

**AROTAKENGA MOTUHAKE NŌ TE AHUREA  
O TE KĀRETI O HOANI TAPU  
MŌ NGĀ TAKE O TE WHAKAPONO KARAITIANA**

**INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE CULTURE OF  
ST JOHN'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE**



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9 August 2021

*Ki te Hāhi Mihinare ki Aotearoa, ki Niu Tirenī,  
ki Ngā Moutere o te Moana nui a Kiwa*

*To the Anglican Church in Aotearoa,  
New Zealand and Polynesia*

*Tēnā Koutou katoa, Malo e Lelei, Talofa lava,  
Ni sa Bula Vinaka, Namaste, Greetings*

The cover photograph is of the wakahuia gifted by the Most Reverend Sir Paul Reeves to the college, traditionally used as a repository of precious objects. It is used here as a symbol of all those who come together on the college site.

## MIHI | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When I began this review in March I had no inkling how challenging it would be, for I expected neither so many participants to come forward, nor such a diverse range of views to be expressed. Nonetheless, I – and all my team – feel privileged to have been given the opportunity to examine the culture of St John’s Theological College and develop what we hope are practical measures to resolve the problems we identified.

I thank all those who took the time and effort to participate in whatever form. Your contributions are gratefully acknowledged. All of you were willing to assist us openly and constructively. I acknowledge the constructive approach taken by the college – particularly Manukura the Reverend Katene Eruera and Te Kaunihera Chair Ven Dr Lyndon Drake – to our many requests of it. And my thanks also to the Chief Executive of the St Johns College Trust Board, Grant Hope, for responding in a co-operative and timely way to the many requests of the trust. Without the involvement of so many participants, this review would simply not have been possible. It was a privilege and pleasure to meet you all.

My thanks also go to all those support staff at the college who so kindly looked after us when we were on the glorious St John’s site. We very much enjoyed the tasty kai! We also want to thank others who hosted us, and in particular the five Hui Amorangi. We appreciated your warm manaakitanga, and these visits were a real highlight of the review.

I particularly thank and acknowledge barrister Nura Taefi from Shortland Chambers, who assisted me with the review, and also lawyer Cheyenne Conroy-Mosdell from Kāhui Legal, who provided legal support. I acknowledge, too, the support of Jen McKay from AskYourTeam, who conducted the culture survey. My thanks go also to Professor Peter Lineham MNZN, Professor Emeritus of History at Massey University, who has assisted with the education-related elements of the review. And to Independent Support Officer Dr Emily Colgan, who has assisted with the health and safety elements of the review. My particular thanks, too, go to Bruce Gray QC, Provincial Chancellor, and Archbishop Emeritus Sir David Moxon KNZN, who assisted us on church law and ecclesiastical-related matters. And finally Peter Riordan, editor from THINKWRITE, assisted me hugely with the writing of this report.

Finally, I thank my co-reviewer Doug Martin, founder of MartinJenkins, who was appointed to assist me with this review, although primarily on education-related matters. Given, however, these matters were entwined to a large degree with the wider issue of culture, this entire report is from us both.

*Nāku te rourou, nāu te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.*

*With your basket and my basket the people will thrive.*



Miriam Dean CNZM QC



Doug Martin

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## TIROHANGA WHĀNUI | OVERVIEW

This independent review of St John's Theological College was commissioned in response to complaints by current and former students, faculty members and staff about the culture of the college. Only a few concerned serious matters, such as bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination. Most were about broader matters. Some had their origins in differences of outlook about theology or the values and purpose of the college. Such complaints are nothing new: during its 178-year history, the college has managed to bring together a rich and diverse company of men and women of faith, but in doing so has exposed divisions arising out of "competing visions, parochial politics and differing understandings about the nature of ministry and how and by whom [students] should be trained".<sup>1</sup> These divisions remain to this day. None of this is to suggest change – even transformational change – is an impossible task, but it underscores the urgency of the need for change.

Inevitably in a review of this sort, the focus has been on the college's faults. No one, however, should think we are blind to its many positive attributes. Some individuals we spoke to had only positive things to say about their time at the college. These individuals may be surprised at some of our findings. The truth is, however, that their experience was not shared by many of those we spoke to. Our report covers four broad areas:

### Ahurea | Culture

It was plain from our many interviews (and confirmed by survey results) that the college lacks the ingredients of a healthy organisational culture, such as strong and visible leadership, agreed organisational values, a simple structure, well-defined roles, good communication and strong stakeholder engagement. Nor does it have a clearly articulated strategic vision, purpose, goals or desired outcomes to give everyone a sense of involvement and direction. What it does have is a top-heavy and rigid hierarchy, a governance structure that is unworkable and lacking in accountability, an unnecessarily complex (and costly) administrative structure, personal rather than organisational values, poor internal and external communication, little interaction with stakeholders, and college leaders who aren't seen enough around the campus.

Its three-Tikanga structure is highly praised, but some of the practicalities of this structure are not working well, particularly having a dean responsible for each Tikanga. The three hats worn by each dean – that of lecturer, supervisor and pastoral care provider – create a clear conflict of roles that undermines student morale: many students feel uncomfortable approaching their dean to air a grievance or discuss certain personal matters. Church politics have a corrosive effect on the college.

The college has no single organisation-wide culture, but rather six distinct subcultures: one for students, another for faculty members, a third for staff and one for each Tikanga. Students have markedly different experiences of college life depending on their Tikanga. Tikanga Pākehā enjoy college life least. Women are far more critical about many aspects of college life, especially health and safety matters. There are undeniably positive features common to all parts of the college, such as generosity, diversity, devotion to God, sense of community, love of shared worship, but there are also negative features, including reactivity, resistance to change, distrust, suspicion, gossip and favouritism. Many said – and this was our observation also – that the students are sometimes treated like children (something the 1990 review said, too). One thing almost all students – former and current – agreed on was the importance of the three Tikanga to the college, and most wanted more interaction among Tikanga.

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<sup>1</sup> Allan Davidson, *Selwyn's Legacy, the College of St John the Evangelist, Te Waimate and Auckland 1843-1992, a history*, Auckland 1993.

## **Kōamuamu | Complaints**

Twenty-five individuals came to us with 35 complaints that had mental health and safety implications. The complaints were: bullying and inappropriate conduct, 17; early termination of scholarships and failure to give sufficient notice, six; racism, four; sexism, three; sexual harassment, two; discrimination, two; and excessive use of alcohol, one.

We attributed the biggest of these – bullying and inappropriate conduct – to five factors. One, the formation of priests has become unnecessarily pressured. Two, the role of dean is inherently conducive to conflict with students because, as mentioned, they wear three hats: leader, supervisor and pastoral care provider. Three, students cannot be honest about their difficulties with their dean because of the concern it will result in a critical report to their bishop and affect their chances of ordination. Four, questions of faith between student and dean can easily give rise to conflict, especially if students feel pressured in a particular theological direction. And five, the college is justifiably proud of its diverse range of people and views, yet those of unconventional personality or theological outlook are not always well received.

We will not go into the specifics of the other complaints here. We do, however, point out a theme running through the sexism complaints – the college's gender bias, which is not helped by a lack of female faculty members or female theologians in study material. We were told this gender bias also pervades the church.

We found the college's handling of complaints leaves a lot to be desired. It does not act quickly and sensibly to prevent escalation of conflict. It is not always direct or clear in communicating with complainants and does not support complainants. It does not always keep complaints confidential or deal with them consistently. It typically resolves complaints in its own favour, leading to the justifiable perception that it is deaf to people's complaints (a perception highlighted by responses to the culture survey).

The college's health and safety policies and processes need significant improvement. There are far too many of them, including three complaints policies when there should be just one for everyone. There is a code of conduct for residential students and their families only, rather than one for all those who work and study at the college. Policies are neither clear, sound, accessible nor applied consistently. Complaint-handling processes are unnecessarily complicated. There is no regular monitoring at management and board level of complaints of mental health and safety incidents. Individuals wanting to make a complaint are more likely to be seen as troublemakers than signallers of possible genuine trouble.

## **Mātauranga me te whakangungu minita | Education and ministry training**

In looking at how well the college is achieving its educational and ministry training objectives, we found people favoured different elements. Some put theological education first, others ministry training first, and others still personal formation first. We consider all three equally vital. The question is how to achieve this mix. The quality of the college's theological education and ministry training programme, and whether it had its emphasis in the right place, was another matter of contention. Some thought the quality of teaching, scholarship and content was good, while others thought it mediocre and in need of improvement. (We agree with the latter view.) Some emphasised a greater role for post-graduate students in lifting research and scholarship. Some wanted greater prominence of indigenous theology. Some described the college's leadership diploma and more general preparation of students for ministry as lightweight, one-size-fits-all and lacking sufficient focus on what it is to be Anglican/Mihinare. Some wanted more emphasis on the practical – even mundane – aspects of being a priest or lay minister (while others wanted more emphasis on liturgy in ministry training). And what emerged through all this was a lack of common understanding between the college, dioceses and Hui Amorangi about precisely who does what when it comes to training and practical ministry skills.

We received a lot of views about how the college could offer theological education and ministry training so it can better meet the needs of the church. Eight models emerged. Four had a lot of support, and four only a little. The top four all retain the college's residential function, something nearly everyone favoured. Almost universally, interviewees said the college's residential-based community life was the "glue that holds everyone together" and was a taonga to be preserved. The decision on which model and associated strategies to choose rests with the college and church, but a mix of the top four is a real option. They are:

*Theological and professional training for lay and ordained roles:* Residential students, whether intending to take up ordained or lay roles, would simultaneously study theology and train for a profession.

*A college without walls:* Students would study on campus and/or via remote learning (supplemented by on-site block courses) to maximise the college's use of its resources, faculty members and programmes.

*Enter partnerships with other providers:* The college would work more collaboratively with one or other providers of theological education and training to both expand and improve its programme (with much greater Anglican/Mihinare content) as well as provide more on-site teaching for students.

*Establish a teaching and research centre:* The college would establish a dedicated, well-resourced teaching and research centre headed up by a senior figure and drawing on expertise and resources from inside and outside the college.

The college must get on with developing a model better aligned to the church's needs. To do that, the church must allow it to lead development of a new strategic plan. It should be consulted along the way, and will, of course, have the final say on the model.

## **Me pēhea e pai ake | Improvements**

We have recommended 15 broad improvements to bring about transformational change. They are designed as a single pragmatic package and we stress the importance of acting quickly and decisively to implement them. The recommendations should be read with care because, as summaries, they are necessarily stripped of the details that give them context. Many can be implemented quickly and easily. Some will take longer and some will require collaboration between the college and church. They are:

*Establish one college-wide culture:* Te Kaunihera and the manukura should be empowered to lead a modernisation of the college's culture. A short, simple, implementation plan should be prepared, into which all those at the college should have input.

*Develop a code of conduct:* The college should develop a code of conduct so everyone at the college – from top to bottom – understands the standard of behaviour expected of them.

*Establish a legal status:* The college should be given legal status as a limited liability company with a constitution or as an incorporated trustee with a modern trust deed.

*Make Te Kaunihera sole governor of the college:* Te Kaunihera should be the only board that governs the college. Te Kotahitanga and the St John's College Trust Board should have no governance role. Canon II Title E must be rewritten as a result.

*Develop a strategic plan:* The college should develop a strategic plan that clearly states its vision, mission (or purpose), values, goals and desired outcomes so everyone at the college understands the strategy and their role in its implementation.

*Review the role of dean:* The college and church should review whether the appointment of deans to head each Tikanga is the best way to embed the three Tikanga in the life of the college. If the role remains, the college should review the appointment process and also remove the pastoral component of the deans' role.

*Appoint a chaplain:* The college should appoint a chaplain or dean of pastoral care to look after the pastoral care needs of all three Tikanga and to ensure worship at the college fully reflects the diversity of theological beliefs, cultures and gender.

*Restructure the operations team:* The college should restructure the operations team to make cost savings and to improve the team's culture.

*Seek multi-year funding:* The college should apply to the St John's College Trust Board for multi-year funding, either for three or five years, so it can manage its own funds, plan long-term, and have an incentive to cut costs and use the savings to fund further initiatives.

*Appoint a human resources officer:* The college should appoint a human resources officer to help rebuild its culture, help redraft its complaints policies, deal with most complaints, and establish and maintain a complaints register.

*Develop a communications plan:* The college should prepare a communications plan after appointing a communications advisor so all those at the college, and in the church, are kept abreast of plans, decisions and events.

*Redraft complaints policies:* The college should redraft its many complaint-related policies into a single policy applicable to all. The new policy should be flexible, easy to understand and apply, and have informal and formal resolution processes. The college should also develop a consistent, clear policy on the termination of scholarships and over time review all its many other policies.

*Set minimum standards for student selection:* The college should set minimum academic and psychological standards for students to meet before they can be considered for admission. The college must interview prospective candidates put forward by sponsoring bishops. It should consult individual bishops, but it should have the final say on admission.

*Consider a whare:* The college should consider building a whare to represent more than one iwi as a visible representation of, and commitment to, its three-Tikanga structure and to give Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Pasefika a "place of belonging" on campus. (An alternative is much greater physical representation of these tikanga in its buildings, along with a kuaha or pou.)

*Start a women in leadership programme:* The college should commit to a tangible programme to address gender bias so its faculty has more women and its education and ministry training programmes pay more attention to the needs of women in ministry.

We have given the college and archbishops a detailed plan for implementing these recommendations, along with suggested timeframes, should the college and church choose to adopt them. The college and General Synod Standing Committee may wish to consider appointing a small working group to monitor implementation of the plan. A clear and focused strategy, along with a strong, positive and all-embracing culture, should enable the college to become a place where, as Davidson aptly put it, "foundations are laid, skills gained, [lessons] consolidated and windows to new worlds opened as part of an ongoing contribution to students' education and formation".<sup>2</sup> Such an outcome is entirely within the college's reach if it – and the church – embraces our recommendations.

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1, p321

## PART ONE: KUPU WHAKATAKI | INTRODUCTION

*Ko tōu reo, ko tōku reo, te tuakiri tāngata.  
Tīhei uriuri, tīhei nakonako.*

*Your voice and my voice are expressions of identity. May our descendants live on, and our hopes be fulfilled.*

This review was commissioned in response to complaints by current and former students, faculty members and staff about the culture of St John's Theological College. The complaints spanned a broad range of topics relating to the way the college is run. We are pleased to report that only a small proportion concerned personal and more serious matters, such as bullying, harassment and discrimination. We emphasise that our task was never to examine these complaints in detail, let alone to decide on their validity, but rather to consider what changes the college should make to its culture, life and ministry as a result of these complaints. We have done exactly that in this independent review.

### Whāinga | Purpose

Our terms of reference (see appendix 1) consist of five parts:

- examine the nature and extent of current and past complaints
- examine the college's response to those complaints
- review the health and safety of staff and students
- comment, where appropriate, on how well the college is achieving its educational and ministry training objectives
- comment, where appropriate, on how alternative education and ministry training models and strategies can be used to meet those objectives and the church's changing needs.

It soon became clear to us that all five matters – behaviour, responses, structures, training needs and alternative approaches – are intertwined to a large degree and form part of the wider issue of culture.

### Huarahi | Approach

Our review took place between March and August 2021. Our approach was investigative and informal. As with any review, there was no substitute for face-to-face interviews. We conducted more than 125 one-on-one interviews, and another 15 group interviews, with current and former students, college faculty members and staff, members of the boards of Te Kaunihera, Te Kotahitanga and the St John's College Trust, bishops, ministry educators, clergy and other interested participants. We interviewed the Anglican Women's Studies Council for its perspectives on gender-related issues and sought the views of other theological institutions.<sup>3</sup> Having met a total of close to 175 individuals, we are confident of having obtained a rich and diverse range of views and experiences of college life.

Mindful of the need to take account of the three-Tikanga structure of the college, we visited the five Hui Amorangi to meet their pīhopa, clergy and former college students. Participants welcomed the effort we made to visit them and we had stronger engagement with Māori as a result. All five hui were immensely valuable.

It was more challenging to undertake face-to-face meetings with Tikanga Pasefika, but we approached the Polynesian diocese and had Zoom meetings with former students as well as

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<sup>3</sup> These included Bishopdale, Carey Baptist College, Laidlaw College, Otago University and Trinity Methodist Theology College.

Polynesian representatives on the boards of Te Kotahitanga and Te Kaunihera. We were, of course, able to meet face-to-face with a number of former and current Pasefika students living in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Recognising the role whānau play in the life of the college, we had a drop-in session for whānau of students to hear their views on life at the college and its culture. We also had two hui with key stakeholders to test findings and options, one with the archbishops and another with representatives of the three governance boards and the secretary and chief executive of St John's College Trust Board.

We also had the benefit of consultation with a panel of advisors on ecclesiastical and tikanga-related matters.

All discussions were confidential and allowed for free and frank feedback. It was gratifying how many individuals were keen to support the review and share their experiences at the college and their ideas about how the college could best meet the church's changing needs. Equally gratifying was the desire of all, whether their time at the college was positive or not, to see the college realise its full potential.

We commissioned AskYourTeam to carry out a culture survey. We sent this survey to all students, faculty members and staff who were, or had been, at the college since 1 January 2016. Of the 170 individuals invited to complete the survey, 120 did so – a participation rate of 71 per cent. The survey provided valuable insights and reinforced many of the themes that emerged in interviews. A full copy of the survey report has been given to the college chair and the manukura. The report presented all data in a way that preserved respondents' anonymity and confidentiality. We also arranged for the high-level results to be shared with faculty members, staff and students. (Note that scores below 65 per cent indicate potential concerns – the lower the score, the higher the concern.)

We considered a wide range of written material, including relevant legislation, the canons, the college's health and safety-related policies, the residential and academic handbooks, board reports (whether by the manukura to Te Kaunihera or Te Kaunihera to Te Kotahitanga), scholarship-related documents, various plans, relevant student data, and New Zealand Qualifications Authority-related material. We received written submissions from 33 participants, 29 of whom also took part in interviews. Some submissions were short, while others ran to many pages. We also studied three previous reviews (see below).

The report consists of five parts (including this introduction): culture, health and safety, education and ministry training, and improvements. Each part sets out relevant facts and feedback and an assessment of current problems. The last part proposes solutions to the problems identified. This review was an opportunity for many participants to have a voice in the college's future and for this reason we make frequent use of quotes (some edited) to convey their experiences and views.

## **Horopaki | Context**

Three matters had a bearing on this review and deserve brief comment:

### *Previous reviews*

The first, in 1984, was titled A Review of Anglican-Methodist Relationships in Ministerial Education of the St John's College Site. The second, in 1990, examined both St John's Theological College and Trinity Theology College and was known as the Colleges Review. The third, in 2010, was led by former Archbishop Sir Paul Reeves, assisted by Kathryn Beck, and was known as the Reeves-Beck review, although its formal title was the Commission of Inquiry in Relation to the Structure of the College of St John's the Evangelist.

We were surprised to find all three reviews contained similar criticisms (albeit against different backdrops) to those we heard: a lack of clear, long-term vision and purpose; complex governance structures; confusion about decision-making at governance and management levels; an absence of strong pastoral care; and student concerns about competing priorities in relation to academic, spiritual, ministry training and community life goals. These criticisms remain valid in 2021, prompting some to question the point of yet another review.

Ultimately, whether our review leads to any change rests with the college and wider church. Four factors, however, distinguish this review from the previous ones and suggest meaningful change is at hand. First, the church has allocated too many resources and committed too much money to this review not to implement it. Secondly, individuals independent of the college or church have undertaken this review. Thirdly, “too many people have bared their souls”, as one interviewee put it, to make inaction a viable option. And fourthly, this review has taken place against a very different social, political and legal backdrop: more stringent health and safety legislation is now in place; a royal commission has been highlighting abuse and other failures in faith-based institutions; gender and racial inequality are becoming increasingly unacceptable; and the church is now recognising the need to reflect these and other changes in the way it functions.

### *Legal obligations*

Three Acts of Parliament have had a bearing on our review. The first is the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, which sets out the duties a company and its officers, such as directors and executives (here governors of the college and its manukura), must comply with. Other people in the workplace, including managers and workers, also have duties to safeguard the physical and mental safety of all workers (here students, faculty members and staff). We are not convinced the college or the church has fully appreciated that compliance is not a tick-box exercise but requires implementation of best-practice processes that have the wellbeing of all students, staff and faculty members at the heart of college life. The second piece of legislation is the Human Rights Act 1993, which prohibits various forms of harassment and discrimination.<sup>4</sup> It is relevant here to the extent we heard several complaints about harassment and discrimination. The third piece of legislation is the Education and Training Act 2020, which requires the college to comply with the Private Training Registration Rules 2021 to maintain its registration as a private training establishment. These rules require the college to, among others, operate a safe environment for its students and staff, have accessible, fair and timely complaint processes, and safeguard student wellbeing.

### *Changing church needs*

The college’s core function is to train people to help the Anglican Church/Te Hāhi Mihinare carry out its mission: for Anglicans, that mission is expressed in its five marks of mission. But what the church requires from the college has changed in recent times. Today it has five needs to which the college must respond.

The first is an immediate need to train more ordained priests and deacons as those currently within its ranks near retirement. According to a thesis in 2013 on the post-war Anglican Church by Rev Noel Derbyshire, the median age of clergy in 2010 was 57, and he predicted the church was likely to need 100 more clergy by 2030 as this group gradually entered retirement age.<sup>5</sup> Even in the face of declining numbers, the church must attract and train more clergy for ministry.

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<sup>4</sup> Section 62, Human Rights Act 1993.

<sup>5</sup> Noel Derbyshire, *An anatomy of antipodean Anglicanism: the Anglican church in Aotearoa New Zealand 1945 to 2012*. History. Auckland, Massey University. Doctorate of Philosophy, 2013.

The second is the need to train more non-stipendiary (non-paid) ministers to supplement the declining number of stipendiary positions for clergy. Derbyshire's thesis noted there were 369 ministry units in 2009, of which only 208 had full-time stipendiary clergy, 87 had part-time stipendiary clergy and 71 had non-stipendiary clergy. So the church must inspire and equip those who want to serve the church, whether as ordained or lay ministers, in non-parochial ministry – such as chaplains, youth pastors or church planters – to achieve this goal. Some need to be inspired to see the spiritual significance of serving as lawyers, accountants, teachers and the like, equipped with the theological skills to provide a Christian presence in an increasingly secular society.

The third is the need to attract younger students to become clergy and lay ministers to help attract younger people to the church. Until the 1980s, newly ordained priests were almost always men in their 20s who remained priests for life, building up deep pastoral experience. Today, newly ordained priests can be anywhere from their 20s to their 60s, the older ones having already had careers in various professions and the corporate world. Although such diversity of backgrounds is a positive thing, the church needs to have young faces of varied ethnicity and gender to speak to and attract people to the church.

The fourth is the need for well-trained clergy and lay ministers to help reverse the decline in church numbers. Anglicanism, once the biggest Christian denomination in the country, declined from 29.6 per cent of the population in the 1986 census to 13.8 per cent in the 2006 census. That number halved again to 6.7 per cent by the 2018 census. Additionally, the church faces the task of explaining the history, structures and faith of the church to congregations from an increasingly diverse theological background. Surveys sponsored by the Christian Research Association of Aotearoa New Zealand indicate about half of Anglicans come from other denominations, such as Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists and Pentecostals.<sup>6</sup> There is a need to help these newer Anglicans understand what it means to be an Anglican, including the five marks of mission.

The fifth is the need for more non-Pākehā and female clergy and lay ministers. Too few women are training for ordination, and often they have the additional responsibility of families to care for. Between 1985 and 1994, men and women were ordained in similar numbers. For a period after that, the proportion of women ordained rose to 60 per cent, before falling away. By 2009, women accounted for just 31 per cent of all clergy (493 out of 1,600).<sup>7</sup> Recent research suggests women are less likely to remain in the stipendiary clergy. Nor are Māori and Pasifika students training in sufficient numbers, given the proportion of Māori identified as Anglican/Mihinare in the 2018 census was 16.4 per cent, and given the considerable potential to attract more Pasifika into the Anglican fold.<sup>8</sup> As Aotearoa New Zealand changes ethnically and socially, the church needs to be able to connect with all people of all backgrounds.

Many told us that, above all, the college needed to initiate meaningful, practical change to help produce, to use one interviewee's words, "strong leaders who can translate the church's mission into today's culture". They stressed the need for fresh expression as well as serving the country's more traditional parishes. The college, said one, had to "make room for everyone at the table" and educate students to serve its church in different ways.

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<sup>6</sup> Some Results from the Aotearoa New Zealand Church Life Survey 2007 and 2011, unpublished paper, by Dr Barry McDonald, Massey University.

<sup>7</sup> Derbyshire, 2013, pp322-325, appendix p40.

<sup>8</sup> Only 1.8 per cent of Pasifika, who make up 8.1 per cent of the population, described themselves as Anglican in the 2018 census.

## Hanganga o te kāreti | Composition of college

The college's on-site roll is small, typically hovering around 50 students. (It has ranged from 54 in 2015 to 46 in 2021.) Māori students have made up anywhere from a fifth to a third of the roll. Between 2015 and 2018, there were about 10 Māori students, although that number had risen to 16 by 2021. Pākehā numbers fluctuate still more. In 2015, they stood at 32, but had dropped to 15 by 2020 before rebounding to 19 in 2021. Pasefika student numbers are the smallest but the steadiest. In 2015, they stood at nine, rising to 11 in 2020 before dropping back to 10 in 2021. The college also offers remote learning. Between 2015 and 2021, the number of students studying via its regional programme ranged from 135 to 166.

The gender make-up of residential students has fluctuated widely. The number of male students has always exceeded female, although in 2015 it was close to an even split – 26 females and 29 males. By 2020, female numbers had dipped to 40 per cent (18 females and 26 males), but rose slightly to 42 per cent in 2021 (20 females and 27 males). Between 2015 and 2018, the number of Māori female students equalled or exceeded the number of Māori males. From that point on, the trend has reversed and Māori male students consistently outnumber their female counterparts. There was a similar trend, and then reversal, for Pasefika, with females exceeding males in 2015 and 2016, only for the opposite to apply from 2017 onwards. The overall breakdown for female students in 2021 is 10 Pākehā, seven Māori and three Pasefika.

Female students, however, dominate the regional programme. In 2021, female students made up 64 per cent of the roll (107 females, 59 males). Strikingly, almost all students are Pākehā. In 2020 and 2021, there were just three and two Māori students respectively enrolled in the programme, and no Pasefika students – largely because the St John's College Trust funds the Hui Amorangi and Polynesian diocese to run their own regional training. This seems an obvious missed opportunity for greater co-ordination and therefore value for money in funding regional programmes.

A breakdown of the student roll by all 13 dioceses reveals significant differences. Of the five Hui Amorangi, Te Taitokerau sends the most students to the college (as few as four in 2015, but up to 15 in 2021), whereas the number of students from Tairāwhiti has steadily declined (from four in 2015 to one in 2019 and none for the past two years). Te Manawa o Te Wheke and Te Waipounamu have each sent only one student each year since 2016 (although the former sent three students in 2015). Te Upoko o Te Ika has sent no students at all. Of the 17 Māori students enrolled in 2021, 15 are all from one Hui Amorangi.

Of the Pākehā dioceses, Auckland and Wellington have sent the most students to the college (Auckland seven and eight for 2020 and 2021 respectively, and Wellington four and six for the same years). Nelson – unsurprisingly because it has its own college in Bishopdale – has sent no students in the past five years. Numbers from Waikato/Taranaki have trended downwards – from five in 2015 to only one in 2020 and none in 2021. Dunedin has not sent any students since 2018. (As Allan Davidson observed in his history of the college, most students, even in the 1950s and 60s, came from the northern dioceses, with the result that it acted more like a “diocesan college than a Provincial institution” – a fact that is still true today.<sup>9</sup>)

Dioceses and Hui Amorangi gave us a range of reasons for not sending students to the college. Some said they were concerned the college would not sufficiently “care for and support” their students. Others said they had concerns about “workload and leadership” and whether college life “would truly equip [their] people for life as a church leader”. Another concern – particularly for Hui Amorangi – was the need to avoid removing students from their local setting for a substantial period of time.

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<sup>9</sup> Davidson, p195.

Finally, a brief note about the curriculum. Residential students undertake study in their first year towards the college's level 5 Diploma of Christian Studies, a New Zealand Qualifications Authority-approved programme that is, in essence, the first year of a Bachelor of Theology degree. In subsequent years, they study either at Otago, Carey or Laidlaw to complete a Bachelor of Theology. Students' ethnicity plays a large part in which college they attend: Māori primarily study at Laidlaw, Pākehā at Otago and Pasefika at Carey (although we note later that this may be about to change). All students also work part-time towards a Diploma of Anglican Leadership while at the college (which is on average three to four years). This programme is not approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. A handful of students study other disciplines, whether health sciences, business or music, alongside one or both diplomas. In recent years, a good number of (predominantly Pākehā) students have undertaken post-graduate studies at the college. By far the majority of students study to become ordained clergy, although students from the Polynesian diocese are often already ordained and come to the college for further training at undergraduate or post-graduate level, including in disciplines besides theology.

Regional programme students study towards a Diploma of Christian Studies. This usually takes three to five years. Many more take individual papers to gain a certificate of proficiency. In 2021, 73 students studied towards the diploma and 93 students studied for a certificate of proficiency. Appendix 2 contains more detailed information provided to us by the college on roll numbers by Tikanga, gender, location and programme.

The college currently has 10 full-time faculty members (although one spends 20 per cent of his time as a parish priest) and four adjunct teaching roles. Five faculty members also have leadership roles – the manukura, the three Tikanga deans and the programme director. The teacher-student ratio is very high for residential students: roughly 1:5. (It is 1:17 for regional programme students in 2021). The college has 10 support staff (three part-time), who all answer to a college manager. They are responsible for all administrative work (including finances), household duties (including student accommodation, catering and the like) and maintaining the college's buildings and grounds. They also provide some administrative and other support to faculty members.

Finally, brief mention should be made of funding and costs. The college is primarily funded from an endowment held by the St John's College Trust. The college received \$4.182 million from the trust in 2020 and \$4.245 million in 2021. Unspent funds in any year must – unless agreed otherwise – go back to the trust. Such an arrangement, we note, hardly encourages the college to make cost savings.

In 2020, the college's total expenditure was \$4.042 million. Of this, faculty and staff costs were the biggest component (40.1 per cent), followed by student and education-related expenses (34.3 per cent). The latter include student living allowances, tuition and course-related fees, education costs for dependents of residential students, and other incidental allowances. We were told the average yearly cost for each student, including accommodation, was about \$85,000. Given most students are at the college for three to four years, this represents a substantial investment in their education and training.<sup>10</sup>

All reference to students, faculty members and staff include former and current members unless indicated otherwise.

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<sup>10</sup> We asked the St John's College Trust Board how this compared with the cost of other scholarships it funded (which could include course fees and/or living and housing costs) to other colleges. We were told scholarships for some studying towards a three-year bachelor's degree could vary from \$12,000 to \$25,000 a year, while scholarships for those studying for PhDs could range from \$25,000 to \$55,000 a year.

## PART TWO: AHUREA | CULTURE

*Kotahi te kohao o te ngira e kuhuna ai te miro mā, te miro pango, te miro whero.*

*There is but one eye of the needle through which must pass the black thread, the white thread and the red thread.*

### Kupu whakataki | Introduction

The culture of any organisation is the “eco-system” in which its people work (and here, study). It is not exactly tangible, yet it is important in shaping how the people within it function and behave towards one another. In a positive culture, people feel safe, trusted and respected. They are ready to do their best to embrace the organisation’s vision and goals, to take pride in their work, and to study and learn from their mistakes. Morale is strong and output high.

So fundamental is the question of culture that it struck us as back to front to examine the specific complaints at the heart of this review without first looking at the culture in which those complaints arose. This places the complaints in their proper context and helps explain why some of these complaints have arisen. Many factors determine a healthy culture. Strong and visible leadership and a clear strategy are closely entwined with, and shape, such a culture. Structures that are simple and roles that are well defined and clearly understood are big contributors, too, as is clear communication within and outside an organisation about its strategy and day-to-day operations.

Many interviewees said most of these ingredients were largely absent from the college. All will require significant attention to improve college life and culture.

Our assessment of the college’s culture is necessarily high-level. Nonetheless we have confidence in the soundness of our assessment given the benefit of extensive interviews, written statements and survey responses. Many features of the culture are positive, but many are not and will need serious attention.

### Ehara i te mea kotahi te ahurea hei tikanga mō te katoa | No all-embracing culture

One of the most striking things about the college is the absence of a single, clear, institution-wide culture. A culture of he waka eke noa (a waka we are all in together) is notably absent. Participants could not even agree whether there was one culture or not – a sure sign none existed. In truth, there are six cultures – one for students, another for faculty members, a third for staff and one for each Tikanga.

When asked whether there was a common culture, responses fell into one of three categories: one, yes there was, although the strength of that culture was coloured by personal experience; two, no there wasn’t, but the college had tried to build one and “hadn’t pulled it off”; and three, no there wasn’t, only “definite subcultures” based on roles and Tikanga. The third is our view.

Almost everyone we spoke to agreed that the college’s ethos possessed certain positive features – generosity, diversity, devotion to God, sense of community, love of shared worship – but, important and noble as these are, they are not the attributes of organisational culture, which is more concerned with leadership, structure, roles, work practices, communication channels and so on. But there were also negative features – hierarchy, inequality and unfairness, distrust and suspicion. Overall, the college’s culture comes across as reactive, rather than proactive.

It was plain from our interviews – and confirmed by survey results – that students, faculty members and staff each had their own culture. Faculty members recorded the strongest overall support for the culture survey statements (72 per cent). Staff were the least supportive (45 per cent) and students fell in the middle (57 per cent).

Faculty members felt there was a “strong common culture” derived from all those at the college coming together as “people of God” – a unifying kaupapa. They described the culture as joyful, communal, friendly and enlightening. They said that aspects of community life, such as shared kai and worship, were “common things that embrace us all” and contributed to culture at the college. Their score for the statement “I enjoy my time at the college” was 80 per cent.

Staff focused principally on the culture of their own team, not that of the college generally, although they thought students were friendly and the college was inclusive. They described their culture as fragmented, cliquish, lacking cohesion or collegiality and even toxic. Some frankly admitted they were “overstaffed for such a small college”, and what was needed “was a relatively small team who worked together as a strong and unified group”. They described a recent operational review as a “missed opportunity”. Staff support for the statement “I enjoy my time at the college” was just 53 per cent. (We should note that interpersonal relationships are a major cause of the poor culture in the staff group.)

Students had a different view of culture again. For them, more than any group, personal experience coloured their views about college culture. Some could not speak highly enough of their time at the college: “I have a grateful heart for my time at the college. It was a transformative, challenging culture, and it was an amazing gift.” They described a positive culture that was joyful, happy, supportive, peaceful and friendly.

Others, however, were critical of their time at the college. One described it as like living in a “cultish bubble”. Another said it was “collegial but not deeply communicative” and also “controlling”. Others described it as hierarchical and dysfunctional. What was abundantly clear, however, was that even those with negative experiences said they loved their fellow students and the three-Tikanga structure of the college. Students’ support for the statement “I enjoy my time at the college” averaged 69 per cent. Current students scored this statement more highly – 76 per cent compared with 65 per cent for former students. On the whole, students appear to feel happier, better supported and have a better sense of belonging than previously.

Participants described the culture of each Tikanga as markedly different. They largely agreed that the culture of Tikanga Māori was friendly, nurturing, supportive, whānau-orientated and challenging (but in a positive way). Several participants described it as steeped in Māori history. One participant summed it up well: “It’s whakapapa-orientated. We love our fellow brothers and sisters and we carry each other through the highs and the lows. There are lot of big voices and we are not slow to challenge or speak up, but we hold it well.” For Māori, whanaungatanga and manaakitanga were crucial. Māori students, staff and faculty members scored the statement “I enjoy my time at the college” at 76 per cent. For current Māori students, the score was 91 per cent, compared with 71 per cent for former Māori students. The college may want to examine what factors are behind this increase and whether they can be carried over to Tikanga Pākehā where enjoyment scores are much lower.

Tikanga Pasefika culture was described in very similar terms to Tikanga Māori – family-orientated, caring, supportive, fun, grateful and tolerant. All this showed through in their high support for the statement “I enjoy my time at the college” – 81 per cent on average, and 90 per cent for current Pasefika students. However, we note that the experiences of Fijian and Tongan respondents varied widely. Tongans scored this statement – and many others – significantly lower than their Fijian counterparts and this needs attention. Moreover, participants added that Tikanga Pasefika culture was also hierarchical and excessively

deferential, making it difficult to speak up or express concerns. We were saddened to hear some Pasefika interviewees say they felt like they were “at the bottom of the food chain” or “poor cousins of Tikanga Pākehā and Māori” and had “little voice at the college”. The college must be vigilant in encouraging Tikanga Pasefika members to bring their voice to the table.

Many participants said Tikanga Pākehā culture was structured, pressured, process-orientated and outcome-focused. They also said it was “very individualistic”, in contrast to the more “collective” outlook of Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Pasefika cultures and that many felt constantly under “evaluation”, even “surveillance”. (The college told us this was unsurprising, in part because of dioceses’ demands for regular reporting about their students’ progress.) Pākehā students said they had higher workloads than anyone else, and the culture overall was described as busy. There was no consensus about whether the culture was positive or negative, and this ambivalence was reflected in responses to the survey statement “I enjoy my time at the college”. Tikanga Pākehā recorded an average score of 62 per cent (and current Pākehā students gave it 60 per cent support).

Five Pākehā students told us they had to study 50 to 60 hours a week on average to keep up (quite apart from expectations to participate in common life) and this made life “stressful” and “pressured”. The question of workloads was the subject of a complaint that went on appeal to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority this year.<sup>11</sup> Students should be able to leave healthy and balanced, not exhausted and burnt out, after their studies. The college needs to give this matter its attention.

## Marau | Themes

Our interviews and discussions revealed four broad themes about the college’s culture or influences on that culture:

### Rautaki, mana whakahaere, kaiārahitanga | Strategy, governance and leadership

*Strategy.* To succeed, any organisation must define the success it seeks and what steps it intends to take to achieve it. This requires a clearly articulated and universally understood strategy (containing, among other things, a vision, purpose and values), backed up by an equally clear plan with long-term and intermediate-term goals and desired outcomes.

Te Kaunihera prepared a five-year strategic plan in September 2020, but it is not so much a plan with concrete steps to follow and specific outcomes to achieve as a series of high-level aspirations. (It deserves credit, however, for at least making a start at such a plan.) It has four strategic objectives – in essence forming students to become missional leaders, being a Tikanga educational hub, building college infrastructure, and delivering excellence within an orthodox faith – and these are further divided into 30 goals. (We might add that many students were unable to tell us precisely what being a “missional leader” entailed.) The plan contains no performance measures.

Also, the values that underpin the plan – faithfulness, integrity and service – are personal, not organisational, in nature. Agreed organisational values that were embraced by all would make a significant difference to the culture of the college. Does the college, for example, value diversity, collegiality or innovation? It is far from clear from its plan or other documents. In summary, the college’s strategy is long on aspiration and short on prioritised actions and measurable outcomes.

This no doubt accounts for the fact support for the survey statement “the college has clearly articulated vision, values and goals” averaged only 59 per cent. Many interviewees were

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<sup>11</sup> It concluded the college did not breach the approval and accreditation rules, but the workload of residential students in Tikanga Pākehā had the “potential to be excessive”. It also concluded the college failed to give students sufficient information about the programme’s requirements.

dimly aware of the plan, but, to paraphrase many, had “no idea what it is, and nor had they had input into it”. It is vital to involve everyone in setting a strategic vision so all feel a personal involvement in its success. As one participant put it: “The joy found in mutual study and social times – like the hīkoi, volleyball, whānau football and so on – simply isn’t enough to build culture unless the college community fully buys in to a clearly defined vision and purpose.”

*Governance:* The college’s governance was universally criticised. Many participants considered it hard to hold anyone accountable at the college. They also found the governance structure convoluted and unworkable. As one participant put it: “The college is effectively governed by three separate boards – the St John’s College Trust Board, Te Kotahitanga and Te Kaunihera – but in reality, it’s governed by no one.” Or as another participant put it, with only a touch of exaggeration: “There are as many people overseeing us as there are students.” It is clear to us the confusion arises from overlapping roles and functions.<sup>12</sup> What is lacking is a sharp delineation between the trust board as funder, the college as service provider and Te Kotahitanga as overseer of theological education and ministry training for the wider church. (See also the discussion below about stakeholders.)

Currently, Te Kotahitanga has three representatives on the board of Te Kaunihera. We cannot see why this should be so. It poses a conflict of interest: do these governors act in the interests of Te Kotahitanga or Te Kaunihera? Overwhelmingly, interviewees attributed the college’s complex governance arrangements to the “low-trust model of the Anglican Church”. Many interviewees said this lack of trust within the church led to a tendency to appoint people to boards to represent stakeholders rather than to appoint those with the necessary skills and expertise to do the job.<sup>13</sup> More than a few also said Te Kaunihera should be a “secular board and keep the church politics out of it”.

Many students felt Te Kaunihera was “removed” or “isolated” from college life. As one put it: “There is no connection with the board – we never see them.” Another said the board was “generally ignorant of the kingdom over which it governs”. This is not in any way to suggest individual board members don’t have the college’s best interests at heart. It is quite clear to us – from meeting with the full board – that they do. But they are all busy people, who only meet four times a year. Further, the convoluted governance structure gets in the way of one single board having clear governance of, and exerting strong leadership over, the college. It also poses legal risks for the church (a question we have addressed in separate advice to the archbishops).

*Leadership:* Culture comes from the top down. The strong feedback we received was that college leaders weren’t sufficiently visible, to the detriment of the college’s culture. Nor were many, particularly students, clear about who among the leadership – the manukura, the college manager or the three deans – was responsible for what. Students said they would welcome the manukura being more visible around the campus to reinforce the sense of shared community life, and also to expound the plans and kaupapa of the college.

Quite a few interviewees, especially current students, considered there was a much reduced emphasis on the common life of the college nowadays, even allowing for the undoubted impact of COVID-19. There was a strong desire among students for the college’s leadership

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<sup>12</sup> Canon Title E makes Te Kotahitanga responsible for oversight of theological education, ministry training and formation. The canon has purported to delegate governance of the college to Te Kaunihera, but a close examination of the canon shows it has not delegated all of its governance-related functions. Although the St John’s College Trust Board is responsible for funding, Te Kotahitanga also has funding-related powers, including making recommendations to the trust board about the allocation of income for education and training, while the trust board has some say – along with Te Kotahitanga – in approving individual student scholarships to the college.

<sup>13</sup> Te Kotahitanga is one such example. All its members are appointed as representatives of each tikanga, along with one member appointed by St John’s College Trust Board: para 3.1.

to restore this vital element of college life, although they accepted that they, too, had a role to play. What seems to be missing is frank discussion between faculty members and students about who should take charge of various community events, whether the pre-2020 regular fortnightly dinner after evening prayers, a church history quiz night, an event for tamariki or a weekly community crossword (examples some interviewees put forward). Others said regular reminders to students and faculty members about why common life mattered were needed, too.

Finally, interviewees mentioned the absence of the archbishops at the college. Said one: “We know they are busy and they needn’t come with anything – just seeing them is enough for us.” Students spoke of the importance of the kaitiaki role at the college and how much they would welcome interacting more with Te Pihopa o Te Aotearoa. He told us he would be pleased to come to the college whenever he is invited.

### **Hanganga me ngā mahi e hāngai ana ki ia tūranga | Structures and roles**

Structures and roles play a huge part in shaping the culture of an organisation. We comment on four matters in this respect:

*The three-Tikanga structure:* The vast majority of participants, whether students, staff or faculty members, said the three-Tikanga structure was the “greatest thing” about their time at the college. Interviewees could not stress this enough: Said one: “The college is the one place in our church where it works out the three-Tikanga relationship on a daily basis, and for me that was the greatest thing about my time there.” Said another: “I loved the experience of the three Tikanga – it was like heaven.” He went on to say – as did many – that he lamented the fact that “life [eventually] became siloed within your own Tikanga parish” and only the biennial General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui gave him the chance to enjoy the three-Tikanga experience again. (As an aside, we note that three-Tikanga structure appears to be working very well at the archbishop level of the church.) A third said: “It’s our only opportunity to come together as disparate parts of a culturally diverse church in a real way, and the bond we form with other Tikanga can last a lifetime and is extremely beneficial to our church and its mission.” Not surprisingly, the survey statement “I believe in the importance of the other tikanga at the college” attracted an average score of 90 per cent.

There was far less agreement about whether the present Tikanga structure had woven the three cultures together well. Many echoed the sentiment of one interviewee who said it would always be “extraordinarily challenging” to have a single unifying college culture as long as “three independent deans headed three independent streams”. Many asked how it was possible to honour three Tikanga without creating silos.

Some described the structure as “problematic” and said it was “dividing the church” because it was the opposite of what the church was all about – “gathering around a common table”. One participant expressed it thus: “We focus so much on what it means to be Māori, Pākehā and Polynesian, [but] we don’t focus enough on what it means to be Anglican and to be worshipping and working together.” Or as another said: “It’s more about understanding and experiencing cultural diversity – it does not need the artificiality of three Tikanga streams to achieve that.” Some who held this view suggested the time might even have come to disestablish the three Tikanga streams. Said one such proponent: “Currently, it’s like doing everything in triplicate with carbon paper.”

Others, however, wanted the three-Tikanga structure preserved. Māori especially held this view. They said they would be concerned Tikanga Pākehā would dominate if the three Tikanga were brought together. Said one student: “Māori need their own space and sanctuary.” Said another: “There are differences between Tikanga and the way students learn, the way they relate to one another, their experiences with food and so on and each must be retained.” Yet another said: “The three Tikanga are perfect in their own differences, and that would be lost if they were assimilated.” Many advocating the status quo did,

however, question whether deans should continue to manage each Tikanga. Many participants made the point – and we tend to agree – that the appointment of a dean to each Tikanga seemed more about “clinging to the concept of three separate colleges”. It was not a model, we believe, that the Reeves-Beck review envisaged (see more below).

The ambivalence about the practicalities of the existing structure showed up in responses to the survey statements “the three-Tikanga commitment is woven into the everyday life of the college” and “the three-Tikanga model works well at the college”. These were markedly lower – 59 per cent and 53 per cent respectively – than the 90 per cent support for the statement about the importance of the three Tikanga.

Overall, our impression is that retaining the three Tikanga streams, at least for the time being, is probably best. As one interviewee said: “They have to be honoured, respected, acknowledged and given a voice.” However, this does not preclude the college from doing more to weave them together. As we note later, many students yearn for more studying and training as one, rather than in their respective Tikanga. In the end, it’s a matter of balance. As one interviewee put it very well: “Each Tikanga needs to have its own time, but there must also be time together.” Another one went further and suggested that “spending 50 per cent of the time in our Tikanga group and 50 per cent in common life might be a [good] start”. Whatever the balance, it should be struck after discussion between the college’s leaders, faculty members and students.

Quite a number of participants said that, for all the talk of a three-Tikanga structure at the college, there was not one visible representation of Tikanga Māori or Tikanga Pasefika on the campus. As one put it: “When you walk in, there needs to be something to say that Tikanga Pasefika, Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Pākehā are here, but there is nothing.” Similarly, we heard that some Māori and Pasefika students felt there was “no place for Māori and Pasefika brothers and sisters [to gather or belong]”. One interviewee bluntly said: “What the college could use is a radical dose of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga and a marae could be the catalyst to help get some of that.”

*Deans:* Many interviewees said the appointment of deans by Tikanga ministry bodies, not the manukura, was “weird”, and it is unclear to whom precisely they are accountable – the manukura or their ministry body or both.<sup>14</sup> (The deans were “in the firing line from above and to the side”, to use one interviewee’s words.) We were far from sure ourselves to whom they are accountable. Chief executives normally get to appoint their own senior leadership team. One thing every interviewee agreed on was that the deans cannot be simultaneously lecturers, supervisors and pastoral care providers. This is a conflict of roles, and many students said they did not feel comfortable to approach their dean – wearing his or her pastoral care hat – to air a grievance or discuss, for example, mental health-related issues. How could they, when this person was their supervisor who reported regularly to their bishop and could be a key influence on whether they succeeded at the college? Almost all participants agreed that, at the very least, deans should not provide pastoral care (see more in part three). The deans shared this view and acknowledged the “predicament” in which they found themselves.

Many participants, however, went further and said the dean structure might have outstayed its usefulness and should be reviewed. Other educational colleges usually have only two deans (or equivalents) – one overseeing the academic programme and the other overseeing students. A dean of students has particular advantages: consistency in liaising with, and managing, all students; the ability to identify issues common to all three Tikanga; and co-ordinated stakeholder engagement (here mostly with each student’s sponsoring bishop).

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<sup>14</sup> In Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Pasefika, the manukura makes an appointment “on the recommendation” of respectively ngā Pihopa of Tikanga Māori and the Tikanga Pasefika Ministry Committee. In Tikanga Pākehā, the manukura makes an appointment “in consultation” with the Tikanga Pākehā Ministry Council (Canon II, Title E, 3.12.3.3).

Suggestions varied about who would lead or look after each Tikanga. One idea was the manukura becomes the “three-Tikanga dean”. Another was that a member of the faculty of the appropriate Tikanga simply be appointed to look after each stream. Clearly, there would be various options available to the college, and ultimately it is for the college and the church to decide on the future of the deans’ roles.

*Hierarchy:* Many participants said the college hierarchy was rigid and top-heavy, and “power” rested in the hands of just a few. They also drew our attention to the cost implications of so many senior leaders in so small a college. We are not convinced a hierarchical structure is a problem in itself, although a rigid hierarchy can be conducive to bullying and the like. Rather, we detected an absence of fairness in the way decisions are made and executed. Exacerbating the effects of this rigidity is the lack of an all-embracing culture and free and frank discussion between students, faculty members and staff on matters that affect them all. Students also expressed concern that they had no common room, a typical amenity at most educational institutions.

*Administration:* For a small college, its administrative structure is needlessly complex. Said one participant: “It’s overly bureaucratic, and this is embarrassing for a tiny college.” Recent restructures of the faculty and operations areas by the manukura and college manager have, on the face of it, merely added to that bureaucracy. The faculty is now divided into five working groups, and the 10-member operations group now has four managers. We appreciate the faculty restructure was well intentioned to reduce workloads and ensure each working group had clear priorities, but more than a few interviewees expressed concern that the restructure added unnecessary complexity and increased the risk of a siloed administration. In our view, there is much to be said for simple structures – and simple roles, for that matter.

Support for the survey statement “the roles of the manukura and each faculty member are clearly defined and well understood” was only 55 per cent and comes as no surprise to us. Interviewees spoke of the lack of clarity about who had what responsibilities. One student described emailing three people because she had no idea who to go to sort out a matter. An outside stakeholder observed: “When I go to St John’s, I never know who I should be dealing with – a dean, the programme director or someone else again – and it’s hard to even find people’s email address on its website. Having one stakeholder liaison person would be very helpful.”

Administration at the college was described as old-fashioned, outdated and bureaucratic – even “archaic”, according to one. Like students, we were surprised staff processed applications using paper forms rather than online. (The St John’s College Trust Board told us it had offered the college use of its online portal for applications, but the offer had not been taken up, although the college manager told us steps were under way to introduce online systems.) Many complained about slow and bureaucratic processes. More than one interviewee lamented the time taken to process student application forms (partly because of the involvement of all three boards in scholarship approvals, discussed in part four), with the result that students would sometimes not know whether they had been granted a place until a month or two before the start date. Maintenance work came up time and again – described by many as a “hassle” and “constant battle to get things done”. Requests for work – apart from very minor matters – are a convoluted process involving referral to the trust as owner of the college buildings and residential houses. A review of processes would be timely, and we are confident they can be improved and also produce cost savings.

Many interviewees brought to our attention what they saw as rigid rules prohibiting staff or students from enjoying leftover food from daily lunches or other functions. The college said it binned food to comply with food safety guidelines, but we are not convinced the guidelines make this necessary in all cases. This is clearly a source of considerable resentment. Students also told us they were deterred from trying to organise pot-luck dinners and the like more frequently to help foster community life because dealing with the plethora of rules in

the way was just too “wearisome”. We mention these matters only because of the frustration and resentment they cause and because they illustrate the bureaucratic culture we heard about. That said, students described members of operations as “awesome”: friendly, helpful and supportive – despite slow and rigid processes.

*Communication:* Good communication is vital if everyone is to understand what is expected of them and what is going on day-to-day. Without clear communication, rumour – even paranoia – can become the norm (see below). We repeatedly heard how “poor” communication was at the college. The residential handbook runs to nearly 100 papers, but many said they would prefer essential rules and processes described in a clear, concise way. There is no weekly communication from the manukura in the way chief executives often send out a Friday email to all employees keeping them abreast of company plans, events and what’s top of mind for the organisation. Students said they often received late notice of upcoming events or were required to turn around college requests overnight – often having to print, scan and return a document to management – despite the administration offices being metres from the study blocks.<sup>15</sup>

Effective communication with the wider church community is also missing (a point made as far back as the 1984 review).<sup>16</sup> Many outside interviewees said they had little idea what was happening at the college. As an example, we were struck by the high-quality of some of the post-graduate students’ research work, yet few in the church seem aware of any of the college’s contributions to research and scholarship. Surprisingly, there is no alumnae network (although we did hear that in some years the college hosted alumnae gatherings). Many former students said they would welcome such a network, and surely this could be one tangible way to maintain and strengthen Tikanga bonds formed at the college. (Te Kotahitanga recently declined an application for additional funding for a communications plan but only because it considered the college could fund this from its existing budget and the college is now doing exactly that.)

Several interviewees said the college was equally poor at marketing, something we, too, noticed. Practically speaking, there is none. The college only in June 2021 sent all bishops and ministry educators the application forms for student scholarships for 2022. It came from one of the college’s administration assistants. It had no accompanying messages from the manukura or college manager about the college’s vision or plan for students, the benefits of study for prospective candidates as well as the church or any updates on college life and activities. Other colleges actively market their services, and it is noteworthy some are turning away candidates for lack of spaces, whereas St John’s sometimes struggles to fill 50 places. The college should not be afraid to market itself.

## Whanonga | Behaviour

Participants drew to our attention to a range of behaviour that has undermined a positive culture, and we have grouped this behaviour under the following headings:

*Reactivity:* The college tends to react, not act, creating what many interviewees described as a “reactive” culture. The cause of this tendency, we suspect, is a distrust of change. The college will respond to difficulties or challenges where it must, but otherwise is content to remain with the status quo. Our impression was it does not, for example, actively engage with all stakeholders (discussed below). It adjusts policies or processes, or adds new ones, in response to some complaint or conflict. One interviewee described the college’s typical response as “applying a band-aid solution”.

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<sup>15</sup> We were told that in previous years the college did send out a regular quarterly newsletter, but this ceased in 2018.

<sup>16</sup> 1984 review, p5.

A few mentioned an absence of any innovation, creativity or even “playfulness”. We agree with those who felt the college’s culture belonged in the early 2000s – some even said the 1980s – rather than in this decade. The college has many positive attributes and should not be afraid of change, especially given, as so many pointed out, the unprecedented times facing the church. One interviewee said the college’s prime role was to serve, not lead. But to our mind, these roles are not incompatible. It can fulfil its mission of being a “servant” of the church and also demonstrate leadership and innovation.<sup>17</sup>

*Suspicion and speculation:* Numerous participants said suspicion, gossip and speculation were “rife”. This appears to stem from uncertainty about the college’s plans, ambiguity about faculty and staff roles, and a lack of clearly articulated expectations about decision-making, behaviour and performance. For example, students said they were not always clear about their role in common life and whether they, or the faculty, should lead certain events. During interviews, we were surprised by how often individuals attributed motives to others that we knew from our discussions were pure conjecture. Our sense was that people at the college sometimes conversed with one another in an indirect and ambiguous manner. Some outside the church thought the college had a “siege mentality”. Said one senior church leader: “It’s impossible to share an opinion with the college without [it] thinking you have an agenda.”

*Favouritism:* More than a few interviewees told us they thought favouritism and cliques were common at the college. Staff said this was a particular problem in their area. A lot of students said those closer in personality and/or theological beliefs to college leaders “had an easier time” of it, especially in Tikanga Pākehā. This impression – whether real or perceived – certainly aligns with the low average support (47 per cent) for the survey statement “staff, faculty and students are treated equally and fairly”. The range, however, between groups was wide: 72 per cent for faculty members, 49 per cent for students and only 25 per cent for staff. There was also a clear gender difference: support from women was 33 per cent, compared with 59 per cent from men. Favouritism should, in our view, be a matter of serious concern for the college since it erodes morale and motivation.

*Lack of trust:* Many students drew our attention to the college’s tendency to treat them as children rather than adults. A good few students told us they were “constantly reminded of – even threatened with – their covenant to the college”, especially if they dared to challenge or question anything. And many more pointed to the myriad of college policies and rules. The low level of support for the survey statement “there is a culture of respect and trust at the college” indicates there is a problem here – and a perennial one at that, for assessors in the 1990 review noted the “frustration” students felt at “sometimes [being] treated like children”.<sup>18</sup> The average score was 52 per cent, although faculty members were much more supportive of the statement (73 per cent) and staff much less so (28 per cent). Students sat in the middle (52 per cent).

*A final point:* A few outside the college expressed concern at an attitude of “entitlement” at the college. They were especially worried about the need for students to learn humility and sacrifice, particularly given fewer and fewer paid stipends were now available, and they were not convinced that “getting a house, living allowance, cooked lunches and other perks helped instil these values”. Our clear impression is that by and large students greatly valued the investment made in them, and that constant reminders of the need to be grateful, or that each was costing the college \$85,000 a year, were neither helpful nor necessary. Quite a few students told us they had given up good corporate jobs and salaries to be at the college, had “uprooted their families” to move and had “left their parishes behind”. One thing all agreed on was that it was a “gift” they enormously valued and appreciated.

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<sup>17</sup> See the 1984: that the college sometimes needs to lead and the church to follow, p5.

<sup>18</sup> The Colleges Review, p21.

## Te hunga whai pānga | Stakeholders

Stakeholders influence an organisation's culture, and the particular challenge for the college, according to almost every interviewee, was accommodating so many interested stakeholders, who often were not "singing from the same song sheet". Many said the wider church culture dictated a lot of the college's culture, or put another way, the college's culture was a "microcosm" of the church's culture, and this was proving "problematic". One interviewee said: "You see [the college] on its best day and on its worst", which we took to mean that, on its best day, the college – like the church – was worshipful, joyful, collegial, caring and nurturing, and on its worst – like the church – rigid, hierarchical, suspicious and reactive.

Many spoke about church politics, which was not, they said, "conducive to a great culture". Specifically, they drew attention to the competing needs of governance boards, ministry bodies, bishops and ministry educators, to name but some, and said it was sometimes impossible for the college to reconcile "conflicting agendas and egos". The 1984 review observed then – and it seems still true today – that "it's all too easy for spokespersons in the church to make demands upon the college which take little or no account of the day-to-day activities of the college environment".<sup>19</sup>

Even students are aware of church politics, and many felt the church's influence over the college was not always supportive or healthy. As one student put it: "The church is territorial and political. We don't know the ins and outs of it, but we are aware stuff is always going on. It's frustrating and dysfunctional. Egos get in the way and everyone has their own agendas and it affects us all." Another student said the problem was deep and wide: "Many of the problems at the college are problems within the wider church – the three-Tikanga structure, the three ministry bodies, 13 dioceses, bishops who are sovereign in their own diocese, a myriad of governing boards – and somehow the manukura and the deans have to make all of this work, as well as supporting the formation of students. The result is that some of us feel rather forgotten in all of this." The average score for the statement "the church nurtures and supports the college to grow and flourish" was 50 per cent.

Quite a few mentioned "dysfunctional relationships between the three boards" and "stonewalling that got in the way of a healthy and positive culture at the college". And almost all participants brought up the fact that "everyone wants a piece of the St John's College Trust pie". Many attributed these so-called "dysfunctional" relationships to the competing demands for a slice of this "pie". We were told other church boards with three-Tikanga representation, such as the Anglican Mission Board, the Common Life Liturgical Commission and the Anglican Women's Studies Council, worked very well together and did not suffer from conflict or disruption. The crucial difference, however, is that these boards have no pie over which to fight.

Some stakeholders in the church had considerable interaction with, and influence over, the college but others have had little, if any. The college has had little contact with four of the Hui Amorangi in recent years, and this must change.

Nor has it had much, if any, contact with the Anglican Women's Studies Council, which clearly has views on gender-related issues and how to solve them. In a written submission to us, the council pleaded for the establishment of a relationship with the college to help advance the interests of female lay and clerical ministers. It proposed doing this by increasing the number of women at faculty and student levels of the college, by designing programmes with issues for women in ministry in mind, and by working together for the advancement of women in the church.

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<sup>19</sup> 1984 review, p7.

Nor do students, who are, after all, key stakeholders, feel their voice is heard at present, particularly after the recent structural review left them without their standing invitation to sit in on faculty meetings. They now participate in meetings of the Common Life Group only. We add that some students weren't entirely sure what the student representatives on this group did, the opportunities to give and receive group feedback about college-related matters, and whether minutes of meetings were available. We suggest the student group's mandate is strengthened, with clear and concise terms of reference and an opportunity to have input at faculty, manukura and board level so their views are taken into account.

### **Whakarāpopoto | Summary**

The college has improved its culture significantly in recent years, especially since the Reeves-Beck review. Many aspects are positive and everyone is well intentioned. But it still has a long way to go to build a strong, positive and all-embracing culture. Lifting its game to become the pre-eminent theological college in the South Pacific will require transformational – not piecemeal – change.

The college must place the same emphasis on culture as other colleges do. Carey told us it put an “absolute premium” on fostering a strong culture, which it described as “relational, intercultural, missional, happy, collegial and egalitarian”. Missional, it added “can mean everything and therefore nothing” and so it went to some trouble to ensure students clearly understood what the term meant in their church and college.

Transformational change will require strong and courageous leadership, a clear strategic plan and good communication so everyone at the college knows what its vision, values, goals and outcomes are, and targets against which to measure performance. As one student put it: “There have always been times of renewal and regeneration in our church history. Now is one of those time for renewal and change.” We wholeheartedly agree.

## PART THREE: HAUORA ME TE HAUMARU | HEALTH AND SAFETY

*He tikanga anamata.*

*Re-imagine wellbeing together.*

### Kupu whakataki | Introduction

Examining the nature and extent of complaints by students, faculty members and staff, along with the college's response to those complaints, is a core task of our review. However, we cannot adequately evaluate those complaints and responses without first considering the health and safety policies and processes in force at the time of the complaints. We also consider the student selection process, since the type of students the college takes affects the overall health and wellbeing of all students and staff.

Overall, we found the college's health and safety system, including both policies and processes, to be in need of significant improvement, particularly in supporting those wanting to make a complaint, who are more likely to be seen as troublemakers than signallers of possible genuine trouble. Policies are neither clear, sound, accessible nor applied consistently. Complaint-handling processes are unnecessarily complicated, and complaints are more likely to be escalated than de-escalated. There is no regular monitoring at management and board level of complaints, or of physical health and safety incidents.

### Kaupapa here me ngā tikanga | Policies and processes

#### Pūmanawa tangata | Human resources

The college has no dedicated health and safety personnel or function. Responsibility for mental health and safety, including dealing with complaints, falls to the manukura, college manager and deans. This has long been the case. The 1984 review noted that too many responsibilities, including for health and safety-related matters, rested on the shoulders of the warden and principal.

#### Kaupapa here | Policies

The college has 41 general policies affecting students and staff (and children living on site), and 28 academic policies.<sup>20</sup> They are approved and periodically reviewed by Te Kaunihera and available via its online student platform. They cover topics ranging from bicultural development to use of fireworks. We consider there are far too many of them, they are too prescriptive (and many also overlap) and reflect a low trust environment. But our main focus is only on those relating to health and safety, which are as follows:

*Code of conduct and discipline policy (residential scholarships):* This policy applies to residential students and their families. It lists behaviour that amounts to misconduct and serious misconduct and sets out how the college will deal with instances of each. The policy has an informal first step to address alleged behaviour (consisting of a meeting with the manukura, dean or college manager) followed by a second and formal disciplinary process if the matter is not resolved. The formal process requires the manukura to investigate and produce a written report on the investigation, the evidence, the conclusions or recommendations, the manukura's consultation with the student's bishop and advice to Te Kaunihera. To our knowledge, the college has never initiated this second formal step, instead either resolving the matter informally or terminating the student's scholarship.

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<sup>20</sup> Each policy is marked with the date of last review, but it is unclear on what date each policy was initially adopted.

*Staff discipline policy:* This separate policy for staff defines misconduct and serious misconduct, and sets out a process for dealing with each. The manukura has responsibility for dealing with complaints about faculty members. The college manager is responsible for dealing with complaints about staff. The chair of Te Kaunihera is an alternative investigator for both.

*Complaints policies:* The college has three complaints policies: one for staff, a second for residential students and their families, and a third for regional students. We find it inexplicable that there is not one for all three groups. These policies deal with student-to-student disputes, student-staff disputes, student misconduct, complaints about college services, and complaints about human rights. (A separate policy covers academic complaints.) All policies state the college will deal with the complaint in a way that is fair, confidential, timely, accessible and safe. This is a good aim, but it is undermined by complex, prescriptive and excessively formal complaint-handling mechanisms.

*Bullying, harassment and discrimination policy:* The college introduced this policy in March 2021 to replace an earlier one that lacked good definitions for bullying, discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour. The update followed a student complaint against a faculty member for bullying. She said the policy was unclear about what constituted bullying. The revised version contains useful examples of what is bullying and harassment and what is not. It lists six people to approach with a complaint of this type. It says the college will consult the complainant about an appropriate way to investigate and resolve the complaint.

*Sexual harassment policy:* This policy defines sexual harassment and helpfully includes examples. There is some overlap between this policy and the bullying, harassment and discrimination policy because the same process applies, but with some added support for victims of sexual harassment. Where allegations are substantiated, outcomes range from an apology to expulsion. We consider it unusual that an apology is an option for proven sexual harassment. Even in the case of less serious sexual harassment, we would expect some disciplinary action, such as a formal warning.

*Policy on children:* This policy sets rules governing the supervision and safety of children at the college's Meadowbank site and residential accommodation. Some interviewees said this policy failed to make the college a child-friendly place, citing as examples the ban on children in any classes and the ban on children – regardless of age – in most college spaces without supervision. There are 11 rules about child behaviour in the dining hall, including such things as use of utensils and where to sit. Participants had mixed views on whether the college was child-friendly. We consider different Tikanga perspectives probably account for this variation.

*Students with additional pastoral needs policy:* This policy provides for extra support for those students deemed to need it. A pastoral care person, typically their dean, will assess their needs and can refer them to an external provider for physical or psychological treatment or advice. We were told students often seek such help, which typically consists of six counselling sessions.

*Health and safety policies:* There are seven health and safety policies – one general one and six on specific matters (off-site events, risk management, critical incidents, lockdowns, alcohol use, and smoking, drugs and weapons). Their focus is on the physical aspects of health and safety.

*Community health policy:* This deals with pandemics and the like, and sets out rules for handwashing, food hygiene and community events.

*Wellbeing policy:* The college is developing a wellbeing policy, which we understand will deal with mental health – a commendable step.

## Ture a te Hīnota Whānui | Canon law

Canon laws enacted by General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui govern all aspects of the church. Many college policies refer to Title D and Title E canons, and these therefore warrant brief mention.

Title D sets standards of behaviour for ordained and lay ministers, including students, faculty members and staff at the college and those who intend to be ordained (and are expected to uphold similar standards of conduct). Complaints about misconduct may result in disciplinary proceedings in which a bishop convenes a tribunal to determine if there has been a breach of standards.<sup>21</sup> The college's complaints policies state that complaints falling under Title D must be dealt with under the provisions of those canons, rather than under the college's own policy. We were told of some confusion in the past about the role of Title D in the college.

Canon II, Title E is specifically concerned with the college. It says, among other things, that Te Kaunihera is responsible for setting all policies, including policies on health and safety, student admissions, annual enrolment approvals, and expulsion of students. It also establishes the roles of visitor and kaitiaki (guardian). The visitor hears appeals on any decision of Te Kaunihera, which can include determining a complaint and referring a grievance to the judicial committee appointed by General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui. The kaitiaki of the college has power to report to Te Kaunihera or the General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui, including, presumably, on health and safety-related matters.

## Whakahoki korero | Feedback

Many students and staff told us they could not find or access easily the college's complaints policies, and most of those who could, said they found them complex and confusing. The independent support officer told us she had never, despite repeated requests, been given copies of these policies, which are highly relevant to the performance of her job. One student said she did not know there was a students' complaint policy because it was not in the student handbook. The spouse of a student was denied access to the college's policies because he was not the residential scholarship holder – despite the fact the code of conduct also covers spouses' behaviour. Another student said she could not find the complaints policy while preparing a complaint and was given it by the manukura only after submitting the complaint. (Since this review, the college has begun giving all students and staff all complaint-related policies.)

Students frequently responded to questions about the complaints policies during interviews with an eye-roll. The general attitude we detected from students, faculty members and staff was that they found the policies unhelpful. One faculty member said the development of policies needed to be done properly, rather than “popping out under crisis”.

Survey results backed up this view. The statement “the mental health, safety and wellbeing of all those at college are appropriately reflected in our systems, policies, programme and work environment” attracted an average score of 49 per cent. The statement “basic information on the college policies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour and where to get support is visible, easily accessible and I understand it well” also scored only 49 per cent. The statement “the college has good policies and procedures in place for managing inappropriate behaviour” scored even lower – 47 per cent on average. Results for current students were higher than those for former students, suggesting the college has made progress on matching policies to practice, but we consider it has room for improvement so policies are clear, sound, accessible and consistently applied. We note staff scores for these same statements were worryingly low – respectively 25 per cent, 32 per cent and 31 per cent. The college is already taking steps to address these concerns, as it should.

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<sup>21</sup> A Title D tribunal is a disciplinary tribunal for ministers of the church. Outcomes range from admonition to deposition.

## Tikanga whakarite i ngā kōamuamu | Complaint-handling processes

Well-designed and implemented complaint-handling processes can go a long way towards safeguarding health and safety. The college has made improvements to its complaint-handling processes in recent years, but there is plenty of scope for further improvement.

*Independent support officer:* The college appointed an (unpaid) sexual harassment officer after receiving a complaint of sexual harassment in 2018. The role grew, and the position was renamed independent support officer. She is independent of faculty, students and staff and helps them (and their families) with questions or concerns about bullying, harassment or discrimination. She can listen to complaints and advise complainants about options available to them, but lacks the power to investigate or resolve them. One interviewee described the role as an “information officer” or “facilitator.” Another aptly said it “had no teeth.” Even so, everyone we spoke to who had sought help from the officer was effusive about the kindness and support they received.

*Submitting a complaint:* All three complaints policies state that individuals must make a complaint within 90 days of the event about which they are complaining. It is difficult to justify such a time limit, except in the context of a personal grievance by an employee, which has a statutory time limitation and also exceptions. In the case of students and their families, the 90-day deadline could prevent valid older complaints coming to the college’s attention.

General complaints go to the manukura (except if the complaint is about the manukura, in which case it goes to the chair of Te Kaunihera). Complaints about residential students or their families go to the college manager. Complaints about bullying, harassment or discrimination go to the manukura, the college manager, the relevant dean, a spiritual director, a supervisor or a trusted person. The idea of having so many individuals to whom to take a complaint is well intentioned – to make it as easy as possible to lodge a complaint – but the number is so great that it risks confusion, not to mention requiring all those so nominated to be well trained in dealing with complaints, a point about which we have doubts.

*Investigating complaints:* In the case of complaints made to the manukura, a meeting is convened with the complainant to decide whether to use a formal or informal process to investigate and resolve the complaint. The informal process typically involves a facilitated meeting, which may be conducted by a staff member, the manukura or an external person. Until this year, however, the college has never used an external person (other than a bishop) to resolve or determine a complaint. Early informal resolution is to be encouraged. We heard of one example of a dispute between two students this year that was resolved quickly using an external mediator. A slightly different process applies for staff and residential and regional students, which adds a further layer of unnecessary complexity.

In a formal process not involving staff, the investigator (usually the manukura or a person nominated by the manukura in consultation with the complainant) requests a written complaint, and a written response to the complaint, with a right of reply for the complainant. The investigator may make further inquiries at his or her discretion and must then produce a written decision. Either side can appeal the decision to Te Kaunihera, and then to the visitor, although this fact does not appear to be well known until recent times. If the visitor is unable to resolve the grievance, he or she can refer the question to the judicial committee for resolution. The formal process for staff is slightly different but appropriate having regard to the requirements of the Employment Relations Act 2000.

*Visitor:* This is an appropriate moment to make some observations about the role of visitor. As noted in the terms of reference, the archbishops in recent times received a number of complaints about the college (prompting this review). We are aware of only one occasion in recent years where the visitor received a formal appeal from a decision of Te Kaunihera. On this occasion, the visitor intervened and the college’s process was put on hold for a time. The church may wish to review whether the visitor process is appropriate in the context of

the college. In some respects, the visitor may be regarded as something of an ombudsman. The difficulty is that the archbishop is not entirely independent, and the role adds a layer of complexity that could be at odds with the college's own processes.

*Independence:* Our chief concern is that students especially do not perceive those investigating complaints as independent or able to be scrupulously objective. The statement “the college deals with inappropriate behaviour fairly, effectively and consistently” received the lowest average score of all statements in the culture survey – 45 per cent (a point examined later). Undoubtedly, concerns about lack of independence and fairness contributed to that low score. In a sexual harassment case discussed later, the manukura, who was a friend of the student accused of harassment, handled the complaint, and the complainant told us she thought this was far from fair. We agree.

In another, a colleague of the dean, who was the subject of the complaint (alleged excessive workloads), investigated the case. Granted, there will sometimes be no sound reason why a faculty member, the manukura or a member of Te Kaunihera should not investigate a complaint, particularly academic ones. But on other occasions, it is vital someone outside the college investigates – the sexual harassment case just mentioned being a good example. For other complaints, the use of a skilled on-site human resources practitioner, though employed by the college, would go a long way to assuring complainants of a fairer, more independent process.

### **Rēhitanga o ngā take | Monitoring trends**

An essential feature of a strong health and safety system is a process for monitoring complaints and incidents. The college keeps a register of physical incidents, but does not monitor trends in mental health and safety. The college previously conducted exit interviews for departing staff and students, but did not keep a record of these. The current manukura, we were told, has not conducted any such interviews. The college has conducted regular student surveys. (This is a requirement of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.) The college told us these surveys had not revealed any of the issues identified in this review. But an examination of these surveys show that no health and safety related questions were asked of students.

The college and Te Kaunihera do not keep a register of complaints, but were able to compile one for us. We found little mention in management reports to the board or board meeting minutes about the mental health and safety and wellbeing of students, faculty members or staff, apart from when discussing individual complaints. Yet managing health and safety-related risks well requires a meaningful level of detail in reports and discussion at board level.

### **Te kōwhiri i ngā ākonga | Student selection**

Students are sent to college by their sponsoring bishop and the selection process varies greatly between the diocese and Hui Amorangi. Some students, we were told, underwent a rigorous 18-month selection process that involved numerous interviews, a discernment weekend and psychological testing. Others received a tap on the shoulder from their sponsoring bishop and found themselves sitting in a dean's office weeks later asking: “Why am I here?” The college receives applications from students, but in most instances does not meet them until they arrive at the college. This strikes us as risky for students and the college, especially for any students who are fragile and unprepared for college life.

We were concerned to hear the college had traditionally been a place to put difficult or so-called broken clergy. One interviewee said some people who were “burnt out at parish ministry or are difficult to work with” were enabled to go to the college for study and their contribution to its culture was “not always helpful”. We observed that a small number of

students were unsuited, either academically or psychologically, to college life and posed a serious challenge for the college, particularly for the deans whose task it was to tend to their very high pastoral care needs. The deans confirmed they spent a significant portion of their time dealing with such individuals.

The royal commission into abuse in care has begun looking at faith-based institutions, and this has inevitably thrown the spotlight on the character of those working in the church. As Bishop Ross Bay told the commission, taking more care in the selection of those holding leadership roles in the church would create a safer environment all round. Archbishops Don Tamihere and Philip Richardson and Bishop Peter Carrell also noted the need for vigilance, better processes and consistency in discernment processes throughout the church. We agree the selection of students is critical to safety. Almost everyone we spoke to about this question agreed there should be minimum standards for admission to the college (quite apart from minimum standards for discernment).

The college said students had to undergo medical tests and psychological testing as part of their application, although we heard of at least one student who managed to avoid psychological testing, which is a matter of concern.

Almost everyone we spoke to, including those inside and outside the college, agreed the college should, at a minimum, interview students before they start college. Some interviewees suggested an open day so applicants could visit the campus and meet students and teachers and become more acquainted with the college. It would also provide an opportunity to discuss the covenant they are expected to sign on admission so they fully understand what it means in practice, especially the obligation to participate in community life. Many students told us they far from understood all its implications for their life at the college before signing on admission. A “talanoa with faculty members and other students” would have been helpful, said one.

Most interviewees considered the college should have the final say on admissions. This is the practice at Carey. The student is nominated by his or her church, interviewed by regional leaders and finally interviewed by the college, which undertakes the psychological testing (unlike here where it is done in the diocese or Hui Amorangi). The final decision on whether to admit the student then rests with Carey.

One bishop told us: “For me, the critical thing would be that I retain the right to make a decision about people I believe should be ordained. I don’t object to the college making a decision someone is not suitable for college, rather than saying this is not a person suitable for ordination.” Some, however, argued bishops should have the final say on who goes to the college. Another suggested the college should prevail if it and the bishop were at odds over the admission of a student, but that the student should be able to access equivalent funding from the college’s trust for alternative study.

Our view is the college should consult sponsoring bishops but must have the final say on admission. Giving the college this role should also enable it to broaden student geographic representation so it is truly a provincial institution. Broadening the student body, along with attaining a position where such is the demand for places that students have to be turned away, will in part be the measure of its success.

### **Whakangungu ākongā kia mārama ai ngā ārai ā-tangata | Boundaries training**

In the course of their eventual pastoral care work, students inevitably develop close personal relationships with many of those in their care. It is crucial they learn how to set appropriate boundaries on those relationships, particularly if they are with a member of the opposite sex. Training on setting boundaries helps prevent sexual harassment and sexual abuse. The college teaches the behaviour expected of ministers of the church (as set out in Title D), and includes training on the safeguards necessary to ensure safety for those giving and

receiving pastoral care. However, the general view was that the subject received insufficient attention at the college. One student said: “My perception is that it’s inadequate. The fact that we don’t have any [boundaries] input in the wananga at the beginning of the year is a mistake.” We agree there should be greater focus on the topic at the college. Training varies from Tikanga to Tikanga, and there are no set requirements for students to demonstrate their understanding of this important content.

## **Āhua me te whānui o ngā kōamuamu | Nature and extent of complaints**

We now turn to a subject that necessarily concentrates only on the negative – the complaints themselves. We note at the outset that most of those we spoke to raised no specific complaint with us. Many had only positive things to say about their experience at the college. They reported feeling safe and supported and said it prepared them well for a life in ministry. Twenty-five individuals came to us with 35 complaints that had health and safety implications.<sup>22</sup> Of these 25 complainants, 19 were women. The complaints covered the years between 2013 and 2020. For these individuals, the impact of the alleged bullying or inappropriate conduct could be profound. Some reported suffering from stress and anxiety, some were prescribed anti-depressants or sleeping tablets, and some sought counselling to deal with their experience at the college.

The complaints can be broken down as follows: bullying and inappropriate conduct, 17; early termination of scholarships and failure to give sufficient notice, six; racism, four; sexism, three; sexual harassment, two; discrimination, two; and excessive use of alcohol, one. We consider 35 complaints to be a moderate number, given the time period involved and the number of students at the college during that time. Broadly speaking, we consider the complaints to be largely the product of a conflict in the role of deans as supervisor and pastor, a lack of any early triaging and informal resolution of complaints, and clashes over theological beliefs. (Gender bias may also be a contributing factor.) We stress again that our role was to report on, not decide on, individual complaints, but rather to consider what they may tell us about culture and the improvements the college should make to its culture, life and ministry as a result.

## **Te hawene me te whanonga kāore i te tika | Bullying and inappropriate conduct**

Many participants said the college environment was “unsafe” and “toxic” 10 or 15 years ago, and that bullying was common, particularly within Tikanga Māori. It is clear to us things have improved significantly since then. Many interviewees spoke of the efforts the college and its leaders have made in recent years to improve culture – something we also detected across the board. This point is reinforced by the culture survey and applies to all Tikanga. Former Māori students gave only 49 per cent support to the statement “the college deals with inappropriate behaviour fairly, effectively and consistently”, compared with 80 per cent for current Māori students. There has also been some improvement among Tikanga Pākehā students. Current Pākehā students scored 44 per cent for this statement, compared with 34 per cent for former Pākehā students. Current Tikanga Pasefika students scored it at 65 per cent compared with 50 per cent for former Tikanga Pasefika students.

We heard 17 complaints from students, faculty members and staff about what they regarded as bullying or inappropriate conduct. Six said they were bullied. Bullying is repeated unreasonable behaviour that can cause physical or mental harm. Most of the conduct complained about did not reach this threshold, but rather were one-off incidents of what might be regarded as unreasonable behaviour. Such behaviour can include, as we heard here, threats, negative comments, favouritism, belittling comments, cold-shouldering and psychological manipulation, usually described as gaslighting.

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<sup>22</sup> We have not included complaints about governance or employment-related disputes that are not about bullying or harassment.

Sixteen of the 17 complaints were about conduct in Tikanga Pākehā. No Pasefika students complained of bullying or inappropriate conduct. But as several students observed, Pasefika students came from a hierarchical culture where complaining about their seniors was unacceptable. Said one: "Pasefika students are trained to be good at being passive. So when you get asked, 'how are you?', you say 'well' and put on a smile. We're trained not to speak out." That makes it all the more important the college emphasises to these students that they must not be afraid to speak up if they ever feel threatened or unsafe.

Confidentiality restrictions prevented us from putting the specifics of all the complaints to those concerned, although we discussed the general nature of what we heard, particularly with a view to identifying causes. We with them discussed some specific complaints with those involved because we had permission to do so and/or the complaints were well known to the college and often the church. Some complainants also gave us specific permission to use their complaint in this report to illustrate a particular point. The subjects of the complaints denied any bullying.

Our concern was to understand the causes of these complaints so we could identify practical steps to reduce their incidence. We attribute these to five factors, each of which the college must manage better.

First, the formation of ordained ministers, although an inherently challenging task, has become unnecessarily pressured – a point noted in past reviews. Some participants said the level of pressure entailed in this work was unacceptable. One interviewee said: "I saw students put under pressure that was cruel and exhibited a lack of grace." Some students said prayer was used as tool of power and manipulation. One cited the example of requiring students to pray for a particular student to "find another path", implying the individual was unsuitable for ministry.

Second, the source of conflict between students and dean is often due to the structure of the deans' role – which, as noted in part two, involves being leader, supervisor and pastoral care provider to students. Many students found the deans an excellent source of pastoral care but others found the role intrusive or crossed personal boundaries. As discussed in part two, students also spoke of "feeling under constant scrutiny and evaluation". As one student said: "People are constantly evaluated to the point of marriages breaking up and children going off the rails." Some students saw this, too, as an inappropriate exercise of power. In the words of one student: "It all comes back to power play – something happens at college and all of a sudden your bishop knows."

Third, some students found themselves unable to be honest about their difficulties with their dean because of concerns it would result in a critical report to their bishop and affect their chances of ordination. Tellingly, one student said the topic of whether he would be ordained was sometimes brought up in conversation if there was a disagreement or debate. He considered this manipulative. As one student said: "Students are afraid to speak up because there is that carrot of ordination. If you say anything negative, people are afraid that ordination would be taken away from you." Another student said: "I felt like I couldn't be myself. I felt like the only way to get on with [my dean] or [the manukura] was to lie to them about what I was thinking or feeling, and what was going on in my life." No student should feel fearful of voicing his or her concerns.

Responses to the survey statement "I feel safe to be vulnerable at the college" confirmed this reticence to be frank, with only 52 per cent of current or former students saying they agreed with the statement (compared with 70 per cent for faculty members). The score for current Tikanga Pākehā students was 50 per cent and only 31 per cent for Pākehā women. There was also a stark gender disparity: female students scored this statement at 47 per cent compared with 77 per cent by their male peers. The 1984 review of the college noted the same thing: "Rightly or wrongly, many students feel that they cannot be entirely frank on a personal basis (as they need to be) with teachers who are doing their professional job of

providing challenging theological content.” We heard from more than one interviewee that they were advised before coming to the college to avoid conflict at all costs and not make criticisms or complaints. A member of the church said: “I have found myself saying things to students like, ‘you won’t be able to fix the college – just keep your head down’.”

Fourth, questions of faith have a bearing on a student’s relationship with his or her dean. Conflict occurs when students resist being shaped by a dean in a particular direction. Said one interviewee: “[Deans] would say they’re trying to form you, but what they’re actually doing is trying to push you into a particular mould, and questioning is completely discouraged.” A good proportion of complainants, we could not help noticing, were of a more Anglo-Catholic persuasion or had a different background or world view to that of their dean. Many of this group said the college – unlike in former times – had become far more evangelical in nature and so diversity of theological beliefs sometimes caused controversy and conflict.

The Anglican Church/Te Hāhi Mihinare is a “broad church” and differing theological beliefs should not, in our view, be a cause of friction, or at the least that friction should be well managed, especially since the issue is sure to reappear for students when they enter ministry. Another reason is that the church prides itself on “unity in diversity”, which then former bishop John Paterson said meant in practice that “a lot of us are very different, but we hang together somehow”. A good few interviewees said it was therefore “ironic that some conflict stemmed from faculty [members] neither welcoming nor allowing that diversity”. This wasn’t the view of all, however. Observed one student: “There was a small but vocal Anglo-Catholic group in my time making a bit of noise around what they perceived was movement away from tradition to a more low-church paradigm. To me, the way they engaged in that issue was not particularly productive or helpful.” Despite the conflict we heard, the average score for the statement “the college respects my theological beliefs” was 70 per cent.

Fifth, the college contains a very diverse range of people and views. Personalities differ and sometimes clash. One interviewee observed that the college was a “kaleidoscope for everyone’s diversity in one space and they have to live with each other day in and day out”. Diversity encompasses culture, gender, sexuality and theology. We did notice a pattern that unconventional students or those exploring their faith in alternative ways tended to have negative experiences of the college. Said one participant: “The college takes people with fragile edges and it escalates those things ... rather than creating a safe container for them to work through their discernment, things just become explosive.” As a senior leader in the church aptly explained: “It’s important to understand that both the college and the church tend to often get inflamed over issues that might not happen in other organisations that also have huge diversity. And unlike when you get a disagreement in other quarters, it’s not just politics, board dynamics or lack of structure in roles. Here it’s all about God as well, and it adds heat to disputes.”

Finally, we heard Tikanga Māori were better able to deal with challenging situations and people – and to move on without rancour. Current students told us Tikanga Māori functioned more like a family, and individuals could have confronting discussions without damaging relationships or leading to complaints. Concepts of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga were strong, and relationships were sound as a result. The college could learn a lot from the way Māori manage conflict and get along with others whose views and outlooks differ from their own.

## **Mahi whakaito | Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment is unwelcome or offensive sexual behaviour that is repeated or serious enough to have a harmful effect or contains an implied or overt promise of preferential treatment or an implied or overt threat of detrimental treatment.

The two complaints of sexual harassment came from former students. The first involved an unwanted physical touch. The student in question discussed the complaint with the independent support officer but took no formal action.

The second complaint involved unwanted romantic advances by a fellow student over a long period of time. In accordance with the complaints policy, the student complained to the manukura, who she said took a long time to investigate the matter. The other student eventually apologised for his conduct and agreed to have no further contact with her. However, she eventually left the college, saying she still did not feel safe on campus, that the college had not taken her concerns seriously, had minimised the seriousness of the harassment, and had refused to ban the other student from visiting campus upon her return to the college to complete her studies after he left. She told us the experience had seriously damaged her faith and, in her eyes, the credibility of the church. She told us it prevented her from pursuing her vocation in ministry.

The student subsequently initiated a Title D process and a tribunal was convened. It concluded it had no jurisdiction because the college had already considered and resolved the matter. In our view, the college and church handled this complaint poorly, both procedurally and in substance. We note that the Title D process would have had precedence under today's college policy.

## **Toihara | Discrimination**

Of the two complaints we received about discrimination, one was on the basis of sexual orientation and the other on the basis of religious belief (being opposed to gay marriage). Both students left the college.

The first student, who was living in a same-sex relationship, told us that she was treated differently by faculty and fellow students and could not fully participate with her partner in the life of the college. She also said fellow students subjected her to hateful comments about gay people during a commission established in 2013 to look into issues related to the ordination and blessing of people in same-sex relationships.<sup>23</sup> The college provided no support for her, she said, and her experience at college caused her huge psychological and emotional stress. Her sponsoring bishop withdrew his support and she left the college. The student told us her experience was a painful one and resulted in her leaving the church altogether. This example illustrates the need for the college to ensure its culture embraces diversity in whatever form that takes.

## **Aukati iwi | Racism**

As noted, we received four complaints about racism. Two students complained of being reprimanded for preaching in te reo Māori at the college or of being refused permission to submit essays in te reo Māori. One student complained to us on both counts. Both students felt hurt and – rightfully – discriminated against. In the words of one: “I was a young person in my twenties. It felt like a low blow.” Current policies allow students to submit essays and speak during services in te reo Māori. A third student complained of a racist comment to an older Pākehā student that she was “struggling because of her racist colonial mind, and she needed to get over that”. A fourth interviewee complained about another person who made

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<sup>23</sup> Ma Whea? Anglican General Synod Commission on Same-Gender Relationships, Ordination and Blessing.

racist comments and treated Māori and Pasefika students less favourably than Pākehā students.

We consider these comments are probably isolated cases of racism, and were not part of any wider pattern. Several former students spoke of experiencing regular racism in more distant times, but the situation is markedly different nowadays. The college promotes and celebrates diversity and the students enjoy being part of a racially diverse group. The survey statement “I believe in the importance of other tikanga at the college” scored 90 per cent support among students, faculty members and staff – the highest of any in the survey. This is a credit to the college and the church.

### **Toihara ā-hōkakatanga | Sexism**

We received three complaints about what students regarded as sexism. They referred to jokes about women in ministry and how female students with family obligations were treated differently to male students with families. One former student said: “I have sat in a theology classroom full of St John’s students and have experienced the class around me erupt in laughter at a ‘wife’ joke. I was brought to tears (pain tears, not laughter tears) by a joking remark in class last year that women were not made in the image of God.”

That same student went on to say: “The number of times I’ve had male colleagues at college say to me, ‘I don’t know how you do it’, when referring to my being a mother and a student, is mind-boggling. Many of them have had children and worked full-time, and have never had the experience of being asked, ‘how on earth do you manage your workload and find time to be a good Dad too?’. I’ve also had male fellow students say to me directly, ‘I’m not going to make friends with you, because you’re a woman’. Or in ministry formation, ‘I’m not going to share with you about this question because you’re a woman, and that could get awkward’.”

Another former student said: “I think it was a very sexist culture. There were so many occasions when men would say the exact same thing I was saying. They never got any sort of look or side discussion. It felt like, if you’re a female, you have to be a certain kind of female, otherwise you’re bad. You’re not allowed to stand up for yourself.” The student said the college automatically assumed she would be leaving the college because her husband had found a job. After complaining about this response, she was told she should leave the college and support her husband. Her scholarship was withdrawn without notification. She complained to Te Kaunihera, but it upheld the college’s decision, which was that she no longer had the support of her sponsoring bishop because her husband had taken a job in a different diocese.

Quite apart from complaints about overt sexism, many students (and those outside the college) considered the college had a gender bias. Students noted the lack of female faculty members, female leaders in the church and female theologians in their study material. As one student put it: “The current gender make-up of the college’s faculty, staff and governance reinforces unjust structures and stereotypes of the role of women not only in the church, but in society as well.” Another student referred to the lack of maternity leave options. Many spoke about closure of the college’s creche. The college said it closed for health and safety reasons and because of low numbers (students were enrolling their children elsewhere).

The survey results pose the biggest concern for us. The scores for female students, faculty members and staff from all three Tikanga were very low compared with those of their male counterparts. AskYourTeam told us it had never seen such a wide gender disparity. Current females scored 61 per cent for the statement “I enjoy my time at college”, compared with 86 per cent for males. Past female students scored this statement 56 per cent, compared with 71 per cent for males. Current female students scored 54 per cent for the statement “I feel safe to be myself at college”, compared with 80 per cent for males.

The variation between Tikanga is worth noting. The overall disparity between male and female student scores was 17 per cent in Tikanga Pākehā, 13 per cent in Tikanga Māori and 11 per cent in Tikanga Pasefika. Why this variation should be so is unclear to us and the college needs to give it urgent attention. More than one interviewee, however, suggested the variation may be attributable to the college's current "conservative evangelical leaning with its male bias", especially, they said, in Tikanga Pākehā.

We convened a hui of female students to explore what was behind this stark divergence in scores. They told us the scores were a reflection of women's position in the church as a whole and the unintentional gender bias that pervaded its structures, processes and language. One student spoke of a gulf between the position of women inside the church and outside it, adding that she did not feel the church had any real understanding of who women were and what it was like to be a woman. Another student said the Anglican Church was doing better than some other denominations – it had women in senior leadership positions, but it was still taking its cue from how things were 20 years ago, let alone how they were now or would be in 20 years' time.

The Anglican Women's Studies Council raised similar issues. It drew our attention to the 2014 resolution of General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui to seek equal representation of women and men in decision-making at all levels when electing or appointing representatives to governing and consultative bodies in the church. We have reviewed the statistics, which show little improvement in female representation in senior church roles (including on governance boards) since 2014. This should be a matter of concern to the church.

Our overall impression is the college is not overtly sexist, but gender bias is an issue that needs tackling. The Anglican Church/Te Hāhi Mihinare is far from alone in this. In July of this year, one Australian Catholic bishop observed that excluding women from the Catholic Church's "governance structures, decision-making processes and institutional functions" deprived the church of the "richness of [its] full humanity". He said the church would continue to be "impoverish[ed]" so long as it continued to make "women invisible and inferior in the Church's language, liturgy, theology and law".<sup>24</sup> It was clear to us from our interviews that many women in the Anglican Church/Te Hāhi Mihinare feel the same.

### **Raukoti waipiro | Inappropriate use of alcohol**

A few students complained of an excessive drinking culture at college, although, with one exception, their complaints were about the years 2011 to 2013. The problem no longer appears to exist. The college now has a policy prohibiting intoxication (but not drinking in moderation) on campus or at college accommodation.

### **Te panatanga i te kāreti | Expulsion from college**

Six students complained of early termination of their scholarships – in effect, expulsion. In all cases, their sponsoring bishop withdrew support, which is one of the grounds for terminating scholarships. The manukura said any decision to terminate a scholarship involved discussion with the student's sponsoring bishop, but that does not diminish our concern about a lack of procedural fairness in the way the college handles early termination of scholarships.

There is no procedure or minimum notice period the college must follow or give when terminating scholarships. This is arguably inconsistent with the requirement to be fair and equitable regarding complaints, discipline and appeals policies and procedures, as set out in the registration rules and codes of practice for private training establishments.

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<sup>24</sup> CathNews New Zealand, A church based on clerical hegemony has run its course, 8 July 2021 accessed online at <https://cathnews.co.nz/2021/07/08/clerical-hegemony-has-run-its-course/>.

Some students had only a few days, or in one case 24 hours, to leave the college. The college sometimes gave no reason for withdrawal of a scholarship. Students were often not given the opportunity to respond to the allegations that led to the withdrawal. One student learned the college had withdrawn her scholarship when it was publicly announced during a graduation event. Students described the difficulty of having to find a place to live at short notice, find new schools for their children, and apply for unemployment benefits. Some had nowhere to go, and one had to move into emergency housing.

The lack of a proper process left these students feeling aggrieved, defeated, helpless and hurt. In most cases, expulsion had a profound impact on students' faith and wellbeing. In one case, the student had a breakdown and was diagnosed with a mental health condition. In another, the student left the Anglican faith. As one bishop said: "It might be that, for health and safety and grace reasons, a student could remain on even if a bishop decided the individual was no longer appropriate to be ordained." We agree.

### **Urupare ki ngā kōamuamu | Response to complaints**

Thirteen of the 25 complainants confided in the independent support officer about making a complaint. Ten of the complainants approached the college with their complaint, five made a complaint to Te Kaunihera, and one escalated the complaint to the archbishop as visitor. Some kept quiet for fear of the repercussions, typically to their career in the church. The fact only 40 per cent of complainants who came to us felt they could approach the college is a worry and underscores the need for an independent review.

We reviewed the college's response to complaints it received during the past five years and consider that, overall, it escalated conflict when it need not have, it failed to communicate clearly, and it was inconsistent in its treatment of complaints. The result was often poor outcomes for both the complainant and the college. We consider the college (including Te Kaunihera on occasion) invariably resolved complaints in its favour, which, unsurprisingly, encouraged the perception that the college was deaf to people's complaints. We also noticed that the college adopted a more generous position when a student, faculty member or staff member engaged a lawyer. And finally, we note that Te Kaunihera would typically make improvements to policies and procedures after looking into a complaint. This is no bad thing in itself, but it highlights the reactive nature of the college's culture.

### **Te pōturi me te hē o ētahi urupare | Failure to act quickly and sensibly**

The college has had relatively few complaints, and even fewer of a serious nature, but we were struck by how often it managed to escalate a comparatively minor matter into all-out conflict. This is particularly true of Tikanga Pākehā.

A perfect example was a student's three-page complaint about bullying – arising from workload issues – that grew into a 100-page complaint and ended up with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. Both the college and student subsequently agreed with us that adopting a sensible, level-headed approach early on would have resolved the matter without all the acrimony and diverted effort. Other examples of complaints running to pages and pages of minute detail were presented to us. One such complaint ran to 75 pages. Conflicts also often escalated to the point where the student, staff-member or faculty member left the college. One participant summed it up well: "The college is full of drama."

One senior church leader said he was not surprised small disputes could be blown out of all proportion, particularly since there was often some theological aspect to the disputes and both students and teachers, being trained to think and give sermons, became "sermonic" in their complaints and responses. Turning around this attitude would go a long way towards managing conflict and helping build a positive atmosphere in which students felt encouraged to speak out when they had good cause.

### **Te kore mārama o aua urupare | Failure to be direct**

The college often failed to be explicit about why it had acted in a particular way. Indeed, it was often completely silent about its reasons, as we have noted already over terminating scholarships. A good example of this was the failure to forewarn a student she would not be receiving her diploma at graduation and why. She learned the news on graduation day, and was not told the reason until months later. Understandably, she was upset and felt she had been treated unfairly. The matter was allowed to escalate, and following the involvement of a lawyer, an administrative assistant informed her she would be awarded the diploma. Had the college notified the student of a problem with her cross-credits (the reason, it said, for withholding the diploma), the matter might never have escalated.

Another example arose in 2019 over whether a student could wear a cassock inside the college grounds, despite the fact it had been a common practice for years to hold an annual “cassock day” when students and faculty members could wear the garment if they wished. The student said the college told him not to wear a cassock in college and threatened to withdraw his scholarship. The college said the cassock was “antiquated” and “not part of the kawa of the college”. It also said its real concern was the student’s attitude. Yet in dealing with the matter, the college placed most of the focus on the student’s dress, not on his attitude, and the college allowed the conflict to escalate. Many viewed the college’s approach as unreasonable and heavy-handed. The attitude of most interviewees was, as one put it: “So what? Let him wear what he wants.” The college’s position was to them all the more baffling because it had no dress policy at the time.

### **Te hārakiraki o ētahi o aua urupare | Failure to be consistent**

The survey statement “the college deals with inappropriate behaviour fairly, effectively, and consistently” attracted the lowest average score among students, faculty members and staff – just 45 per cent. For Tikanga Pākehā students, it was as low as 36 per cent (compared with 59 per cent and 58 per cent for Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Pasefika students respectively). For staff, it was lower still, a worrying 18 per cent.

For all its many policies, the college seldom applied them consistently and sometimes departed from its own processes. One participant told us how the college handed a complainant two complaints policies because it was unsure which applied. In another case, the college instructed the complainant to attend a meeting with the person whom he had lodged the complaint about, contrary to the disciplinary and complaints policies for staff, causing stress and anxiety to the complainant. One interviewee said it appeared the college applied policies according to “how it suits the dean [concerned]”. In another, the manukura delegated the investigation of a complaint to a faculty member, which was at odds with the relevant complaints policy.

Communication during a complaint process was also uneven at best. During a sexual harassment complaint, the college appointed a sexual harassment officer, but the complainant learned of the appointment only at her exit interview. Overall, the result was a feeling that complaints were pointless. Said one student: “There is a fear of submitting a formal complaint and a fear it will just be dismissed.” Or as another student said: “There was no point making a complaint – no one listens to you.”

### **Te kore e tautoko i ngā kaiamuamu | Failure to be supportive**

Students said complaints were discouraged by virtue of the fact it jeopardised complainants’ prospects within the college and the wider church. The result, said many participants, was a nervousness about coming forward. Others said that to lodge a complaint was to risk being viewed as unchristian or someone unable to forgive a transgressor. As one interviewee told

us: “When I have questioned and challenged ... I feel that I am regarded as a nuisance, an agitator, a troublemaker.”

The failure to support complainants can be subtle. One interviewee told us about a sermon on respecting authority in which a minister made reference to a college leader and also to Romans 13, a passage that says whoever rebels against authority rebels against God. The effect, said the interviewee, was to suggest that “if you question God’s authority invested in these people, it makes you a bad Christian”.

The survey results confirmed this lack of support. The statement “the college genuinely supports those who challenge or speak out about inappropriate behaviour” attracted an average score of 47 per cent. The score was lower for Tikanga Pākehā students – 40 per cent. The scores of staff and female students are a particular cause for concern and require immediate attention. Staff support for the statement was a tiny 15 per cent (compared with 68 per cent for faculty members and 48 per cent for students). Support among current female students was 38 per cent, compared with 75 per cent among their male counterparts. This differential is stark and needs immediate attention.

### **Te kore e pupuri kōamuamu kia noho tapu ai | Failure to keep complaints confidential**

A few individuals said the college did not respect the confidentiality of their complaints. Yet, as one observed, “this is a fundamental principle of pastoral care”. The fact no independent person has the power to hear and investigate complaints exacerbates matters. The independent support officer can advise the student, faculty member or staff member about what to do, but eventually the individual must take his or her complaint to the college. We were told the substance of complaints often became the subject of gossip among faculty members and staff. These concerns are not unfounded. One interviewee told us faculty members and staff would frequently discuss student matters, and that breaches of confidentiality were commonplace.

As an aside, there are plenty of open secrets throughout the college and church. As already noted, stories abound of less than positive – even “traumatising” – experiences at the college, which “cast a long shadow”, said one interviewee. In our interviews, we heard the same stories about individuals who had difficulties with the college time and time again – including stories about those who had signed confidentiality agreements with the college. This is all the more reason for the college to do better at communicating the positive stories of college life, of which we know there are many.

### **Ākonga kei ngā whare noho o te kāreti e noho ana | Students in cloisters**

A final point: Several students in cloisters expressed concerns about their health and safety, both physical and mental. As to the former, they told us they had complained several times about a lack of good lighting around the cloisters, which was worrying when returning to cloisters late at night. This should be immediately addressed. As to the latter, we were told life for them could be “especially isolating alone and without family”. We think it is especially important the college regularly checks on their safety and wellbeing. We also heard that family members are not allowed to stay with these students from time to time. We appreciate there may be good reasons for this, but the policy seems outdated and should be reviewed.

## PART FOUR: MĀTAURANGA ME TE WHAKANGUNGU MINITA | EDUCATION AND MINISTRY TRAINING

*Ma te ako ka mārama, mā te mārama ka mātau, mā te mātau ka ora.*

*Through learning comes understanding, through understanding comes knowledge and wisdom, through knowledge and wisdom comes life and wellbeing.*

### Kupu whakataki | Introduction

The second strand of our review concerns the college's educational and ministry programmes. We have been asked to comment on how well it is achieving its educational and ministry training objectives, and whether alternative models and strategies may better meet those objectives and the church's changing needs. The feedback we received about the success or otherwise of the college in meeting its objectives very much depended on whether participants considered the college's primary purpose to be one of theological education, ministry training or personal formation with an emphasis on community life.

As for alternative models and strategies, we have outlined several feasible options for the college to consider. We make no recommendations about these, since it is for the college and church to decide on questions of long-term strategy. No doubt their decisions will be influenced by the work Te Kotahitanga is undertaking as part of its Te Pae Tawhiti project, which, we were told, aims to develop a strategic framework to guide theological education and ministry formation for all of the church. It is, however, only at an early stage.

### Whakarāpopoto horopaki | Brief context

Participation in traditional churches has been in decline throughout the West, as has the number of candidates for vocational ministry in these churches. The closures and mergers of many traditional colleges and the declining number of full-time teaching positions have spurred on the search for viable alternative education and training models. Taking advantage of regional and distance students and non-vocational enrolments and strategies has been essential. Successful colleges have recruited non-vocational students and offered more distance teaching in conjunction with on-site block courses. They have also adapted their academic curriculums.

In the United Kingdom, where there is a single selection process for Anglican ordinands, but more freedom of choice of college, some college enrolments have dropped and colleges have closed. However, St Mellitus College, which brings together evangelical and "generous orthodoxy" traditions, has grown hugely since it was founded in 2007, mostly through enrolments by distance students.

In Australia, three Anglican colleges, including St Mark's National Theological Centre in Canberra and a Uniting Church college in Sydney offer a full degree accredited by Charles Sturt University in Bathurst, New South Wales. This is available extramurally as well as internally. The former Melbourne College of Divinity, which once accredited many New Zealand qualifications, has been re-formed as the University of Divinity and has 10 contributing colleges (Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Churches of Christ, Coptic and Lutheran). It now offers a broader range of qualifications than before.

In New Zealand, the training of ministers and priests in other churches has also changed in recent years, although the changes vary from church to church. In a cost-saving move, the Catholic Church combined its College of the Good Shepherd seminary with the Catholic Institute of Aotearoa New Zealand in 2020. (The latter trains teachers for Catholic schools.)

The merged entity has 45 seminary students, including at least 15 international students, plus some private students. Just five lecturers are devoted to teaching a theological degree.

Presbyterian training changed radically in about 2012. Those chosen for full-time ministry firstly attend Otago, Laidlaw or Carey to gain a theological degree and are then prepared for ministry by the Knox Centre of Ministry and Leadership, in a non-accredited two-year programme, which includes a ministry placement and distance and block courses. Student numbers are very small. Part-time and volunteer ministerial candidates are trained by regional presbyteries for “local ordination”. The Presbyterian Church recently initiated its own education and training review, recognising that its two-tier model was “unsustainable” and lacked a “systemic approach” to the church’s training needs. It is likely to recommend training “in context”, which will extend the role of its Knox Centre.<sup>25</sup> The church and college could do well to keep abreast of these developments.

Methodist training through Trinity changed significantly in 2020 when it began teaching a theological bachelor’s degree, partly from its Meadowbank site and partly by distance learning using about four full-time and two adjunct faculty members. The degree includes a distance learning component and is taught in various languages, including Tongan. Most of its current 125 students study part-time.

Baptist training is largely undertaken at students’ expense, although study and accommodation scholarships are available. Carey has a Bachelor of Applied Theology, along with a Diploma of Christian Studies and a range of graduate and specialist programmes. It has a student roll of more than 300 full-time and part-time students and a faculty of seven full-time academics and four ministry trainers. Students in training for pastoral ministry (typically about 30) take the non-accredited Diploma in Pastoral Leadership alongside the Bachelor of Applied Theology, while others train for specific lay roles such as chaplaincy.

Laidlaw is the country’s biggest inter-denominational college, offering qualifications ranging from certificate to masters level in theology, biblical studies, mission, ministry counselling and teacher education. It also offers masters and doctoral qualifications through the Australian College of Theology. It has more than 900 students, including part-time students on three campuses and in distance courses, 23 full-time academic staff and many more adjuncts.

Finally, Bishopdale College in Nelson teaches Laidlaw diplomas, degrees and a Bishopdale level 6 diploma to 23 Anglicans in the Nelson and Wellington dioceses as well as some non-Anglicans. It has a faculty of five mainly part-time staff. (Some evangelical students also study at Moore College in Sydney.)

## **Te arotake i ngā mahi a te kāreti | College’s performance**

We have summarised participants’ views, and offered our own perspective on the college’s performance, under the following headings:

### *Purpose*

One group of participants considered the college’s focus should be firmly on high-quality theological education. It considered the college was not particularly equipped to offer formation, which was, in any case, best provided in a curacy alongside experienced clergy. A larger group, however, said many other institutions, such as Otago, Carey and Laidlaw, were better equipped to offer theological education, and so trying to compete with those larger, better-resourced colleges was misplaced. That said, everybody seemed to agree the

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<sup>25</sup> Task Group Second Report 2021

college had real potential to be a hub of Anglican/Mihinare research and scholarship in the South Pacific.

A second group considered the college's primary purpose was ministry training (or formation) and that a theological education without the primary ingredient of ministry formation was "of no use at all". As one proponent from this group put it: "The college is for something much bigger and more important than academic [striving]. Rather, it's a place for exploration about ministry." This group said the college's role was to "form students for missional leadership, particularly in the fullness of the five marks of mission, which is the strongest identifying thing about the Anglican Church". Formation, they said, was far and away the college's top priority. Certainly, given theological education is available at a good many other institutions, it would seem formation – particularly what it means to be an Anglican/Mihinare – is the area the college is best placed to focus on.

A third group considered the college's primary purpose to be for "personal formation", emphasising community life to help anchor students' spiritual, pastoral and academic learning. As one interviewee put it, this aspect of the college was the "glue that holds everyone there together – not the academic programme but the community life". This group – including the college's current leadership – considered the seminary aspect of the college to be a particularly important one for reasons articulated well in an article by Robert F Leavitt entitled, *A Case For The Free-Standing Seminary*.<sup>26</sup>

It is not for us to decide which of these purposes should be the primary one. Many said the real problem was perhaps "trying to hold all three – educational institution, seminary and training college – together in one". We consider it is possible to accommodate all three if the college gets sufficiently clear about its vision, purpose and goals. As the 1984 review noted, "the truth of the matter" is that the college needs both education and ministry training.<sup>27</sup> One interviewee suggested it was "like a marinade: the basic ingredients are some good theological education (learning the language of faith and how to think critically about it, from which the missional aspect will emerge); ministry training, while recognising there are other training programmes within dioceses; and most importantly, daily and weekly worship by students as part of the rhythm of life that will be theirs when they leave the college". We agree.

### *Programme*

Views differed on the quality of the college's theological education and ministry training programme. On the plus side, it was pleasing to hear that other institutions – for example Otago, Carey and Laidlaw – were complimentary about the quality of the college's students enrolling in their programmes. A 2019 report by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority was positive about the college and its Diploma of Christian Studies.<sup>28</sup> It said the college's performance was "excellent" in all cases, adding that the diploma programme was "complemented and underpinned by the [college's] formation programme" and that "together these programmes provide the knowledge, practical skills and attributes required for successful ministry". It is fair to say quite a few current and former students told us they were surprised at how positive the 2019 report was about the college's academic performance. Several considered it a "very high-level and once-over-lightly" review.

<sup>26</sup> *The Way*, Supplement, 56 (1986), pp116-123.

<sup>27</sup> 1984 review, p13.

<sup>28</sup> External Evaluation and Review Report, St John's Theological College, New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 12 November 2019. The report considered six key questions: How well do students achieve? What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students? How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders? How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning? How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement? How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

We must emphasise that some interviewees were very positive about their education and training experience at the college. Said one former student: “The training I received at the college through academic study, spiritual formation and personal development enabled me, with God’s help, to effectively move into ministry.” Another spoke of the “solid theological education” he received, adding that he “would have been ill-prepared to minister without [his] time at St John’s”. Another still said: “My formation class was very rich, and our dean was a superb teacher.” However, considerably more students said the college needed to improve its programme, including the quality of teaching and scholarship, the content (particularly of the formation programme), and the method of delivery. The average score for the survey statement “the college structure and community provides a quality theological education” was 63 per cent.

Feedback was as follows:

First, a pervading theme was the lack of quality academic teaching, scholarship and research that had once been part of its programme, particularly in its Diploma of Christian Studies. Many participants spoke of the world-renowned scholars who had previously taught at the college. Some even considered the college had gone backwards since the Reeves-Beck review. Many felt the college had lost the benefits of having three distinct colleges reflecting each Tikanga, yet gained none of the benefits, as the review intended, of a single integrated collegial institution with a diverse and scholarly faculty. They said the dysfunction that had pre-dated the review still existed to a degree. “Mediocre” was the word some used to describe the current level of teaching. That said, many noted that faculty members were, to use one interviewee’s words, “solidly biblically based Christians who talk from a place of genuine care for all students”. Nor is it to ignore the very favourable views some students had of particular faculty members. Yet as many pointed out, the college, “with all its wealth, has a responsibility for producing the finest scholars”. We agree.

Some thought an immediate way to lift the college’s research and scholarship performance was to give greater focus to the growing number of post-graduate students at the college, whose work ranges from subjects as diverse as abuse within the church, using kapa haka in liturgy, climate change and theology, and a practical theology research project about faith in a multi-ethnic congregation. There is a wealth of untapped potential here, particularly within Tikanga Pākehā. Tikanga Māori uses its post-graduate students to tutor and lecture its undergraduates, whereas the Tikanga Pākehā stream, we were told, was slow “to draw on the talent of the PhD students to teach”. Like the 1984 review, we consider the college could do far more to draw on the “gifts of talents” at the college, including post-graduate students and those undertaking post-ordination study.<sup>29</sup> A more general view is that post-graduate endeavours are merely “an add-on to the ordination track”. Almost all agreed – and we concur – that the college needs to turn around this attitude so it can become a “centre of excellence for Anglican theology in the South Pacific”.

Secondly, according to some, research and scholarship needed to give greater prominence to indigenous theology. More focus, too, was needed on teaching te reo, tikanga Māori and the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We agree the college could do more to enlarge its indigenous form of education and ministry training. As one interviewee noted, “indigenous theological voices are needed within Te Hāhi Mihinare worldwide, and where else in the world is there a three-Tikanga church to bring those voices to the Anglican communion?”. It was therefore surprising to us that the college taught no Tikanga Māori course, although it does teach te reo Māori – a fact many Pākehā students lamented. More than a few Māori and Pasefika students – former and current – said quite simply that “the curriculum was still too “Western-based”.

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<sup>29</sup> 1984 review p16.

Thirdly, many participants expressed dissatisfaction with the Diploma in Anglican Leadership and the college's more general preparation of students for ministry. Interviewees described the diploma as a "one-size-fits-all that creates cookie-cutter priests", "very light" and "dumbed down". Even the faculty told us the programme "felt unwieldy", and that part of the problem was "it's become too compliance-driven". Many more said the programme was not consistent across the three Tikanga. We were told it is very "heavy in content", "footnoted" and "highly assessed" for Pākehā students, and this contributed to workload pressure. More time was needed for discussion and reflection. For Māori students, we were told, it was far more reflective and focused on strong whanaungatanga. Said one student: "We build relationships together, to be a church together, to know each other, and to understand each other." For Pasefika students, the formation programme was very light in comparison. (Lecture time is often used for personal study.) Some felt they missed out as a result.

By far the majority of students wanted to undertake formation studies together more and not as separate Tikanga groups. We acknowledge the purpose of the tārai waka is to try to provide exactly that and some said their groups worked very well, but for others this was far from the case. A good few students said these groups lacked clear purpose. Asked one student: "Is it for pastoral care? Is it trying to form relationships across Tikanga? Or is it for discipleship?" Another noted that faculty ran the groups, and she questioned whether students shouldn't be taking turns to lead these groups to hone their own leadership skills. A point repeatedly emphasised was that the key lesson in formation was "how to be in the presence of other Tikanga, so there's missed opportunities in not giving us this".

Several participants said there was a real need for more cross-Tikanga discussions about important issues such as bi-culturalism, sexuality and racism. One interviewee said "these conversations need to be truthful and helpful" and pointed out – quite validly – that the college attracted people with strong views on these issues, and faculty members needed to take the initiative in "leading conversations that are helpful, not harmful". In short, as he put it: "We need an environment that can hold this kaupapa well."

Many held the view that the formation programme needed to offer more practical training before curacy – "the nuts and bolts" of being an ordained or lay minister. One priest said: "I've had a curate sit in my office who I've had to train for a whole year – they didn't learn anything, they didn't know the canons and they didn't know how to run anything." Another said: "Students do not know how to stand at the altar, what to do with the cup, or that the Thanksgiving is a prayer."

Many also stressed the need for more focus on "practical, mundane but very essential" aspects of being a priest or lay minister. Several students said they wanted "to understand the canons and church structures more and how to be an administrator – given a lot of our job is about administering to, and for, all sorts of things". Governance and financial management were other subjects in this category. As one cleric said: "Graduates must understand the place in which they stand to be a minister – to understand the pou and whare – and have the practical skills to lead and manage." A point many in this category stressed was the need to be able to pick from a "suite of options for training, such as youth ministry, pastoral care or chaplaincy". And most interviewees were in favour of a bi-vocational model (discussed later) because of the church's pressing need, especially in the Hui Amorangi, for "lawyers, plumbers, corporates and the like to have a theological background".

A good many participants considered there was insufficient emphasis in ministry training on the liturgy. One said "the richness of the liturgy has been consistently weak in the college over the years and there's a reluctance to employ experienced liturgists to train students". Others said an institution like the college ought to be "training those who will become clergy and providing the best of Anglican liturgy and spirituality to give them a solid ground in our faith". However, others considered that liturgy could be taught and practised in various ways. As best we could tell, this concern may well stem from a view we heard repeatedly that the

college was “leaning towards the evangelical right”, and some participants considered some faculty members and students were “less Anglican than Baptist in drag”. Some participants felt, rightly or wrongly, that most faculty members had “never practised in a parish” and this was part of the problem. “The staff don’t have good ministry experience to pass on,” one interviewee said. Another said: “They haven’t done pastoral work, they haven’t dealt with disasters, or sat at the bedside of a dying person, and without that experience it’s hard to train students to do that.” The college could, however, draw on the talents of many outside the college who can provide exactly this.

Yet some said all such practical matters were a task for the parish during students’ placements or in their curacy. As one bishop observed: “The college’s task is to teach students why a baby’s baptism is so important to our faith – not how to hold the baby.” Or as a student put it: “I want to understand the why. I can tell you how to set up the eucharist table because I get that on my placement, but I can’t tell you what each item means and what it symbolises for our faith.” It would be fair to say this is a minority view, and our impression is that part of the problem is that practical training varies widely between dioceses and Hui Amorangi: some are in a better position to provide this than others.

What is clearly missing is agreement between the college and all dioceses and Hui Amorangi about precisely who does what when it comes to training and practical ministry skills. We cannot put it better than the reviewers did back in 1990 – that what is clearly required is a “common understanding of expectations” so the “church knows what St John’s will offer [and] likewise St John’s knows what expectations the church has of their training; and the students at the beginning of the process will know the expectations of both”.<sup>30</sup> In due course, Te Pae Tawhiti could look to spell out precisely who does what.

One participant summed it up thus: “[We need] a road map of what the college will do and what the dioceses will do.” We agree, and it may be best the college develops one with all the dioceses and Hui Amorangi without delay. It can always be adjusted later, depending on the Te Pae Tawhiti strategy.

### *Delivery*

Views differed on the best way to deliver theological education and ministry training. Should it remain based at the college, or should it extend to online learning, or should it consist of both? A few participants went so far as to say the college’s primary focus should be on online, not residential-based, learning. Some interviewees told us they welcomed the college’s regional programme (a mix of online and weekend courses in the dioceses). But most – including faculty members – felt the current programme was an “add-on”, and that far more investment was required in good online training. Said one participant: “No one at the college cares about long-distance learning and the residential students take the oxygen. Yet we need radical change with an online programme with cohorts of learners coming together in situ for week-long block courses during the year. That’s the way of future learning and training in ministry.”

Research suggests a combination of residential and online block course learning can produce the best outcome for students as well as the church. One option raised by participants was for the college to become either a hub for a consortium of online learning providers or a provider of online learning (see below).

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<sup>30</sup> 1990 review, p6.

### *Our view*

We share the view of many that the programme is mediocre, has become one-size-fits-all, puts insufficient focus on what it means to be Anglican/Mihinare, and does not offer the range of options for ministry training that is so pressingly needed by the church in current times. The college needs to conduct more research and scholarship, and offer more indigenous theology. More can be done, to borrow the words of one interviewee, “to deliver on its amazing cultural promise as a three-Tikanga college to reach a position where students can drop in and do a Samoan, Tongan, Māori, or English service easily with no one complaining they feel excluded”. And it so happens, the college itself wants that, too. We hasten to add that the students we met were, as one of the other colleges described them, “fabulous and academically able”. As already noted, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority was positive about the college’s Diploma of Christian Studies in 2019 and many students were positive about the education and training they received. Course completion rates for residential students have improved markedly, up from only 60 per cent in 2018 to 72 per cent in 2020.

### **He taura, he rautaki anō | Alternative models and strategies**

We received a lot of feedback from a range of participants about alternative models of education and ministry training delivery and associated strategies. Some proposals would redefine the purpose of the college, while others would change the way the college provided training. Four models came up time and again during our discussions with participants as preferred options for the college, and we discuss these first. Four others that attracted less support are also included. Seven retain the college’s residential function, which the overwhelming majority of participants considered essential to the experience of living, learning and worshipping together as a community. Our description of each model (and strategies) is necessarily high-level. Note the models are far from mutually exclusive.

#### *Theological and professional training for lay and ordained roles*

Under this model, residential students, whether intending to take up ordained or lay roles, would simultaneously study theology and train for a profession. The college already has a small number of students training in this way. Such a move would recognise that many of those taking up roles in the church need academic and formation programmes that go beyond those developed only for ordained ministers. Overwhelmingly, the majority view was that the composition of the student body must be widened to include those training for lay as well as clerical ministry and also those who are looking for both theological and vocational education and training. As one bishop said: “My deeply impoverished Hui Amorangi needs to take incredible young talent and mould them into amazing Anglican leaders to serve the local church but also in a way that enables them to make a living.” We cannot agree more.

Four things would be needed. First, the college’s trust board would need to expand the categories of those eligible for scholarships to enable a broader mix of individuals to qualify for admission. We heard very differing views – and could not, quite frankly, ever get to the bottom of it – whether the current legislation was getting in the way of a broader mix of scholarships or not. Some said the St John’s College Trust Board and/or Te Kotahitanga would not fund non-ordinands – apart from those Pasefika priests who come to the college for vocational training and some post-graduate students. The trust board, however, told us it was open to funding non-ordinands and did do so.

As best we could tell, the trust board does fund some who are training as non-ordinands but only a very few. We think there is a very simple solution to fixing the apparent conflict over what the trust board can and cannot fund and that is for the General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui to declare, as it can under section 3(1)(c) of the St John’s College Trust Act 1972,

that the college is one of those places where college funds can be spent on the costs of education of students in such manner as the General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui directs.<sup>31</sup>

Secondly, the college would need to review the Diploma of Christian Studies and the Diploma in Anglican Leadership to make them more applicable for lay roles (such as pastoral care and youth ministry). We hasten to note this need not involve adding new courses but potentially working with Carey or Laidlaw, which offer an excellent range of courses dedicated to youth ministry, pastoral care and the like, provided these are adapted for an Anglican/Mihinare context. Working with Trinity in this way is another option. One way of doing this would be to convene a small working group that includes representation from outside the college to review both diplomas.

Thirdly, the formation programme would need to be reviewed, taking account of the feedback discussed earlier – the need for cross-Tikanga formation, more “nuts and bolts” training, increased focus on the liturgy and so on. To its credit, the college already has a review of its formation programme under way.

Fourthly, there would be more focus on indigenous theology, programmes incorporating more te reo, Māori culture and tikanga, and demonstrating commitment to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

This model – and strategies – would see a potentially much bigger student roll, with some in residence, some attending the college for the day only, and some (as discussed further below) training remotely but under college supervision. This is nothing new. We heard from several older students about the days when the college had both what it then called “covenanted” and “independent” students. As best as we understand, some of these independent students paid their own way. Davidson notes that in 1984 there were 53 of these students. Some who were at the college at that time told us this mix of covenanted and independent students added much diversity, richness and vibrancy to the college.<sup>32</sup> Preserving the college’s inclusive common life would be one of the challenges of this option.<sup>33</sup> But it is not, in our view, an insurmountable problem and simply requires some creative thinking about how these students can experience some of the benefits of the college’s communal life.

We consider this model is a viable way for the college to better meet the changing needs of the church.

### *A college without walls*

This would be a college in which students studied on campus and/or via remote learning (supplemented by on-site block courses).<sup>34</sup> St Mellitus College in the United Kingdom was frequently mentioned as a leading example of this approach. Proponents said it maximised the flexible use of the college’s resources, faculty members and programmes, and strengthened ministry throughout the church. Laidlaw is another example closer to home. It live-streams interactive lectures by video link from two of its campuses to other campuses and sites, such as churches. We were told the programme has proved hugely successful.

<sup>31</sup> Currently students are mainly funded pursuant to s 3(1)(b) – for the education in the college of candidates for ordination, s 7(2) – maintenance and support of candidates for ordination or those already ordained. None appear to be funded under s 7(1) – maintenance and support of scholars at college. Only a very few are funded under s 3(1)(c).

<sup>32</sup> Davidson, p284.

<sup>33</sup> The 1990 review also made this point, p18.

<sup>34</sup> Stephen Haar, Learning, Formation, and Community: Challenges Facing a Distributed Model of Theological Education, *Lutheran Theological Journal* 53, No 1 (May 2019).

This model would allow the college to provide distance learning in one of several ways. First, the regional programme could be strengthened to provide distance ministry training for all those in their parishes who cannot afford to attend the college – whether for financial, whānau/family or other reasons. Online training could be supplemented with on-site block courses. One option with potential is for the college to become a hub for a consortium of online learning providers. This could draw on some of the excellent training of formation programmes we heard about, offered within individual dioceses and Hui Amorangi (and even at Bishopdale college). A consortium – regardless of who leads it – could offer the church better value for money and avoid what seemed to us to be considerable duplication in training.

Another option – and one the college put forward – would be to offer a mix of residential and distance ministry training. Here, the faculty suggested students identified as potential ordained or lay leaders could live at the college for at least a year to do the Diploma in Christian Studies, in the process experiencing the unique inclusive life at the college. After the first year, the college could continue to supervise these students, who could choose one of two paths: what the college calls “a pioneer” missional leadership role (that is, ministry in context), or a “parish-based” ministry role as a youth, pastoral care, community ministry or chaplaincy role. Postings would be part-time, allowing part-time study (online and block courses) towards a degree. We think this option is worth exploring further with the college’s key stakeholders, not least because of its flexible and equitable use of college resources and also its ability to better meet the church’s needs.

#### *Enter partnerships with other providers*

Under this model, the college would work more closely and collaboratively with one or other providers of theological education and training to both expand and improve its programme as well as provide more on-site teaching for students. A frequent refrain from students was that they loved their first year at the college, when they all studied together, but that this camaraderie was lost in subsequent years attending Carey or Laidlaw in person or attending Otago online.

The college has, in fact, already taken steps to achieve this by entering new memorandums of understanding with Otago, Carey and Laidlaw, which, in essence, will enable it to teach a further 60 credits of each of those institutions’ degrees, or half of each degree, at St John’s. It calls this its “pathways” programme. We were told content covered in the college’s formation programme, notably Anglican liturgy and preaching, will be removed from that programme because papers the college will now teach through the memorandums of understanding will have significant Anglican content and perspectives. This may go some way towards responding to demands for an improved focus on liturgy. The college should also explore greater collaboration with Trinity. As one interviewee noted, it made no sense to have “two colleges on the same site who do not closely work together” as they did in the past. Biblical studies was one paper, an interviewee suggested, that could be taught at both colleges because the variation between denominations on this subject was minimal. Trinity’s strong Tongan lay teaching programme may provide another opportunity for collaboration.

This model would allow the faculty to teach beyond level 5, which would be good for recruiting and retaining quality teaching staff, and keep students studying together on site, although distance learning could also be undertaken. The main risk is the complex arrangements with the other providers. One way around this may be to link up with a single degree-holding partner. The relationship between Bishopdale and Laidlaw is one such example, while others are the Charles Sturt model in Australia and the Durham University model in the United Kingdom. However, linking up with one provider may not serve the current diverse needs of the student body at the college. The college could, as it has already indicated, strengthen its partnership with Otago for post-graduate students, specifically more joint supervision of the college’s students, and the college’s faculty teaching both its own and Otago’s post-graduate and master’s programmes, including in the area of chaplaincy.

We support the overall approach of the college strengthening its relationships with degree-holding partners and teaching more Anglican/Mihinare content and perspectives within that framework. We see this as preferable, at least for the time being, to the college pursuing accreditation for its own degree. And it would mean the college would effectively be able to offer a programme ranging from certificate and diploma level through to degree and post-graduate level.

The college this year received approval from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority for a level 3 Certificate in Christian Studies. We were told this would offer students an entry-level qualification and provide a helpful “testing ground for people’s sense of call to ministry”. We heard from participants that the college needed to offer more “bridging” courses for those who had yet to decide on a call to ministry, or a more basic academic programme (particularly for older students who had been out of study for many years) before studying at a certificate or diploma, let alone degree, level. This is a positive development.

#### *Establish a teaching and research centre*

Under this option, the college would establish a dedicated, well-resourced teaching and research centre headed up by a senior figure and drawing on expertise and resources from inside and outside the college. Such a centre could boost the profile and quality of the college’s research efforts. It already undertakes various writing, publishing and promotional initiatives towards this end, but the view of many was that these efforts, worthwhile as they are, fall short of the college’s potential.

We support a centre which would foster high-quality teaching, research and professional development work on the context, history and current challenges facing the Anglican Church/Te Hāhi Mihinare. Research undertaken by faculty members and post-graduate students would deepen understanding of Anglicanism and contribute directly to the teaching and ministry training programme at the college and in the wider church. The centre could become a place for both regional and international Anglican/Mihinare scholarship and have visiting residential fellows. The work of the centre could be shared through public lectures, conferences and publication work. The college’s Selwyn lecture should be resumed.

We consider that the college is well placed to take on this role. It is rich in Anglican/Mihinare heritage and whakapapa, it is the only institution that on a daily basis brings together the three Tikanga of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, and it has a wonderful location and resources (notably the world-class Kinder Library) on an historic site. Also, it already has well-established connections with other regional providers of theological education and a strong relationship through Trinity with the Methodist Church. Indeed, there is an opportunity for St John’s College and Trinity together to establish the site as a real hub for Pasefika theology.

#### *Other views*

Four other options attracted a lesser degree of support among participants:

***A free-standing seminary:*** Under this model, the college would educate and train students only for ordination in a residential setting. Community living would anchor the college’s spiritual, pastoral and academic programmes. However, we consider it would not produce a sufficiently diversified range of lay and ordained leaders to meet the church’s contemporary needs. Also, the exclusive focus on ordained ministry would concentrate a great deal of effort – and consequent benefits – on a very small group of people, as well as constraining programme content and teaching methods and limiting the overall student experience. It is not a model we would favour.

*A bachelor's degree-awarding college only:* The college would be accredited by New Zealand Qualifications Authority to offer a Bachelor of Theology degree (or equivalent) only. Te Kaunihera and the faculty preferred this option, but few of the college's stakeholders did, mainly because of the impact of such a move on the viability of other degree-providing institutions. Offering a degree programme, the faculty said, would have advantages, including a wider range of courses, an indigenous theology component for Māori and Pasefika students, and more choice for students who wanted to prepare for advanced programmes (through graduate and post-graduate certificates and diplomas). It would also allow the college to be competitive in recruiting high-calibre research and teaching staff, a necessary condition for accreditation as a degree provider.

Bringing the college up to the required standard to get accreditation would demand considerable time, effort and money. It would need to develop the sub-disciplines for a theology degree and recruit faculty members with the necessary range of specialisations to offer a credible degree. Given the availability of degrees from other providers, we doubt the effort and cost would justify the expected benefits. We note, too, that the New Zealand Qualifications Authority requires applications for new degrees to have strong support from stakeholders – something currently lacking.

*A finishing school for graduates:* The college would become a finishing school for theology degree graduates in Anglican formation. This would be along the lines of the Presbyterian Church's Knox Centre of Ministry and Leadership model, where students complete a theological qualification before entering a non-accredited two-year programme of ministry formation, with ministry placement and a series of distance and block courses. Supporters of this option said students would be able to demonstrate their commitment and test their vocation before being accepted for training. They said it would also ground ministry formation in ministry practice and foster in-context learning. However, many interviewees told us such formation was best done alongside theological study so that theory and practice were properly integrated. We agree and do not think access to the college should be limited to graduates seeking Anglican/Mihinare formation.

*Distance learning only:* The college would become a specialist distance education provider along the lines of the Open Polytechnic. Block courses would supplement online coursework so students could have face-to-face contact with one another and build up informal networks. Many theological education providers worldwide have begun down this distance learning road, conscious of the scarce resources that are tied up in expensive land and buildings, but such a step would still involve a substantial investment in technology and studios so the college could become a credible distance learning provider. Granted, opening up programmes to students regardless of location or training intentions would allow a more equitable distribution of resources. But such an approach would lose the widely valued taonga of learning and formation through its three-Tikanga engagement in a student community. Also, a purely online presence would lose the necessary face-to-face contact, to the detriment of student and faculty morale. Students who were less socially adept or less independent would struggle under such a model. We do not favour this model.

## **Whakarāpopotanga | Summary**

We have, as requested, commented only on alternative models and strategies. It is clearly for the college and church, influenced no doubt by its Te Pae Tawhiti project, to choose which is best to meet its current and future needs, not us. All we will add – with the benefit of this review – is that all of the first four models have very real advantages, and a potential model for the college could be a mix of all four. This could be achieved in a staged approach, starting with consolidating the work the college has already undertaken with its new “pathways” approach, reviewing its formation and ministry training programme, starting to strengthen and invigorate its regional programme with a mix of online and on-site learning, and then looking to a wider group of students for 2023.

This would not necessarily mean any increased spending beyond some one-off outlays on technology to become a credible distance learning provider. Rather, it would require the college to look at, to put it colloquially, “re-slicing its pie” (of about \$4.5 million). This might mean a smaller number of residential students receiving full scholarships, tuition fees, accommodation and a living allowance, with the savings redistributed to those who might study at the college for one year only, attend the college as non-residential students, or be learning their ministry training in context. Value-for-money considerations would have to play a big part in this re-slicing of the pie, especially when the college’s student-teacher ratio and staff-related costs are both high compared with those of other colleges.

We consider the college is well placed to take on this challenge if it steps up, has a strong governance board and effective leadership at all levels, and commits to all our improvements. It shared with us a vision that would essentially combine all four models in one: a college without walls that is a three-Tikanga educational hub, trains ordained, lay and bi-vocational leaders in the Anglican Church/Te Hāhi Mihinare, provides on-site and distance learning, and is an internationally renowned centre for teaching and research.

It was a vision one faculty member described thus: Ko Hoani Tapu te ākonga i tino arohaina e Ihu. He aha ai? He mā nō tōna ngākau. Waiho tēnei māpihi maurea o tō tātou tupuna wairua hei kaingākautanga mō Hoani Tapu Kāreti kia tū ai hei poutumārō o te mātauranga. (John was the beloved disciple of Jesus. Why? Because of the purity of his heart. Let this legacy of our spiritual ancestor, John the saint, be our guiding principle and St John, the College, will be at the meridian of education.)

What we would urge, however, is for the church and college to avoid endless debate, even conflict, over the college’s future role. We are struck by the fact that all three previous reviews – 1984, 1990 and 2010 – pointed to problems of “tension”, even “alienation”, between the college and the church over the college’s primary role. Davidson also makes the same point in his book – that there appears to have been a perennial problem about theological education versus theological training. Yet surely both are important and can simply be delivered in different ways: it’s the “marinade” we noted earlier.

The 2010 Reeves-Beck review pulled no punches when it said some of these theological education and ministry training matters had been debated “on numerous occasions, in different forums ... although often by the same individuals, with no progress being made on the issue”. That often left the college “in a state of inertia”.<sup>35</sup> We hope our report will mark the end of this inertia, and that the college will, as the 1984 review urged, “[listen] to the wider church” but be allowed from time to time to “take a pioneering paths for the church to follow”.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Reeves-Beck review, p5.

<sup>36</sup> 1984 review, p5.

## PART FIVE: ME PĒHEA E PAI AKE AI | IMPROVEMENTS

*Tūngia te ururoa kia tupu whakaritorito te tutū o te harakeke.*

*In order to change, we may need to leave some ways behind.*

### **Kupu whakataki | Introduction**

Our review revealed shortcomings in numerous aspects of the college's culture and operations. However, we are confident the following 15 improvements can correct these deficiencies. We devised them taking into account numerous factors: the complaints about the college and the way it responded to them; the college's culture, systems and policies; its theological education and ministry training objectives; and the alternative models and strategies discussed in part four.

Our focus has been on pragmatic solutions. The improvements that follow are intended to work as a package. For that reason, we advise against picking and choosing among them. Some measures can be implemented quickly and easily, and some will take longer and require consultation within the college and also with the church. Some will require investment in the short and medium term. Some may need outside help because making significant change at a workplace requires expertise that only skilled external specialists can provide. Several improvements, we are pleased to say, are already in the pipeline.

We are confident the foundations are there for the college to make meaningful change. Crucially, we know the college's heart is in the right place, and with appropriate support and guidance from the church, and expert help where needed, it will be able to realise its full potential to be a world-renowned college in the South Pacific.

### **Whakarite i tētahi ahurea kotahi mō te whānuitanga o te kāreti katoa | Establish one college-wide culture**

The college – more particularly Te Kaunihera and the manukura – should be empowered to carry out and lead a modernisation of the college culture. Some pockets need more attention than others – particularly Tikanga Pākehā and staff operations. Aided by the results of the culture survey, the college's leaders are well placed to begin this task. We suggest external assistance to lead culture change. This should start with a clear alignment between the college's board and leadership team about how to respond to our findings, along with preparation of a short, simple implementable plan to improve culture. This must be done with the involvement of all who work or study at the college – probably starting with a series of facilitated workshops. They are, after all, the ones who experience the culture on a daily basis. Good co-ordination of the various initiatives to change the college's culture is essential. Many of the improvements detailed below flow into this change, which must be the college's number one priority.

### **Whakatakotoria he tikanga whanonga | Develop a code of conduct**

The college should develop a code of conduct that applies to all those at the college – from top to bottom – as soon as possible. Such a code is essential so everybody knows what standard of behaviour is expected of them, and also so the college – and a human resources officer – has a standard against which to monitor behaviour. Students, staff and faculty members should be involved in setting agreed standards of behaviour.

## **Kia whai mana ā-ture te kāreti | Establish a legal status**

The college should be given legal status. The church should take appropriate advice, although two options could be: incorporation as a limited liability company with a constitution or as an incorporated trustee with a modern trust deed. Although tax advice would be required, either structure should allow registration as a charity and be efficient from a tax perspective. Other entities within the church, such as the St John's College Trust Board, have incorporated status, while other theological colleges, such as Carey, Bishopdale and Laidlaw, have a legal status that offers the obvious advantages of clarity of roles and functions and limitation of legal risk.<sup>37</sup> Incorporation of Te Kaunihera, like the St John's College Trust Board, might potentially make it unnecessary to rewrite Canon II Title E to include detailed provisions to relate to either because their constitutions or trust deeds would deal with such detail.

## **Kia noho ko te Kaunihera anake hei mana whakahaere | Make Te Kaunihera sole governor**

Te Kaunihera should be the only board that governs the college. Neither Te Kotahitanga nor St John's College Trust Board should have any governance role. Canon II Title E would need to be rewritten as a result. This would also provide an opportunity to clarify the precise roles of St John's College Trust Board and Te Kotahitanga (bearing in mind a very different legal landscape exists now compared with that prevailing when the canon was written). If the St John's College Trust Board focused solely on funding-related decisions (along with monitoring the use of its funds), and Te Kotahitanga concentrated exclusively on oversight of the church's education and training needs, this would create a clean separation between the roles of funder, provider of services, and education and ministry training oversight. It goes without saying that the three boards would need to build strong collegial and collaborative relationships and work together in the interest of the college and the church.

Special attention should be given to the composition of the Te Kaunihera board – and, we would add, to the make-up of Te Kotahitanga and St John's College Trust Board. Te Kaunihera needs a stronger mix of governance, financial management, education, human resources and theological expertise and experience. Change management experience would also be helpful, at least for a time. More than a few interviewees suggested it be a secular board. Views were divided on whether a bishop should sit on the board. One view was that inclusion of a bishop helped to bring to the board the views of the church and enabled input into the college's academic programme. Another view was that this could be achieved via the Board of Studies, which already has input into the college's academic programme. One interviewee observed that, more generally, the church needed to "redefine episcopal leadership so it is more about spiritual leadership, not administrative leadership". This is a decision for the church. All we will say is that, provided the bishop has the requisite governance skills, he or she could have a useful liaison role with other bishops.

On a similar subject, the college needs to think about appointing a student representative and a faculty member representative to the Te Kaunihera board. This is a common feature of some educational institutions. These individuals need not necessarily be board members, but both must be consulted on matters affecting their colleagues and both must be regularly invited to board meetings.

The canon stipulates that Te Kotahitanga has the role of appointing directors, and that three Te Kaunihera board members be Te Kotahitanga representatives. We have already said it is inappropriate for Te Kotahitanga representatives to sit on the Te Kaunihera board. Pending change to the canon, we suggest Te Kotahitanga agrees not to appoint Te Kotahitanga

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<sup>37</sup> Examples of similar entities within the church with incorporated structures are Trust Investments Management Limited – owned ultimately by the diocese of Auckland – and Anglican Communications Limited, a company with the Tikanga Pākehā archbishop as shareholder on behalf of the church.

members to the Te Kaunihera board, and that it consults Te Kaunihera and appoints the people with the right skills to lead transformational change. An alternative to Te Kotahitanga making these appointments is for the General Synod Standing Committee to do so.<sup>38</sup> Yet another alternative is for Te Kotahitanga and the General Synod Standing Committee to make the appointments together. Some consistency of board make-up is required. Our suggestion would be to retain at least two of the current board members. There would be immediate vacancies if the three roles filled by Te Kotahitanga were disestablished.

Some suggested an interim board to lead transformational change. There is merit to the suggestion because some hard work will be required if the college and church decide to implement our recommendations. Monthly, not quarterly, meetings will be necessary. If there is resolve to commit to, and get on with, meaningful change, we are not sure this interim step is necessary or desirable (although that does not exclude the option of short-term appointments for some directors to help bring about transformational change). It should be possible to make new appointments quite quickly and allow a reinvigorated Te Kaunihera to lead transformational change without delay.

Given the importance of the role of governor of the college (and the commitment in time it entails), we suggest the church considers paid appointments.

As an aside, we suggest the General Synod Standing Committee may want to consider setting up an appointments advisory committee that would make governance appointments to church-related boards. Given the number of such boards, it may be time for the church to appoint people to boards with the necessary expertise to do the job, rather than to represent particular stakeholders. Such a committee could also have a mandate to improve gender diversity on boards.

### **Whakatakotoria he mahere rautaki | Develop a strategic plan**

The college must develop a new strategic plan that clearly states its vision, mission (or purpose), values, goals and desired outcomes – in other words, a high-level plan or framework of the sort most organisations formulate so everyone in the organisation understands the strategy and their role in its implementation. The desired outcomes should be measurable and provide the basis for monitoring the performance of the college. Such a plan would help all those at the college – whether faculty members, staff or students – to truly feel personal involvement in the college's success, as well inform decision-making at all levels. It would also give the church a clear written understanding of the college's strategy. Involving everyone in creating the plan's vision, purpose, goals and outcomes would send a strong message to all – both those at, and outside, the college – that serious steps are afoot to build a revitalised college.

We urge the college to adopt a vision that is pithy and inspiring and has a new long-term focus – not a continuation of the status quo. It must resonate with all at the college and the church and excite faculty members, staff and students to strive to achieve it. It also needs a clear articulation of its kaupapa – the all-important why. Exactly who is the college ultimately serving – the church as an institution, the students, the Anglican/Mihinare congregations or all the people of Aotearoa New Zealand? It is far from clear to us – or to many students – what the answer is.

Plainly, the strategic plan would first require a decision about what model of theological education and ministry training the college should adopt to meet the church's future needs, and the church would necessarily have a significant role in setting that new strategy as part of Te Pae Tawhiti. However, there appears to be a broad consensus on the future direction

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<sup>38</sup> As we understand, the Standing Committee has the ability to make any decisions that the General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui can otherwise make.

of the college within any wider strategy that is ultimately adopted as part of the work associated with Te Pae Tawhiti.

Nonetheless, we are concerned about a real risk of delay if the college has to wait for the church to decide what model and strategies it should follow before it can begin developing a strategic plan. Such a delay would not be in the interests of students or the church. Furthermore, it is likely that involving too many stakeholders would, as more than a few interviewees noted, result in a vision that was anything but pithy and compelling. Rather, it would be a “pureed” vision to accommodate a myriad of competing views, and as such it could mean anything and therefore nothing. As Davidson observes, the college has had to contend for much of its history, with “competing visions, parochial politics and differing understandings about the nature of the ministry”.<sup>39</sup> It is time to put an end to this debilitating tussle. Moreover, there is also the practical matter that senior leaders of the church are simply too busy to get involved in evaluating alternative models and strategies and developing a new strategic plan. Besides, the church still would have the final say on any new strategy.

We therefore suggest that a common sense and practical process would be for a new Te Kaunihera to:

- meet, perhaps via a hui (or series of hui), with relevant stakeholders – bishops, ministry bodies, St John’s College Trust Board, Te Kotahitanga, Anglican Women’s Studies Centre and others – to get their views on our options for theological education and ministry training
- prepare a draft strategic plan with input from all those at the college – students, faculty members and staff
- work with Te Kotahitanga and the St John’s College Trust Board as the college’s two most important stakeholders to secure their support for the draft plan, taking account of any early themes emerging from the Te Pae Tawhiti work
- submit the draft plan to either Te Kotahitanga (an option under Canon II Title E) and/or the General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui (when it meets in May 2022) for approval.

If, as we believe and as outlined earlier, there is reasonably broad consensus about the college’s future role, then it should be possible with collaborative and constructive input to prepare a new plan in the next six to nine months. It can always be adjusted later to fit within the Te Pae Tawhiti strategic framework, although close collaboration now with those involved in that work may minimise the need for any adjustment.

The college and the St John’s College Trust Board should also start discussions on long-term strategic planning for college accommodation. We were told of a proposal mooted some years ago for the trust to fund modern apartment housing on the campus. This would benefit students and also enable the trust board to sell some of its residential accommodation in Meadowbank, to the obvious financial advantage of the church. The college and trust board could also look at including accommodation suitable for those attending block courses as part of a distance programme.

### **Āta tirohia te tūranga o te amokapua | Review the role of dean**

The role of the Tikanga deans needs to be reviewed for the reasons set out in our report. In short, the question is whether the appointment of deans to head each Tikanga is the best way to embed the three-Tikanga structure in the life of the college.

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<sup>39</sup> Davidson, p2.

If the role is to remain, the appointment process should be reviewed. This could happen at the same time as Canon II Title E is rewritten. The manukura alone should appoint deans, although he or she should be required to consult each ministry body on any appointment. The current process impedes the college's ability to choose the right person, who must be able work collaboratively and effectively with the senior leadership team – a consideration the ministry bodies may not fully appreciate.

The pastoral component should be removed. It is simply a conflict of roles. A very small number of interviewees said one option might be that deans keep the pastoral role only and lose the roles of teacher and supervisor. But that would be a very costly option. Almost all other interviewees said that what was needed was a chaplain – or a dean of pastoral care.

### **Whakatūria he minita motukahe mō ngā ākonga me ngā kaimahi | Appoint a chaplain**

The college should appoint a chaplain or dean of pastoral care ready to begin next year. We are confident that in today's bi-cultural world it should be possible to appoint a person who can meet the needs of all three Tikanga or at least Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Pākehā. A small group of additional chaplains could be on call to provide pastoral care where a student wanted, say, a female or Pasefika chaplain to provide pastoral care. The college should consult the ministry bodies but must have the final say.

We could not do better than recommend what the 1984 review said about the appointment of a chaplain to the college. It said such a person would:

- be responsible for the welfare – physical, emotional and spiritual – of students and their families
- respond to the needs of the community
- lead community events
- assist with spirituality and worship.<sup>40</sup>

Those needs remain as true today as they were in 1984. In our view, the role is as important as any Tikanga dean role. Indeed, the appointment of the right person would considerably improve the college's culture and add to the vibrancy of community life. A chaplain would also make sure worship at the college fully reflected the diversity of theological beliefs, cultures and gender. And finally, students especially need not be fearful or uncomfortable approaching the chaplain to air grievances or share wellbeing issues.

We acknowledge the college currently has a chaplain, but her role does not include providing pastoral care. Again, we draw on the 1984 review, which suggested that such a chaplain would need to have good "organisational skills as well as the qualities of warmth, openness and empathy". A chaplain and human resources officer together would, alone, go a long way to addressing the cultural problems we have identified.

### **Whakahoutia te rōpū whakahaere mahi | Restructure the operations team**

The college should restructure its operations team (and this is already under way). This would provide an opportunity to reset the team's culture so it is a safe, healthy, collegial and happy workplace. It would also produce immediate cost savings. Administrative costs (staff costs and other overheads) were 38 per cent of total costs in 2020, which is high, even allowing for the extra costs associated with residential services. Cost savings can help fund other initiatives, such as employing a human resource officer and communications advisor. This measure is already under way. As part of this restructure, the college and the St John's College Trust Board should also improve processes for maintenance work.

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<sup>40</sup> 1984 review, p10.

## **Tono kia hōmai he pūtea mō ngā tau maha | Seek multi-year funding**

The college should apply to the St John's College Trust Board for multi-year funding. It should do this in time for the start of the next financial year. Other colleges – and dioceses – have already taken advantage of the ability, introduced by the board in 2018, to apply for such funding. It should – in discussion with the St John's College Trust Board – consider applying for either three or five years of funding.<sup>41</sup> Multi-year funding would allow the college to manage its own funds and plan long-term. It would also give the college an incentive to cut costs and use the savings to fund further initiatives.

The college would report regularly to the St John's College Trust Board on key performance indicators that the college and the board agree on. It must be fully accountable to the board for use of church funds.

We note that a new governance structure – along with three or five-year funding – could avoid the current problem of overlapping responsibilities for approving student scholarships. This responsibility should best sit with the college and Te Kaunihera, although there could be real merit in the appointment of one or two independent members to a college scholarship committee to provide a useful outside perspective. That committee could also provide the St John's College Trust Board with the requisite confidence that the students meet all scholarship – including legal – requirements.<sup>42</sup>

## **Whakatūria he kaiwhakahaere pūmanawa tangata | Appoint a human resources officer**

The college should appoint – possibly full-time at first and then part-time – an experienced human resources practitioner skilled in people management and culture more widely. This person's role would be to:

- help the college with a restructure of the operations team
- help the college, with assistance from AskYourTeam, to begin a programme of rebuilding the college's culture
- work with the college's lawyers to redraft its complaint policies and implement well-designed and documented processes for handling complaints (see below)
- triage, and in many cases, handle complaints and avoid escalation
- establish a register for tracking and monitoring complaints to help discharge the college's health and safety obligations.

The independent support officer role should be disestablished once the appointment is made. The college could usefully explore, however, appointing a student from each Tikanga to be available as a support person for students wishing to discuss any matter, including complaints, before going to the human resources officer. Other organisations have such support people, and they often have a real and effective role to play because people generally prefer to talk "sideways rather than upwards", that is, to discuss troubling behaviour with their peers rather than their superiors. It would be important, however, that each of these students had appropriate training for this role.

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<sup>41</sup> Bishopdale, and a number of diocese – for example Waikato, Auckland – and other organisations (the Anglican Schools Office) have already taken advantage of multi-year funding. We were told most applications are for funding for between three and five years.

<sup>42</sup> Multi-year funding should also render the declaration of the surplus under section 8 of the St John's College Trust Act 1972 largely redundant.

## **Whakatakotoria he rautaki whakawhitiwhiti korero | Develop a communications plan**

The college should appoint a skilled communications advisor (it could be part-time) and prepare a communications plan so all those in the college, and indeed in the church, are kept abreast of plans, decisions, events and so on. The college is already taking steps to appoint such a person.

Good communication is vital to a positive culture. Communication should be simple and clear. Too many of the college's documents are long and opaque. It should identify the college's key stakeholders and who within the college would be responsible for communication with which stakeholders (and how often) to streamline engagement and take some of the weight of this work off deans. The college and the church must commit to improving communications with each other.

As part of such a plan, the college should establish an alumnae network, something that is long overdue. It should also consider a regular newsletter – it might be only six-monthly – to this network and indeed all key stakeholders in the church so they are kept regularly informed of college-related developments. Such a newsletter could also help re-establish the networks that so many clergy said they missed when they left the college

The college should also develop a marketing plan. This would be critical if the college opened up to more non-residential students.

## **Whakahoutia ngā kaupapa here | Redraft policies**

One of the first tasks for the newly appointed human resource officer should be to draft, with assistance from the college's lawyers, a single clear complaints policy applicable to everyone. A draft policy should be the subject of consultation with faculty members, staff and students.

Such a policy should deal with complaints about bullying, harassment, discrimination and other behavioural matters that might arise (apart from academic complaints, which require a specific process). A well-designed complaints policy should be flexible, easy to understand and apply, and have informal and formal resolution processes. It should also allow a person independent of the college to investigate and determine complaints, where necessary.

We would recommend no appeal by complainants to Te Kaunihera. A governance board is not independent, does not necessarily have the skills to investigate and determine complaints, and does not have the time for such a function. The church may wish to review whether the visitor process is appropriate for the same reasons.

The college must also develop a clear policy for termination of scholarships that is consistent with natural justice and gives students the opportunity to respond to a proposed termination before a final decision is made. Minimum notice periods are also essential.

Longer term, the college should review its many other policies to significantly reduce their number and make them clear and simple. They should also reflect an implicit trust in the behaviour of those to whom they apply.

## **Whakatakotoria ngā paearu me mātua eke i ngā ākonga kia kōwhirihia ai | Set minimum standards for student selection**

The college should set minimum academic and psychological standards for students to meet before they can be considered for admission. The college must interview prospective candidates put forward by their sponsoring bishops. The final say on admission should rest with the college after consultation with the sponsoring bishop. Prospective candidates should ideally attend an open-day at the college where they can meet faculty members, staff

and students. This would also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the college's expectations of students, including the covenant they would be asked to sign.

### **Whakaaro he whare | Consider a whare**

The college should consider building a whare on the campus. This would be a visible representation of, and commitment to, its three-Tikanga structure and also give Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Pasefika, we were told by many, a “place of belonging”. The college should consult Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Pasefika beforehand. The idea of a whare, or a marae, has long been proposed, and indeed it is part of the current strategic plan.

Some consider the idea a “placebo” that does not confront the excessive Western focus of the curriculum, but almost all participants were in favour of it, pointing out that other educational institutions have a whare/ marae. A handful of participants queried, however, whether a whare/marae was appropriate, because it would belong to the iwi with mana whenua, and would not be one for all Hui Amorangi and the wider church.

Given the need for the college to be truly a place of the Province, we think this concern has some substance. These participants considered that what was primarily required was that the college be a “welcoming” and “sharing” place for all Tikanga and that a marae or whare was not the only way to achieve this. Their suggestion was that rather, the college look to incorporate various physical representations of both Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Pasefika on the campus in its various buildings as well as erecting a kuaha and/or pou.

An option is to follow the approach described to us as “maata waka”, that is a whare representing all peoples of the church. A senior church leader told us there were three reasons for favouring this model: “First it would be a whare for the Province – not just one diocese or Hui Amorangi; second, it is a very Māori precedent; and third, it would provide a wonderful opportunity for Māori (and Pasefika) Christian art.” He said such a whare would be one “not just for the campus but the whole Anglican Church/Te Hāhi Minihare”. This option will require investment but it would have the added attraction of opening up the campus – which, in our view, is underused – for the benefit of all. And this option might go some way towards balancing the competing concerns, and needs, of both sides of this debate.

This topic has been debated for many years. It is not for us to decide what is the best visible representation of, and commitment, to the college's three-Tikanga structure, but it is, in our view, a debate that needs to be resolved once and for all.

### **Timataria he kaupapa e whakangungua ai ngā wāhine hei kaiārahi | Start a women in leadership programme**

The college should commit to a tangible programme to address gender bias issues. Its faculty needs more women, and its education and ministry training programmes must pay more attention to the needs of women in ministry and, moreover, to train female students so they are well placed to take up senior leadership positions in the future. The college should work with the Anglican Women's Study Council to help achieve this.

### **Mātauranga me te whakangungu minita | Suggested considerations**

We have recommended no alternative models and strategies since this is a decision for the college and church, although we suggest they take account of the following in making their decision:

- The college can accommodate all three purposes – education, ministry training and personal formation – provided it is clear about its vision, purpose and goals.

- The composition of the student body should be widened to include those training for lay and clerical ministry, as well as those looking for both theological and vocational education and training.
- The Diploma of Christian Studies and the Diploma in Anglican Leadership should be reviewed to make them more applicable to lay roles.
- The formation programme should be reviewed, taking account of the feedback we heard about the need for cross-Tikanga formation, more practical training and an increased focus on liturgy.
- There should be more focus on indigenous theology, more focus on programmes incorporating te reo and tikanga Māori, and a greater demonstration of commitment to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

### **Mahere whakatutuki | Implementation plan**

We have given the archbishops – who commissioned this review – and the college a step-by-step plan for implementing our 15 recommendations, along with suggested timeframes, should the college and church choose to adopt them. The college and the General Synod Standing Committee may wish to consider appointing a small working group to monitor implementation of the plan to ensure the meaningful change required is brought about both in policy and practice.

## APPENDIX 1

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

*Kia whakamoemitiā a Ihowā, te Kaihanga o te rangi me te whenua, te Puna o te Ora, te Ariki o te Rongomau. Waiho ko tona Wairua Tapu tatou e arahi, kia meatia o tatou mahi katoa i runga i te tika, te pono, me te aroha.*

*All glory be to our God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, the Source of all Life, the Prince of Peace. May the Holy Spirit be our guide, so that we might serve with righteousness, with truth, and with love.*

#### Appointment

The Most Reverend Philip Richardson, The Most Reverend Don Tamihere and The Most Reverend Fereimi Cama as Primates and as Visitor to St John's College, acting with the support of the General Synod Standing Committee of the Province have appointed Miriam Dean QC to conduct an independent high level review of the culture at St John's College. Doug Martin will assist her, more particularly with the last two matters listed under the scope of the review below. This document sets out terms of their appointment and the nature of the review.

#### The Presenting Issue

Over an eight month period Archbishop Philip has received a number of complaints from students and staff (from both within the College and from within Episcopal Units) about the culture at the College. Archbishop Philip consulted Archbishop Fereimi and Archbishop Don and learned that they too had received similar complaints.

The Archbishops wrote to the College-appointed Independent Support Office requiring comment. The office responded setting out anonymously a range of complaints that it had received since November 2018.

Some complainants elected to take their complaints to Te Kaunihera. Others may have felt unwilling or unable to use the complaints procedures and so their concerns have not been heard or resolved.

The Archbishops have not themselves been able to investigate these complaints to understand precisely what has happened.

The Archbishops consider that there needs to be a thorough and independent examination of the claims and a consideration of the extent to which the culture, life and ministry of the College needs to respond to, and to adapt as a result of, these complaints.

#### The Scope of the Review

The reviewer has been asked to:

- Examine the nature and extent of the current and past complaints;
- Examine how the College has responded to past complaints;
- Review the health and safety of staff and students at the College;

In the light of the three items above, to comment, where appropriate on

- the extent to which the College is achieving its educational and ministry training objectives;
- ways in which the educational and ministry training objectives of the College can be met in the future through alternative education and ministry training models and strategies which may meet the changing needs of the Church over time.

### **Confidentiality**

The reviewers will gather all relevant information and invite participation of current and former staff and students. In doing so, they will have full access to any documents and any individuals, including experts they consider will help in the Review.

The reviewers will protect the anonymity of the persons interviewed unless they direct otherwise.

The reviewers will protect confidentiality of personal information.

The reviewers will maintain the legal privilege of any legally privileged information disclosed to them during their Review and do their best to ensure that nothing in their report results in an implied waiver of privilege.

### **Expert Assistance**

The Primate will appoint a Panel of advisers who will be available to advise the reviewers on matters of tikanga, ecclesiology, education and ministry training.

The reviewers will prepare a written report.

Prior to completion of the report, the reviewers will conduct a hui to which stakeholders and interested parties will be invited and at which they may offer comment on relevant issues.

The report is to be completed by not later than 31 August 2021.

.....  
Archbishop Philip Richardson  
Cama

Archbishop Don Tamihere

Archbishop Fereimi

3 March 2021

## APPENDIX 2

St John's College - Roll Numbers 2015-2020																													
year	Level 5 Diploma				Undergraduate				Postgraduate				Vocational				All Courses												
	Maori	Pakeha	Pasefika	Other*	total	Maori	Pakeha	Pasefika	Other*	total	Maori	Pakeha	Pasefika	Other*	total	Maori	Pakeha	Pasefika	Other*	Te Ruinga	TOTAL								
2015	2	12	2	0	16	3	15	1	0	19	1	4	2	2	9	4	1	4	1	10	10	32	9	3	54				
2016	5	2	6	0	13	3	17	3	1	24	0	4	3	3	10	1	2	1	0	4	9	25	13	4	51				
2017	5	6	2	0	13	4	13	2	1	20	0	7	2	4	13	1	0	4	0	5	10	26	10	5	57				
2018	3	5	5	0	13	1	12	3	0	16	1	4	1	4	10	4	4	3	0	11	9	25	12	4	50				
2019	2	3	2	0	7	2	9	7	0	18	1	6	1	3	11	3	1	1	0	5	8	19	11	3	5	46			
2020	7	2	4	0	13	1	4	9	0	14	2	9	1	1	13	5	0	0	0	5	15	15	14	1	0	45			
	NZ Diploma in Christian Studies																												

Any degree/diploma programme that is not Theology (e.g. Business, Music, Teaching). Note: All Vocational students are enrolled in the St John's Diploma in Anglican Leadership and/or Christian Studies.

Other\* is Melanesia & International

Note: All students are involved in the Diploma in Anglican Leadership

**Student Roll by Tikanga & Gender 2015-2021**

Year	Māori Female	Māori Male	Pākehā Female	Pākehā Male	Pasifika Female	Pasifika Male	Other Female	Other Male	Te Ruinga Female	Te Ruinga Male	Total Female	Total Male
2015	7	4	13	19	6	4	0	2			26	29
2016	5	4	9	16	6	4	0	3			20	27
2017	4	4	7	18	3	5	0	3	2	4	16	34
2018	3	6	7	14	4	8	0	3			14	31
2019	3	5	5	14	4	8	0	1	4	1	16	29
2020	4	10	9	6	5	9	0	1			18	26
2021	7	10	10	9	3*	7*	0	1			20	27

**Student Roll by Hui Amorangi/Diocese 2015-2021**

Year	Te Tai Tokerau	Te Manawa o Te Whake	Te Tairāwhiti	Te Upoko o Te Ika	Te Waipounamu	Auckland	Waikato/Taranaki	Waipū	Wellington	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Polynesia	Te Rūnanga	Other	Total
2015	4	3	4	0	0	9	5	2	7	0	6	3	10		0	55
2016	6	1	2	0	0	8	3	1	8	0	4	1	10		0	47
2017	7	0	1	0	0	10	3	2	5	0	4	1	8	6	6	50
2018	7	0	2	0	0	7	2	3	2	0	6	1	12		0	45
2019	5	1	1	0	1	5	3	2	4	0	5	0	12	5	5	45
2020	12	1	0	0	1	7	1	2	4	0	1	0	14		0	44
2021	15	1	0	0	1	8	0	2	6	0	3	0	10		0	47

**\*Tikanga Pasefika:** Three additional students were expected for 2021 – two males and one female but delayed due to Covid-19 travel restrictions and planning on a 2022 arrival. These students have not been included in the table.

**Other:** includes students from the Anglican Church of Melanesia and International Students.

**Te Rūnanga:** A one year programme offered to young Anglicans in 2017 & 2019.