

July 11, 2025

Professor Pal Ahluwalia
Vice Chancellor and President
The University of the South Pacific
Laucala Campus
Private Mail Bag
Suva, Fiji

Dear Vice Chancellor Ahluwalia:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning The University of the South Pacific (USP) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 27, 2025. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to USP April 23 -25, 2025, using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by USP prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), and the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Jito Vanualailai, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice President (Education) and Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO); Priya Devi, Project Accreditation Officer; Shaiza Janif, Interim Manager, Curriculum Review and Development Unit (CRDU); Walter Fraser, Chief Operating Officer; Gurmeet Singh, Professor and Vice President (Research and Innovation); and Manumatavai Tupou-Roosen, Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice President (Regional Campuses and Global Engagement). Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Reaffirm accreditation for a period of eight years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2032 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2033
4. Schedule an Interim Report to be submitted by March 1, 2029 to address:
 - a. the need for a comprehensive strategy for student and academic support services that reflects regional campuses needs.
 - b. institutional research capacity and the data literacy of all staff.
 - c. that all students regardless of modality have intentionally designed educational experiences that employ advanced digital tools and demonstrate equivalent learning, retention, and degree completion results.

Commendations

The Commission commends the institution for:

1. A highly developed resource allocation and oversight process that links strategic and operational planning and that is evidence-based, realistic, and focused on institutional objectives.
2. A long history of effective financial management highlighted by unmodified independent audit opinions, operating surpluses, and growing net assets despite the enrollment and government support challenges faced by the university.
3. An integrated system that draws on best practices to provide library resources and educational services both physically and virtually to staff and students at all university locations across the South Pacific.
4. Creating the Curriculum Review and Development Unit (CRDU) that fosters continuous improvement, including the management of accreditations, quality assurance frameworks, and requirements by member nations.
5. Skillful management of the complexities of serving multinational interests and funding, through stakeholder engagement and thoughtful development of triennial investment and annual strategic plans, while maintaining a focus on student needs and outcomes.

Areas for Development

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following areas for development:

1. Address student affordability, especially for those students who are not fully sponsored, to improve access to university programs, reduce student debt, improve recruitment and retention, and promote student success. (CFR 3.4)
2. Invest in research, scholarship, and innovation enterprises to address regional and global problems, generate extramural and philanthropic funding, leverage indigenous knowledge, and advance strategic partnerships that support faculty, doctoral, and student research and inquiry to further the mission of the University of the South Pacific. (CFR 1.1)
3. Develop a comprehensive strategy for student and academic support services that considers local needs of regional campuses, including relevant data sharing and thoughtful assessment of outcomes and impact. (CFR 2.13)
4. Develop institutional research capacity, including data integrity, data accessibility, and the data literacy of all staff, to enable data-informed planning and decision-making across the institution. (CFR 4.4)
5. Ensure that students in face-to-face and distance education versions of programs, including hybrid programs, have intentionally designed educational experiences that employ advanced digital tools and demonstrate equivalent learning, retention, and degree completion results. (CFRs 2.5, 4.6)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirmed that USP successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, USP should strive for ongoing improvement with adherence to all Standards of Accreditation and their associated CFRs to foster a learning environment that continuously strives for educational excellence and operational effectiveness.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of USP's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the USP website and widely distributed throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in these documents. The team report and the Commission's action letter will also be posted on the WSCUC website. If the institution wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WSCUC will post a link to that response on the WSCUC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that The University of the South Pacific undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



A. Maria Toyoda
President

AMT/mam

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair
Jito Vanualailai, ALO
Pat Walsh, Acting Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council
Members of the Accreditation Visit Team
Maureen A Maloney, Vice President