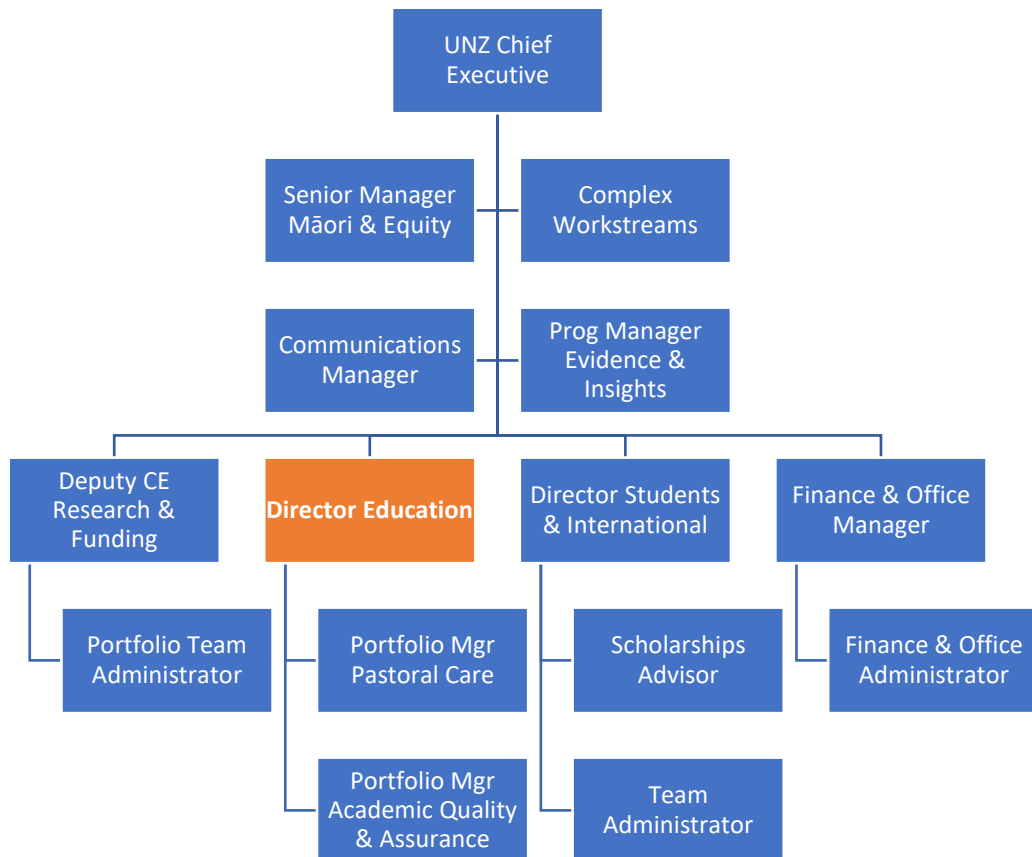


UNIVERSITIES NEW ZEALAND – TE PŌKAI TARA

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title	Director Education
Reports to	Chief Executive
Tenure	Fixed term – three years (see below)
Hours	37.5 hours per week on average with some flexibility expected in line with the seniority of the role.
Location	Wellington
Date	October 2024



BACKGROUND

Universities New Zealand – Te Pōkai Tara advocates for university education and research activities by promoting the common interests of the New Zealand universities through coordinated action across the sector. It is a statutory body with responsibilities for the quality assurance of university academic programmes, university entrance and scholarships.

Universities NZ works at the interface between government and the universities. It makes an informed contribution to policy issues, maintains dialogue between government and the

universities and contributes well-argued, unified responses to developments and the public that may impact on university autonomy or New Zealand's comparative position with international university systems. It also maintains key linkages within the international community.

Led by a committee comprising New Zealand's eight Vice-Chancellors (the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee - NZVCC), much of Universities NZ's work is undertaken through committees and other groups generally comprising a representative from each university. Universities NZ's activities are supported by a small Wellington-based team.

CONTEXT FOR THIS ROLE

New Zealand is unusual by international standards in that responsibility for quality assurance is assigned to the university sector's eight Vice-Chancellors collectively. Section 253 of the Education and Training Act 2020 states that "the Vice-Chancellors Committee is the body primarily responsible for quality assurance matters in respect of universities". Other sections of the Act detail functions of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

The Vice-Chancellors collectively agreed that quality assurance in the university sector adhere to the following common principles:

- Quality assurance/Code administration in the university sector is being done more creatively, fairly, and effectively than would be likely through another external agency.
- Processes are streamlined and decisions are predictable, fair, and reasonable.
- Individual university systems and processes are not overridden and no attempt is made to impose higher than necessary standards or to apply values or preferences that are at odds with those developed by the university itself.
- Processes and policies help universities identify and share good practice – enabling them to do more and do better within available resources.
- Work builds on and complements wider sector priorities and objectives.
- Other sector committees & functions are engaged/involved to maximise synergies and to align effort and priorities.
- The final authority for any recommendation is the NZVCC collectively who can, if necessary, override or reject anything that is not fair or reasonable and who can amend processes where they are adding unnecessary risk, cost, and/or time.

Between February 2023 and April 2024, the Vice-Chancellors undertook a first principles review of how they exercise their statutory quality assurance role. This led to decisions to disestablish the Academic Quality Agency, to establish a new Academic Audit Advisory Committee, to establish a new Education Standing Committee, and to simplify and streamline arrangements around the approval of academic programmes, and the ways in which the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 is administered.

One consequence of this review has been the establishment of this position.

There are four main committees/functions that this role enables and supports:

1. **Education Committee** – comprising the eight Deputy Vice-Chancellors Academic of the eight universities and chaired by a Vice-Chancellor, this group provides strategic advice to the Vice-Chancellors on matters such as sector quality assurance, learner success, learning and teaching, and academic integrity.
2. **Academic Audit Advisory Committee** – providing objective, credible, and useful assessment of quality across the eight universities.

3. **Committee for University Academic Programmes (CUAP)** – quality assurance of university proposals to substantially amend existing programmes/qualifications or to add new ones.
4. **Committee for University Student Pastoral Care (CUSPaC)** – monitoring and oversight of the operation of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 in the university sector.

FIXED TERM – THREE YEARS

The role is being established on a fixed term contract for three years as UNZ is not yet clear on what the ongoing needs and requirements may be for leading these functions. The fixed term role will be responsible for establishing and getting the arrangements for effective quality assurance up and running. Long term needs will be reviewed and determined once that has been achieved.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

This is a new role and responsibilities include helping shape how all of the quality and assurance statutory functions of the Vice-Chancellors are exercised so they are effective and credible, while also being efficient and adding value to the universities. The position responsibilities will necessarily evolve over time.

1. Portfolio Leadership – policy, strategy, and coordination

- 1.1. Work with the Chief Executive, Vice-Chancellors, Committee Chairs, and relevant Government agencies to ensure there is coherent policy, strategy, coordination, and alignment across anything to do with sector quality and assurance.
 - 1.1.1. Ensure there is sound evidence to support good analysis and decision making.
 - 1.1.2. Insofar as is possible given University New Zealand's role as a peak sector body, positively influence or shape Government policy, strategy and thinking through high quality analysis, argument and writing.
 - 1.1.3. Be a trusted expert and source of expertise and advice regarding education and quality assurance strategy and policy for the university sector and for officials across relevant Government agencies.
- 1.2. Support all operations of Education Committee and the body that oversees academic audit. This will include:
 - 1.2.1. Secretariat work - including scheduling meetings, coordinating agendas and papers, recording minutes, and tracking actions through to completion.
 - 1.2.2. Substantive work - effectively acting as an expert in-house consultant for the committee, knowing what is going on around government and the sector, helping the committee navigate complex agendas and challenges, progressing committee decisions and projects, and generally contributing as a trusted value-adding resource to the Committee.
- 1.3. Be the key relationship manager and contact point for all day to day and operational matters between the university sector and the parts of the Ministry of Education,

Tertiary Education Commission, and New Zealand Qualifications Authority with a focus or interest in academic quality and learner success. This will encompass;

- 1.3.1. Building effective working relationships with all key staff within these agencies and the university sector. Helping the university sector understand what these agencies are doing and why. Helping the agencies understand what the university sector is doing and why.
- 1.3.2. Coordinating work and briefings across the university sector and between the university sector and the key government agencies.
- 1.4. Uphold policies and procedures required for university sector quality assurance to remain credible and trusted at all times.
- 1.5. Assist with assessing and investigating complaints about quality and/or academic integrity in the universities.
- 1.6. Provide an overall strategic context for the work done by staff in your team and provide them with leadership and support in line with UNZ's culture, values, and policies.
- 1.7. Work closely with other Universities NZ staff to collaborate and share information and to identify and constructively manage overlaps between your portfolio and other portfolios.

2. Projects and programmes

Oversee or lead projects for UNZ and the Vice-Chancellors. These may have a range of objectives including one or more of the following; improving general understanding of an issue, improving sector outcomes (cost reduction, quality improvement, risk reduction, coordination, etc), informing Government policy and operational settings, and/or supporting decisions by the Vice-Chancellors. UNZ projects vary considerably in size and duration but the following are expectations of all projects.

- 2.1. Ensure all projects have a clear business owner – the person who determines project objectives, scope, philosophy, and who approves all key project documents and reports.
- 2.2. As new projects are identified, work on behalf of the business owner with other key stakeholders to scope requirements. Stakeholders are likely to include Universities NZ committees, university staff, and key advisors and managers in Government agencies.
- 2.3. Via the Business Owner and the Chief Executive take scoping documents to meetings of the Vice-Chancellors for approval.
- 2.4. Be accountable for ensuring that projects proceed in line with agreed scope. As necessary, plan, manage, report, and coordinate decision-making to ensure projects run as anticipated and deliver the desired outcomes.
- 2.5. Where the scope of a project needs amending, do so formally via the Chief Executive.

3. Other Duties

- 3.1. Keep sufficient records in a location and logical structure that another person can locate key information during absences and that the history of key issues or projects can be understood in the future.
- 3.2. Assist UNZ's Communications Manager with information, analysis, and contacts across areas relevant to your portfolio.
- 3.3. Ensure that the content of the website, intranet, and other on-line systems relevant to the portfolio are kept up to date.

- 3.4. Contribute to wider Universities NZ planning, projects and operations as required by the Chief Executive.

KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS - GENERIC

Internal

- The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee.
- Chairs and members of committees and short-life working groups relevant to this portfolio.
- Senior staff across the universities working in or around areas relevant to the role – particularly the DVCs-Academic/Provosts, and the university quality managers.
- People across the university sector working in quality assurance, audit, and risk functions.
- Staff of Universities New Zealand.

External

- Senior officials in key government agencies – particularly the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education Commission, and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.
- Students and peak bodies (students' associations) representing students – particularly the NZ International Students' Association.
- The public.

KEY PERSON REQUIREMENTS

- **New Zealand-based quality assurance experience** – sufficient experience over sufficient time and at a level where you will be credible developing and advising on whole-of-university-sector policy and practice for areas such as quality assurance, academic integrity, learner success, and teaching pedagogies.
- **Political nous and pragmatism** – ability to understand and work across often conflicting priorities, agendas, and personalities in the university and Government sectors. Ability to get everyone working together around a shared agenda, and to keep the programme moving forward successfully.
- **Government experience** – knowledge and/or experience of how Government works and how Government policy is made.
- **Communicating with an executive audience** – ability to communicate in person and in writing simply and effectively to audiences that are overwhelmingly in tier 1 and 2 roles.
- **Qualification** – a postgraduate university qualification.
- **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** - An understanding of the implication of Te Tiriti for universities and quality assurance and a commitment to equitable outcomes in a bi-cultural context.

KEY INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

- Where someone needs/wants to relocate to Wellington for this role UNZ will contribute to the cost of relocation.
- There will be some travel – mostly domestic.
- This position is covered by an Individual Employment Agreement.

PLACE OF WORK

- UNZ staff have some flexibility in where they work.
 - Since the Covid period a significant proportion of university sector meetings have moved online. These can be attended from anywhere.
 - UNZ staff are issued with any necessary equipment to enable them to work effectively from home or UNZ's office.
 - Staff are generally expected to be in the UNZ office not less than two days a week, but there is significant flexibility as to which days.
- Although there is flexibility in where work is carried out, the role requires someone who is in Wellington much of the time to attend meetings with Government agencies and/or at Universities New Zealand. We currently have staff who live outside of Wellington but who travel to Wellington to attend meetings regularly at their own expense. UNZ has arrangements to help defray the cost of commuting.

HOURS OF WORK

Though the role can usually be done within 37.5 hours a week, this is a senior role and some flexibility will be expected in hours of work (to accommodate meetings, travel and functions) and hours worked (to accommodate periods of unusually high workload). Flexi-time is available.

REMUNERATION

Universities New Zealand sets remuneration between 85% and 110% of a market median. For this role, 85% is \$139,000, the median is \$163,750, and 110% is \$180,000. The exact point a person is appointed within the range will be determined by relevant knowledge and experience.

UNZ also provides an employer contribution to superannuation on top of remuneration.