



18 October 2023

Professor Ray Geor
Pro Vice-Chancellor
College of Sciences - Te Tari Matua o Te Wāhanga Pūtaiao
Massey University

By email only: r.geor@massey.ac.nz

Dear Professor Geor

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES – CHANGE PROPOSAL

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on proposed changes in Massey University's College of Sciences.

First of all, we would like to acknowledge the challenges that New Zealand universities and the tertiary education sector more generally are currently dealing with. It's very unfortunate that Massey is now faced with making a decision to close its engineering school, primarily for financial reasons, at a time when we see a clear need for a wider review of funding arrangements in the tertiary education sector. This is something that we intend to raise with the incoming Government as we seek a stronger commitment to STEM subjects at all levels of the New Zealand education system.

We endorse the critical importance of food engineering to the New Zealand economy and Massey's decision to prioritise continuation of programmes in this area.

As you state in your proposals, Massey's engineering programmes only account for a small percentage of New Zealand engineering graduates overall. However, we note that:

- any reduction in engineering places is a loss for New Zealand at a time when there is an urgent need for more engineers.
 - Recent [research](#) we commissioned through PwC indicates New Zealand will need almost 2,500 engineers every year assuming long-term economic growth of 3 percent. This doesn't include the new engineers we need to replace those who retire, leave the profession or go overseas. New Zealand graduate numbers are currently falling well short of this level
 - The recent [media release](#) from ACE New Zealand also starts to quantify the challenges employers are currently facing
- Massey has tended to focus on preparing graduates for roles in the productive sector and the loss of these programmes is likely to be more keenly felt in this area that is critical to New Zealand's economic future

- the timing of Massey's decision is likely to see a loss of engineering academics offshore given that most other NZ universities are also operating in capped staffing environments.

Student welfare and accreditation

We have received approaches from students and are aware that other engineering schools have also been approached about transfer options. Subject to final decisions on your proposal:

- we are considering whether and how we can help students access information on their future study options
- we are committed to ensuring that accreditation requirements do not create any unreasonable barriers to student transfer arrangements
- we will prioritise consideration of any request to extend Massey's current accreditation in support of any short term teach out proposal.

Yours sincerely



Dr Richard Templer
Chief Executive