

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Admissions Specialist

Reports to:	Head of Admissions
Division:	Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic
Tenure:	Permanent
Location:	Hamilton
Date:	August 2026

Vision

Ko te tangata

A research-intensive university providing a globally connected, innovative and inclusive student experience in an environment characterised by a commitment to diversity, respect for Indigenous knowledge, and high levels of community engagement.

Values

Ko te mana o Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato ka herea ki tō tātou:

- Tū ngātahi me te Māori
- Mahi pono
- Whakanui i ngā huarahi hou
- Whakarewa i te hiringa i te mahara

The University of Waikato places a high value on:

- Partnership with Māori
- Acting with integrity
- Celebrating diversity
- Promoting creativity

1. GENERAL

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (DVCA) is responsible for teaching and learning, curriculum oversight, academic governance and quality assurance, student administration and enrolment, and the pastoral care and support of students. The DVCA portfolio integrates academic leadership and professional services to ensure a coherent, high-quality and student-centred academic experience, from admission through to progression, completion and graduation.

Situated within the DVCA Portfolio, Student Operations plays a critical role in delivering high quality, student-centred administrative services that support success across the student lifecycle. It provides efficient, technology enabled processes and responsive service delivery across admissions, student fees, examinations and graduation.

The portfolio includes:

- Admissions Office: Oversees programme planning and application assessment, and manages first-year enrolment processes, while providing enrolment support for other new students, ensuring compliance with institutional and sector requirements.
- Student Centre: Provides integrated information, advice, and operational support across the student lifecycle as the first point of contact for current and prospective students, including, but not limited to, enrolment, examinations, fees, grades, completions and graduation processes.

2. POSITION PURPOSE

The Admissions Specialist provides advanced technical expertise and specialist advice on complex admissions matters, supporting accurate, consistent, and compliant decision-making across the admissions cycle.

The role acts as the University's subject matter expert for admissions assessment frameworks, tiered decision pathways, and complex admissions cases, while providing specialist oversight of offshore programme admissions, professional qualification admissions, and other admissions activities requiring interpretation of regulations, policies, qualification frameworks, and precedent.

The Admissions Specialist is responsible for developing and maintaining admissions assessment frameworks, quality assurance practices, and specialist guidance that support consistent and evidence-based decision-making. The role contributes to staff capability through training, knowledge sharing, and specialist support and may undertake delegated Senior Admissions Advisor responsibilities during periods of leave or absence.

3. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal:

- Director of Student Administration
- Associate Director of Student Administration
- Head of Admissions
- Admissions Colleagues
- Staff within the Student Administration Division
- International and Engagement Office Staff
- The Global Programme Team
- Future Students Team
- School of Graduate Research
- University Staff

External:

- New students, applicants and prospective students
- International agents and partner institutions
- Government agencies and professional bodies

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Administration and Leadership

- Develop, maintain, and oversee admissions assessment frameworks, including the classification of application types and escalation pathways to support consistent, risk-based decision-making.
- Provide specialist advice and make recommendations on complex admissions requiring interpretation of regulations, policy, precedent, or qualification frameworks.
- Act as an escalation point for complex admissions matters and support consistent decision-making across the Admissions Office.
- Undertake Senior Admissions Advisor responsibilities during periods of leave or absence to ensure continuity of service and decision-making.
- Any other duties as required that are consistent with the position held, other than in exceptional circumstances such as rehabilitation after injury or sickness.

4.2 Quality Assurance and Compliance

With the support of the Head of Admission and working with the Senior Admission Advisors;

- Contribute to the development and implementation of admissions policies, procedures, systems, and business improvement initiatives.
- Provide advice and support regarding changes to admissions policies, procedures, and regulatory requirements.
- Support internal and external audits and compliance activities relating to admissions.

4.3 Stakeholders Engagement

- Deliver training, coaching, and specialist guidance to Admissions staff.
- Build effective relationships with academic divisions, the Global Programmes Team, professional bodies, and other key stakeholders to support admissions outcomes.
- Promote consistent admissions practices through knowledge sharing and collaboration across teams.
- NOTE: Staff have annual objectives, development and reflection (ODR) meetings with their manager. New staff normally attend such a meeting approximately three months after taking up their appointment.

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Admissions Specialist will be performing satisfactorily when:

- Admissions decisions across the admissions cycle are accurate, consistent, evidence-based, and compliant with University regulations, policies, and external requirements.
- Complex admissions portfolios, including offshore programmes and professional qualification admissions, are administered effectively and in accordance with applicable requirements.
- Admissions assessment frameworks, decision pathways, and guidance materials are maintained and applied consistently, supporting transparent and risk-based decision-making.
- Quality assurance and continuous improvement activities identify risks, trends, and opportunities, resulting in measurable improvements to admissions processes, compliance, and decision quality.

- Specialist advice, training, and stakeholder engagement contribute to increased staff capability, consistent decision-making, and positive admissions outcomes.

NOTE: Staff have an annual Objectives, Development and Reflection (ODR) meeting with their manager.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- A tertiary qualification in an appropriate discipline.

Desirable

- A bachelor's degree in an appropriate discipline.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Proven administration experience.
- Proven organisational skills and attention to detail.
- Knowledge of University recruitment, admissions and enrolment processes.
- Proven ability to lead an area of work including training, regular communication and process improvement.
- Ability to apply information and communication technologies to achieve desired outcomes.
- Established critical thinking skills with experience in a continuous business improvement environment.
- An understanding of the NZ tertiary education system.
- Excellent written and interpersonal communication skills together with the ability to build and maintain constructive and collegial relationships.
- High standards of work quality and output, including the ability to work to deadlines and maintain performance under pressure.
- Experience in leading work within a team to achieve set goals or standards.
- Demonstrated ability to investigate, analyse, summarise and make recommendations or decisions on a variety of processes and issues.
- Ability to identify risks and issues within current practices and processes and develop appropriate solutions.
- Ability to work in a flexible way to assist in managing peak periods of work.
- Demonstrated ability to work with cultural sensitivity.
- Committed to ongoing learning and contributing to a culture of continuous change.
- Current full driver's license.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Commitment to high quality work, service and support.
- Flexible, adaptable and able to identify and support change within a team.
- Ability to work collegially across an organisation.
- Confident in ability to contribute to a culture of continuous improvement.
- A strong commitment to customer service.
- Ability to show initiative along with discretion and judgment.
- Ability to perform well under pressure, overcome obstacles and complete tasks.

- Commitment to a culture of openness, flexibility and co-operation.
- Commitment to equal opportunity and to the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi.