



Waipapa
Taumata Rau
**University
of Auckland**

Teachers Conference 2026



10-11 September

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*E ngā mana e ngā hau e whā,
tēnā koutou katoa,
Nau mai, haere mai,
E koa ana te ngākau kua tae mai koutou
Ki te whakanui i te kaupapa o te rā.
Nō reira, e aku Rangatira,
Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.
E aku manukura, tēnā koutou.
Tēnā tātou i ō tātou mate o te wā.*

I am delighted to welcome you to our 2026 Teachers Conference.

Nau mai, haere mai, piki mai ki Waipapa Taumata Rau, the University of Auckland.

As educators, you play a vital role in shaping the aspirations, achievement, and future pathways of young people. Through your teaching, guidance, and mentorship, you help students build the knowledge, confidence, and skills they need to thrive in further education, employment, and life.

Strong foundations in literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking open doors to future opportunities. Just as importantly, students who develop confidence in their learning are more likely to pursue ambitious goals and navigate an increasingly complex and changing world.

This conference provides an opportunity to strengthen the connections between secondary and tertiary education. Through workshops, discussions, and collaboration with colleagues from across the sector, we hope you gain practical insights into tertiary pathways, curriculum developments, and the evolving needs of future learners.

Our aim is that you leave equipped with new ideas, useful resources, and stronger connections that support informed course design and conversations with students about their future study and career options. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to excellence in education and for the important role you play in supporting the next generation of learners.

Mehemea he pātai āu, whakapā mai. Mālo 'aupito,
Katalina Ma

Huapaetanga Kaitiaki | Pathway Programme Manager
Schools and Community Engagement
Waipapa Taumata Rau, The University of Auckland





Background & Purpose

Our inaugural STEM Conference in 2024 demonstrated the value of bringing secondary educators and university academics together. Feedback from participants highlighted a strong appetite for a broader conference that provided insights beyond STEM and supported teachers in their wider role as subject specialists, form teachers, and academic advisers.

The Teachers Conference responds to that need. It provides educators with a deeper understanding of first-year university programmes, course expectations, and student pathways, better connecting classroom learning with future study opportunities. By strengthening secondary–tertiary alignment, the conference aims to support informed course design, subject selection, and pathway conversations that help learners transition successfully beyond school.

Our Teachers Conference is a response to:

- Strong feedback from educators seeking a broader professional learning opportunity spanning all subject areas.
- The need for stronger alignment between secondary and tertiary education to support successful student transitions.
- Teachers' desire for greater understanding of university programmes, first-year courses, and the knowledge and skills students are expected to bring with them.
- The important role teachers play in subject selection, pathway advice, and shaping students' post-secondary aspirations.
- Our commitment to strengthening partnerships between schools and the University of Auckland

Teachers Conference objectives:

- Help teachers understand how school learning connects to first-year university courses, degree programmes, and future career pathways.
- Provide insight into the structure, content, and expectations of undergraduate courses across all faculties.
- Support informed course design by showcasing the foundational knowledge, skills, and capabilities students need for success at university.
- Highlight the importance of specific subjects and learning experiences for particular degrees and pathways.
- Equip teachers with practical information and resources to support subject advising and pathway conversations with students and whānau.
- Strengthen collaboration and relationships between secondary schools and the University of Auckland

Day 1 - Programme



TIME	ROOM	PROGRAMME / BRIEF
8:15-9:00AM	B401 L3 Atrium	Registration
9:20AM	B401-401	Keynote: Secondary-Tertiary Learner Success Insights <i>Katalina Ma, Pathway Programmes Manager</i>
10am	B401 Atrium	Morning Tea
10.30-11.30	B401-401	Lightening Sessions 1: Faculty of Medical & Health Sciences Pathways into Health: What's Changing in 2027? <i>Associate Professor Laura Wilkinson-Meyers</i> Bachelor of Health Science Programmes <i>Dr Sally Mackay & Dr Rob McNeil</i>
10.30-11.30	B401-470	Lighting Sessions 2: Faculty of Science First Year Maths at UoA <i>Dr Nicolette Rattenbury</i> Introducing the new Bachelor of Psychology <i>Dr Joan Leung</i>
10.30-11.30	B401-422	Lighting Sessions 3: Faculty of Engineering & Design How to aid students to succeed when being part of a large cohort <i>Dr Vonne van Heeswijk</i> Supporting Girls into Engineering Pathways: The Bigger Picture <i>Dr Dulsha Kularatna-Abeywardana</i>
11:35-12:35	B401-401	Lighting Session 4: Faculty of Medical & Health Sciences Bachelor of Biomedical Science Programme <i>Professor Alan Davidson & Dr Rachelle Singleton</i> Student Panel
11:35-12:35	B401-470	60-min Session: Faculty of Science Stage One Statistics <i>Emma Lehrke</i>
11:35-12:35	B401-422	Lighting Sessions 5: Faculty of Engineering and Design Learning how to learn by self-assessment: Improving STEM students' preparedness for tertiary education <i>Dr Yuanyuan Hu</i> Designing a Flourishing Future Through Creativity, Community and Innovation <i>Ayla Hoeta</i>

Day 1 - Programme



TIME	ROOM	PROGRAMME / BRIEF
12:40	B401 Atrium	Lunch
13:20-14:20	B401-401	60-min Session: Faculty of Science Future-ready undergraduate programmes in the Faculty of Science <i>Associate Professor Murray Ford</i>
13:20-14:20	B401-470	Lighting Sessions 6: Faculty of Engineering & Design Shaping Our Cities - What It Means to Be an Urban Planner <i>Dr Iresh Jayawardena</i> Women in Engineering <i>Unayza Nabijan</i>



Day 2 - Programme



TIME	ROOM	PROGRAMME / BRIEF
8:15-9:00AM	B401 Atrium	Registration
9:20AM	B401-401	Day 2 Keynote Session Transitions, connections and learning from each other <i>Professor Stuart McNaughton</i>
10am	B401 Atrium	Morning Tea
10.30-11.30	B401-401	60-min Session: Faculty of Arts & Education The Human Edge: Why the Bachelor of Arts matters now more than ever <i>Dr Alex McAuley</i>
10.30-11.30	B401-470	Lighting Sessions 1: Faculty of Law From classroom to career: employment law for the next generation <i>Simon Schofield</i> The Making of a Lawyer: Student Panel
10.30-11.30	B401-422	Lighting Sessions 2: Faculty of Business & Economics About the HRM Major <i>Dr. Deepika Jindal</i> Studying Business Analytics <i>Andrew Eberhard</i>
11:35-12:35	405-344	60-min Session: Faculty of Arts & Education Leading change through sport, health and physical education <i>Associate Professor Rod Philpot</i>
11:35-12:35	B401-470	60-min Session: Faculty of Law How to decide to study law/ Experiencing a criminal law class: "when can you eat your shipmates?" (a real case) <i>Professor Scott Optican</i>
11:35-12:35	B401-422	60-min session: Faculty of Business & Economics Maths as a foundation for Accounting, Finance, and Economics. <i>Justin Case</i>

Day 2 - Programme



TIME	ROOM	PROGRAMME / BRIEF
12:40	B401 Atrium	Lunch
13:20-14:20	B401-401	60-min Session: Faculty of Arts & Education Bachelor of Communications <i>Kiri West</i>
13:20-14:20	B401-470	60-min Session: Faculty of Law Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Across Languages, Cultures, and the Country <i>Theodore Baker-Jones</i>
13:20-14:20	B401-422	Lighting Sessions 3: Faculty of Business & Economics Bachelor of Commerce: Programme Structure, Flexibility and Core Courses <i>Associate Dean Academic Sue Laurenson</i> Business School Student Panel



Day 1 - Sessions & Speakers



Sessions	Speaker Bio	Session Summary
Secondary–Tertiary Learner Success Insights <i>Katalina Ma, Pathway Programmes Manager</i>	Katalina Ma brings a unique perspective shaped by her experience as a former Head of Mathematics and senior secondary leader, alongside her current role leading learner success programmes at the University of Auckland. She oversees initiatives including Pacific Academy, on track to support over 1,000 Māori and Pacific students this year, and co-founded the nationally recognised Math Challenge competition. In 2025, she was formally acknowledged for her work partnering with Auckland schools to advance University Entrance parity for Māori and Pacific learners.	In this keynote, Katalina will share data-driven insights into learner success, with a focus on what makes the greatest difference during the secondary years. She will highlight how course and subject design in schools shape student readiness, pathway access, and success beyond school. Teachers will gain practical insights to support subject planning, strengthen secondary–tertiary transitions, and better enable learners to succeed in further study.
Pathways into Health: What's Changing in 2027? <i>Associate Professor Laura Wilkinson-Meyers</i>	Laura is Associate Dean (Academic) in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences at Waipapa Taumata Rau. Her teaching and research focus on health systems, health service organisation, funding, and policy, with a particular interest in improving the equity, accessibility, quality, and effectiveness of health and social services.	The University of Auckland is introducing a refreshed suite of undergraduate health programmes from 2027, designed to provide clearer, more flexible pathways for students interested in health-focused science disciplines, biomedical science, population health, and future clinical study.
Bachelor of Health Science Programmes <i>Dr Sally Mackay & Dr Rob McNeil</i>	Dr Sally Mackay is a Registered Nutritionist, Senior Lecturer, and BHSc Director at the University of Auckland. Her research focuses on food environments, healthy diets, and dietary assessment, and she co-chairs Health Coalition Aotearoa's food expert panel. Dr Rob McNeill is a Senior Lecturer in Health Systems, researching cancer care, care pathways, and patient and whānau experiences to improve services. He teaches social determinants of health and research methods.	Teachers will be informed about the changes to the BHSc programme. The two new majors will be introduced, 'community health', and 'health systems and data analytics'. We will discuss how these give students the opportunity to shape their degree around what matters to them most and their subject strengths. Conjoint options will be outlined as well as future career pathways.
First Year Maths at UoA <i>Dr Nicolette Rattenbury</i>	Dr Nicolette Rattenbury is a Professional Teaching Fellow in Mathematics at the University of Auckland with BSc (Hons), MSc and PhD qualifications in Applied Mathematics. She is passionate about mathematics education and science communication, and serves as a Co-Convenor of AWIS, advocating for diversity and opportunities for women in STEM.	We will explore the first year Maths papers at The University of Auckland, concentrating on prerequisites and assessment structures.

Day 1 - Sessions & Speakers



Sessions	Speaker Bio	Session Summary
Introducing the new Bachelor of Psychology <i>Dr Joan Leung</i>	Joan is a Postdoctoral Research and Professional Teaching Fellow at the University of Auckland's School of Psychology, leading the Online Graduate Diploma in Applied Psychology and contributing to psychology and speech-language therapy teaching. Her research supervision focuses on hearing and auditory processing challenges in clinical populations, including autism, traumatic brain injury, learning and language difficulties, and mild cognitive impairment.	The new Bachelor of Psychology, available from 2027, offers an in-depth study of psychology for students seeking careers or research opportunities in the field. The programme develops academic, clinical and cultural skills, provides a foundation for clinical training and people-focused professions, incorporates industry perspectives, and this information session will cover programme structure, prerequisites and postgraduate pathways.
How to aid students to succeed when being part of a large cohort <i>Vonne van Heeswijk</i>	Vonne van Heeswijk is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow and Professional Teaching Fellow at the University of Auckland. With qualifications in Biomedical Engineering and Chemical and Materials Engineering, she leads spine research in the Experimental Tissue Mechanics Laboratory, conducts Lottery Health Research-funded research, and supervises honours and undergraduate students.	Students who start studying engineering at the University of Auckland will join a cohort of more than one thousand first-year engineering students. How do we aid students to succeed when being part of a large cohort? We will explore how we deliver a first year course to a large cohort, sharing course content and relevant insights.
Supporting Girls into Engineering Pathways: The Bigger Picture <i>Dulsha Kularatna-Abeywardana</i>	Dulsha is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Electrical, Computer and Software Engineering within the Faculty of Engineering and Design. Her research focuses on sustainable electronics, including energy storage, wireless power transfer, sensor electronics, and STEM education. She is also actively involved in promoting women in engineering and STEM	This session explores why encouraging more girls into engineering goes beyond increasing participation numbers. It examines how representation influences innovation, equity, workforce capability, and the technologies that shape society. It also considers how teachers, subject choices, role models, and early experiences affect whether girls see engineering as a realistic and rewarding pathway, and highlights practical ways teachers can support this journey.
Bachelor of Biomedical Science Programme <i>Professor Allan Davidson & Dr Rachelle Singleton</i>	Professor Davidson is co-Director of the BBiomedSci programme and an internationally recognised researcher in kidney development, regeneration, and disease. He previously headed the Department of Molecular Medicine & Pathology (2017-2025). Dr Rachelle Singleton is a BBiomedSci Year Lead and pathology educator who teaches across undergraduate and clinical health programmes. Her expertise includes cancer biology, scientific methods, digital learning, and innovative, evidence-based teaching and learning.	This session will provide secondary teachers with a clear understanding of our new stage one course BIOMED 101 (Biomedical Beginnings) - an introductory course for the University of Auckland's new Bachelor of Biomedical Science degree. It will explicitly cover learner success insights relevant to high schoolers. What content is covered, how is it delivered, and what is the assessment structure of the course. It will also provide a brief overview of courses that follow BIOMED 101 in the programme after students first year at university.

Day 1 - Sessions & Speakers



Sessions	Speaker Bio	Session Summary
Stage One Statistics <i>Emma Lehrke</i>	Emma Lehrke has over a decade of experience teaching Mathematics and Statistics in New Zealand and the UK. Since joining the University of Auckland in 2018, she has been instrumental in redesigning introductory statistics courses, with a focus on interactive teaching and aligning assessment with learning outcomes.	This session introduces the five Stage One Statistics courses, including STATS 101/108, taken by around two-thirds of first-year students at the University of Auckland. It will highlight what students will recognise from their Year 12 and 13 experience, alongside the new ideas and expectations they encounter. I will also outline course structure and share key study and assessment strategies that help students transition successfully into university statistics.
Learning how to learn by self-assessment: Improving STEM students' preparedness for tertiary education <i>Dr Yuanyuan Hu</i>	Dr Yuanyuan Hu is a Research and Teaching Fellow in the Faculty of Engineering and Design. Her research focuses on Artificial Intelligence for learner success and wellbeing.	Do students know how to study, or recognise when they don't? In an era of generative AI, developing self-regulated learning and learning-to-learn skills is increasingly important, especially for students transitioning to university. This talk presents findings from Learn-ENG, a 10-minute self-assessment tool designed to help secondary STEM and first-year engineering students reflect on their study habits and access support. It explores students' study-skills profiles, their relationship to academic performance, and students' perceptions of their own learning, providing insights into how they learn and where additional support may be needed.
Designing a Flourishing Future Through Creativity, Community and Innovation <i>Ayla Hoeta</i>	Ayla Hoeta (Waikato) is a lecturer in the Design programme at Waipapa Taumata Rau, teaching kaupapa Māori design, co-design, and community-led innovation. Her work focuses on design for wellbeing, community, and place, with projects including Te Puhinui regeneration, the Ao Mārama wellbeing app, and Maramataka Nature Playground. She is passionate about empowering future designers to create equitable, connected, and flourishing communities through design.	Design is more than creating products or services. This session introduces the Bachelor of Design at Waipapa Taumata Rau and how it develops students' skills, mindset, and confidence to address real-world challenges. Through community partnerships, industry collaboration, and interdisciplinary learning, students learn to create meaningful social, cultural, environmental, and economic impact. Using student projects and practical examples, the session highlights how design empowers rangatahi to become creative problem solvers, critical thinkers, and future leaders contributing to healthier communities and a more sustainable world.

Day 1 - Sessions & Speakers



Sessions	Speaker Bio	Session Summary
Future-ready undergraduate programmes in the Faculty of Science <i>Associate Professor Murray Ford</i>	Associate Professor Murray Ford is Associate Dean Academic in the Faculty of Science, where he leads the development of new undergraduate health study options from 2027 and works with schools and departments to prepare future-ready graduates. A geographer specialising in coastal change in New Zealand and the Pacific, his teaching focuses on physical geography, GIS, and introductory remote sensing.	The Faculty of Science is going through a massive transformation in the programmes and majors delivered by its academics. Traditionally students had the choice of the BSc and the majors and specialisations within it. From 2027 Science will be offering a new Bachelor of Psychology, a Bachelor of Biomedical Science, delivered with FMHS, and a refreshed BSc with improved navigability and student choice. In this talk Murray will outline the changes and the opportunities they provide for our future students.
Shaping Our Cities - What It Means to Be an Urban Planner <i>Dr Iresh Jayawardena</i>	Dr Iresh Jayawardena is a Senior Lecturer in Urban Planning and Deputy Head of School (Urban Planning) at the University of Auckland. With over 14 years of experience in academia and planning practice, his work focuses on environmental planning, climate change adaptation, natural hazards, urban resilience, and sustainable urban development. A former Auckland Council planner, he contributed to major planning initiatives, including the Auckland Unitary Plan. He is also a contributing author to the IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities, due for release in March 2027.	This session introduces urban planning and the vital role planners play in creating sustainable, resilient, and liveable communities. Participants will explore diverse planning careers across local government, consultancy, policy, environmental management, transport, housing, and community development. The session will also provide an overview of the University of Auckland's Bachelor of Urban Planning (Honours), highlighting its focus on sustainability, climate change, urban growth, community engagement, evidence-based decision-making, and preparation for professional planning practice.
Women in Engineering <i>Unayza Nabijan</i>	Women in Engineering visit school classes, run events online and at University of Auckland, and provide free academic support for high school students. Through our academy, we nurture an inclusive community to inspire, connect and empower our members to make informed career decisions so that we can all contribute to improving diversity in engineering, and make a positive impact on the world!	Join the University of Auckland's Women in Engineering Academy for an interactive workshop designed to help you support and inspire the next generation of engineers. This session will feature a brief introduction to our work, followed by hands-on outreach activities for educators to experience firsthand the activities we deliver directly to high school students in your classrooms.

Day 2 - Sessions & Speakers



Sessions	Speaker Bio	Session Summary
Transitions, connections and learning from each other Professor Stuart McNaughton	Stuart is Professor of Education at Waipapa Taumata Rau the University of Auckland and Senior Research Fellow at East China Normal University (Shanghai Municipal Institute for Lifelong Learning). He has published extensively on children's learning and development, the design of effective educational programmes for diverse populations, and digital tools to promote online resilience, and received national and international research prizes and honours. In 2011 he was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit, from 2014 until 2024 was Aotearoa New Zealand's inaugural Chief Education Scientific Advisor and became a Fellow of the Royal Society Te Apārangi in 2025.	The transition from secondary schooling to university is like other transitions, an important time to support students' development. The closer connections are between secondary schooling and university the better the transition. Connecting is not just to optimise valued content and knowledge but also the very important social and emotional, critical thinking and digital citizenship skills.
The Human Edge: Why the Bachelor of Arts matters now more than ever <i>Dr Alex McAuley</i>	Dr Alex McAuley is the Programme Director of the Bachelor of Arts at the University of Auckland. He is a Classicists and Ancient Historian who has previously taught at Universities in Canada in the UK before coming to New Zealand, and was educated at McGill University and the University of Edinburgh. A specialist on the Hellenistic Period, he has published widely on the society and culture of the world after Alexander the Great, and teaches all aspects of Ancient Greek History and Language	Dr Alex McAuley will deliver a session entitled 'The Human Edge: Why the BA matters now more than ever', which will provide an introduction for secondary teachers to the BA as a programme of study as well as the career and employability outcomes for BA students and graduates. He will begin with an overview of how (and why) the BA is structured as it is, and the key concerns for students as they consider their applications and possible fields of study, alongside the other opportunities to students available in the BA. From there he will address the typical question of 'what do you do with a BA' head-on by examining graduate employment outcomes, the transferable skills cultivated by the degree, and examine why a degree such as the BA provides a uniquely valuable education for students in the age of AI
From classroom to career: employment law for the next generation <i>Simon Schofield</i>	Simon Schofield is a Professional Teaching Fellow at the University of Auckland Law School. Simon holds an LLB(Hons)/BA(Hons) LLM from the University of Canterbury and began his career working as an employment advocate exclusively for employers before practising employment law as a lawyer. While in practice, Simon advised on, and acted in relation to, the full gamut of employment law issues. Before joining the University of Auckland in 2021, Simon lectured at the University of Waikato. He has published widely in the field and is the editor of Wolters Kluwer's New Zealand Employment Law Guide.	For many young people, employment law is the first area of law they experience in their everyday lives. This session will introduce LAWPUBL 425 Employment Law and provide an overview of the course content, teaching methods, and assessment structure. It will also share insights into the skills that help students succeed at university as well as the multitude of career opportunities open to graduates. Using <i>Salad Bowl Ltd v Howe-Thornley</i> [2013] NZEmpC 152, the session will examine a common question for those starting work: where does the law draw the line between an unpaid work trial and paid work?

Day 2 - Sessions & Speakers



Sessions	Speaker Bio	Session Summary
About the HRM Major <i>Dr. Deepika Jindal</i>	Dr. Deepika Jindal is the Subject Group Lead for Management at the University of Auckland, where she teaches Human Resource Management and related courses. She serves as Director of the Master of Business Management programme. Deepika is Chair of Human Resource New Zealand's (HRNZ) Academic Network committee and a member of its Auckland Regional Network committee. Deepika is a committee member of Women in Business Chapter of American Chamber of Commerce in New Zealand.	Human Resource Management (HRM) is a growing professional field that combines business strategy, psychology, employment law, analytics, and leadership to address some of the most pressing challenges facing organisations today. This session introduces the University of Auckland's new HRM major, launching in 2027, and explores how it prepares students for careers in talent management, organisational development, employment relations, people analytics, consulting, and leadership. The major includes a unique focus on HR analytics, which is the only undergraduate course of its kind in New Zealand, reflecting increasing employer demand for graduates who can use data to make evidence-based people decisions. This interactive session will provide practical insights into an emerging profession that many students know little about despite its strong career prospects.
Studying Business Analytics <i>Andrew Eberhard</i>	Andrew Eberhard is a Professional Teaching Fellow who teaches business analytics and data visualisation at the University of Auckland Business School. He is a recipient of the Prime Minister's Supreme Award for Tertiary Teaching Excellence. Andrew's teaching focuses on active learning, practical feedback, applied examples, and helping students build confidence with unfamiliar ideas and tools. In BUSAN 101: Data Visualisation Essentials, he helps first-year students learn how to critique visualisations, apply design principles, and turn data into clear, accurate, and useful stories for real audiences. His wider teaching work focuses on making analytics education practical, engaging, and accessible for diverse learners.	How do students learn to see data differently? This session introduces BUSAN 101: Data Visualisation Essentials, a stage one course that helps students move beyond making charts to communicating clearly, accurately, and ethically with data. Teachers will get a brief look at how the course develops students' understanding of audience, visual perception, chart choice, design, critique, and data storytelling. The session will include a short active learning demonstration from the course, giving participants a chance to experience the kind of practical, discussion-based learning used with first-year students. The session will also share what student feedback tells us about what helps learners succeed, including clear structure, regular practice, applied examples, and opportunities to build confidence through feedback.

Day 2 - Sessions & Speakers



Sessions	Speaker Bio	Session Summary
Leading change through sport, health and physical education <i>Associate Professor Rod Philpot</i>	Associate Professor Rod Philpot is a teacher educator and researcher in the School of Education and Social Practice at the University of Auckland, where he serves as Programme Leader for the Bachelor of Sport, Health and Physical Education. Before entering academia, Rod spent 16 years teaching Health and Physical Education in Auckland secondary schools, holding leadership roles. His research focuses on social justice pedagogies in physical education teacher education (PETE), health and physical education, and critical pedagogy.	Worried about the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on career futures? Come and learn why the Bachelor of Sport, Health and Physical Education is even more important in an AI world. In this session you will experience some of the key aspects of first year courses and learn more about where graduates are taking their BSportHPE degrees.
How to decide to study law/ Experiencing a criminal law class: "when can you eat your shipmates?" (a real case) <i>Professor Scott Optican</i>	Scott Optican is a Professor of evidence, criminal procedure and criminal justice at the University of Auckland Faculty of Law. He holds a BA in Rhetoric from the University of California at Berkeley (USA 1982), an MPhil in Criminology from the University of Cambridge (UK 1983) and a JD in Law from Harvard Law School (USA 1988). Scott writes and lectures widely on topics related to evidence, criminal procedure, criminal justice, police powers and the NZ Bill of Rights Act 1990. He has also engaged in legal policy work for the NZ Law Commission, is a regular	Professor Scott Optican of the Auckland Law School will discuss what college students and their advisors should be thinking about when deciding to study/ enrol in the University of Auckland Faculty of Law. He will then lead the audience through a simulated law school class in first-year criminal law — giving them a taste of how an entry-level law student would study a foundational British judicial decision involving the law of culpable homicide: <i>R v Dudley and Stephens</i> (1884) 14 QBD 273 (UK).
Maths as a foundation for Accounting, Finance, and Economics <i>Justin Case</i>	Justin Case is a Lecturer in Finance at the University of Auckland Business School. He teaches courses on investments, data science, and machine learning. His research focuses on empirical asset pricing and machine learning. Before entering academia, Justin worked as an R&D Engineer in vibro-acoustics at Siemens AG in Austria. He holds Bachelor's degrees in Engineering and Business, postgraduate degrees in Engineering and Mathematics, and a PhD in Financial Economics.	Mathematics is the language behind confident business and economic decision-making. This session will show why strong foundational math skills matter for students considering Accounting, Finance, or Economics at the University of Auckland. We will explore how mathematical skills develop across our degrees and how they are used to analyse information and optimise decision-making. The session will also consider the role of mathematics in an AI-enabled world and why students still need core cognitive math skills to use digital tools effectively and critically.

Day 2 - Sessions & Speakers



Sessions	Speaker Bio	Session Summary
Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Across Languages, Cultures, and the Country <i>Theodore Baker-Jones</i>	Theodore Baker-Jones (Ngāpuhi, Ngāruahine) is a Professional Teaching Fellow at Te Wāhanga Ture o Waipapa Taumata Rau The University of Auckland Law School. He has an LLB and a BA, as well as an MA in Linguistics with a focus on te reo Māori grammar. He teaches into Law 121 (Law and Society), and his research is focussed on tikanga Māori and the way it operates in day-to-day life.	This talk will explain the first-year law programs available to high-school students, with a focus on Law 121 (Law and Society), the required first course for law school entry at Auckland University. It will examine the learner skills of cultural competency and understanding, and discuss how teaching Te Tiriti o Waitangi can build these skills in secondary students.
Bachelor of Commerce: Programme Structure, Flexibility and Core Courses <i>Associate Dean Academic Sue Laurenson</i>	Sue Laurenson is Associate Dean Academic and International at the University of Auckland Business School and Programme Director for the Bachelor of Commerce (BCom). She provides academic leadership for programme development, curriculum review, quality assurance, and student success across the Business School. Sue has extensive experience in business education, curriculum design, and international accreditation. She works closely with academic and professional staff, students, and external stakeholders to support the ongoing development of programmes that are relevant, flexible, and responsive to changing learner, industry, and societal needs. Her work includes programme review, curriculum renewal, and pathway development across the BCom, with a particular interest in helping students build the knowledge, skills and capabilities needed for future careers.	This session explores how the University of Auckland's Bachelor of Commerce is evolving to prepare students for business careers in an increasingly complex, AI-enabled world. A key focus is the growing emphasis on business communication, teamwork and professional capabilities alongside disciplinary knowledge, including changes in how we teach and assess these skills to better reflect what employers expect from graduates. We will review the structure of the degree, including the Business Core and the flexibility students have through majors, double majors, and conjoint programmes, and discuss why combining expertise across disciplines is becoming increasingly valuable. The session will also cover recent admission changes and opportunities for high-achieving students, along with current enrolment trends, including popular double-major combinations and emerging areas of student interest. Teachers will leave with a clearer understanding of how secondary subject choices connect to university study and the capabilities that support student success.

Additional Information

We'll send useful links, relevant information, and resources from the conference to all attendees. If you'd like to register a different email address from the one you submitted when you purchased your ticket, please see a staff member at the registration desk in the main foyer.

Ngā mihi,
The Schools & Community Engagement Team,
Waipapa Taumata Rau, The University of Auckland

