would deliver benefits in terms of our international reputation. The evidence in support of simplifying our name is powerful and hard to ignore. As a global civic university though, we work very closely with our communities and listen to their ideas and contributions.

Who will make the final decisions?

The University Council will make any final decisions about a name simplification.

How much will it cost?

There will of course be costs involved in simplifying our name. We don't know the exact amount yet, but I can assure you these costs will be spread over a period of time and we will be working hard to keep them as low as possible.

How can you justify spending money on a rebrand when many parts of the University are desperate for more money?

This is not a simple rebrand, but part of a wider critical work programme that is essential to ensure our University continues to go from strength to strength. We cannot afford not to make some changes if we are serious about achieving our strategic goals and delivering the very best to our communities and stakeholders.

Will each area have to pay for their own new materials (i.e stationary/business cards/signage/banners/collateral)?

These details have not been worked out. However, we are conscious of the tight financial climate and that areas have limited funds that are not already accounted for.

How extensive is the change you will be making to the brand?

We are looking at simplifying our name but we are not proposing a major rebrand. Our Know Your Mind domestic recruitment campaign will continue and we will continue to use 'Capital Thinking. Globally Minded'.

How will this affect students who have graduated from Victoria University?

There is no impact on the qualifications granted under the name Victoria University of Wellington. They are still valid and legal.

What will this mean for current students - what name will be on their degree certificates?

We are still working out the details but if the University Council was to approve a name simplification, from 2019 graduation certificates would be issued with the simplified name of the University.

What are you doing to inform people?

Currently, we are talking to alumni, students, staff and key stakeholders and partners to share our thinking and get their thoughts.

If we decide to proceed with a name simplification, a comprehensive communications plan will be developed to ensure everyone who needs to know about the change is told and to widely publicise our new name in New Zealand and internationally.

How can people have their say?

People can have their say by emailing members of the Senior Leadership Team or the Vice-Chancellor.

Why do rankings matter anyway?

Where our university sits in the international tables not only affects our ability to attract top students from other countries, but is also taken into account by foreign governments deciding where to send students on publicly-funded scholarships. Rankings also affect our ability to recruit world class staff and to form research partnerships and collaborations with leading universities around the world. In addition, philanthropists prefer to donate to highly ranked universities.

You say you don't trust rankings so why are you doing this?

Rankings are not without their critics who justifiably question aspects of their methodologies. However, like it or not, rankings have a significant effect on our international reputation and therefore on our future.

What happens if the University goes backwards in the rankings?

All of our research and discussions indicate that a name simplification will improve the University's profile and hence its rankings.

How long do you think it will take to see the effects of this decision?

Name simplification is just one aspect of a wider programme of work designed to enhance our international reputation. We expect to start seeing the impact of this work programme within the next 12 months.

Do you expect staff, alumni or students to be angry about this?

We understand that many people feel a sense of attachment to the name Victoria. However, we are also finding that once people know the reasons for the proposed change, they understand its importance. The name Victoria embodies a lot of history and heritage for our University and we will be looking for ways of honouring and protecting that.

What do you think the reaction will be from organisations around Wellington or New Zealand?

We expect a very positive reception from organisations around Wellington and New Zealand. The name simplification aligns us more closely with New Zealand's capital city and also positions the University well to attract more partnerships, students and staff, all of which will be good for Wellington and New Zealand.

Have other universities made this sort of decision in the past? What have you learned from their rebrands?

Yes other universities have successfully done similar things in the past. For example, the former Victoria University of Manchester became the University of Manchester in 2004 for some of the same reasons we are now considering this move here.

Will this affect domestic student recruitment?

We don't expect any negative impact on domestic student recruitment from the change.

Have you considered spending the money on marketing your current brand, rather than on rebranding?

No matter how effectively we market the current brand, there continues to be confusion about who we are because there are a number of other universities with a similar name. Simplifying the name is the best way of promoting the quality of our brand internationally.