

POSITION DESCRIPTION

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR SERVICE OPERATIONS

Reports to:	Chief Information Officer
Division:	Information Technology Services
Tenure:	Permanent
Location:	Hamilton
Date:	July 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

Our University's digital vision is "Digital connects us and moves us forward."

Information Technology Services (ITS) leads digital direction, manages and protects the digital ecosystem, supports digital initiatives and delivers digital services that ensure the University can teach, research and operate successfully in a secure, resilient, connected, sustainable and future-ready digital environment.

ITS is part of the Corporate Services Group within the portfolio of the Chief Operating Officer.

2. POSITION PURPOSE

The Associate Director Service Operations is a key role in the ITS senior leadership team, contributing to decision making and strategic direction. The role has a strong focus on improvement and transformation across the service management domain while ensuring an equal focus on sustaining high-quality service excellence and positive relationships with customers, stakeholders and partners.

The role is responsible for driving the operational ICT service management and procurement practices across all University locations and leads the specialist operational teams that provide these services to support University staff, students and visitors. The team comprises of Service Desk, Service Delivery and ICT Procurement teams and is sized at approximately 20 FTEs.

The Associate Director ensures the service management standards for incident, problem, knowledge and technical change management activities are fit for purpose within the University context and also ensures the operational ICT procurement needs of the University are met.

The role is part of a Service Operations roster for after-hours incident response within agreed parameters, and acts as the Senior Incident Manager for any high severity ICT incident.

3. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal: Service Operations teams
Chief Information Officer
ITS managers and teams
Vice Chancellors office, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Heads of Schools and Directors
University staff and students

External: External customers utilising University ICT services
Vendors and strategic partners

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Team leadership and management

- Provide strong leadership to the Service Operations teams to ensure high-quality service delivery across the breadth of responsibilities
- Provide guidance and support to team members through annual goal setting and review processes, motivation and recognition of achievements
- Confidently lead teams through transformative change and understand the change journey for individuals that minimises impact to stakeholder groups
- Ensure a 'customer centric' approach is taken in all activities to assist the University achieve excellence in teaching and research, and enhance the student experience
- Align team activities with the Digital Vision and strategic priorities
- Ensure appropriate levels of resourcing are in place for during business hours and on-call/out-of-hours support for core infrastructure and application support as defined in ITS service catalogue
- Facilitate proactive knowledge-sharing activities to build awareness, understanding and know-how across Service Operations and wider ITS teams
- Proactively contribute to the ITS leadership team.

IT service management and delivery

- Design and deliver the service management transformation roadmap that leverages process improvement, optimises system features and configuration, encourages first point resolution, and embraces AI and automation
- Enhance capability in ITIL-based service management practices across all team members for a consistent quality of service delivery regardless of location or stakeholder profile
- Ensure effective and sustainable processes are in place for managing service requests and enquiries in a consistent manner via all channels (online, self-help, email, phone, in person)
- Develop and maintain the ICT service catalogue, knowledgebase (internal ITS and customer facing views) and service level agreements on behalf of ITS and other digital service areas as agreed
- Regularly analyse service requests, incidents and problems, and report trends or significant issues to ITS leadership team and key stakeholder groups as agreed
- Employ fresh thinking and innovation to improve service responsiveness
- Build and maintain positive relationships directly and through teams with divisions and key stakeholders across the University to deliver outcomes that successfully resolve incidents and service requests.

Technical change, incident and problem management

- Define the standards for knowledge, incident and problem management practices across ITS aligned to good practice, monitor and improve these practices, and build capability as appropriate
- Ensure incidents are managed appropriate to the scale and impact of the event and actions taken to minimise recurrence
- Oversee the technical change advisory board (CAB) and related processes to ensure technology change activities are maximised within agreed change windows and implemented to agreed standards with minimum adverse impact to the business, and a forward schedule of change is maintained and well communicated across ITS teams and to the wider community
- Assign the CAB Change Manager responsibilities to a nominee within the Service Operations team, and grow their capability for approving technical/business process change being implemented by ITS and other digital service teams
- Ensure the communications/notifications requirements for incidents and change activities are met, in conjunction with other senior ITS managers.

Operational ICT procurement

- Oversee the operational acquisition and disposal process for ICT hardware and software within agreed practices
- Ensure the desktop standard and annual desktop renewal programmes are current, inwards/outward goods receipt and warranty/non-warranty repair processes operate effectively and invoice payment processes and recharge/on-charge processes follow agreed practice and payment terms are achieved
- Oversee the monitoring and analysis of software license agreements to ensure these are current and agreements are not breached, and identify where there may be opportunities for rationalisation
- Maintain a positive relationship with external supply partners and take action accordingly if contract obligations are not being met.

Cost centre management and business planning

- Manage the annual operational and capital budget allocations assigned to the Service Operations team, report on progress and manage any variances, while ensuring decisions

within the Service Operations budget do not adversely impact the wider ITS and University budgets

- Contribute to the annual ITS business planning process for team business plans, budgets and programme planning.

Contract management and vendor relationships (as apply to the Service Operations team)

- Prepare and manage ICT contracts for service in conjunction with ITS procurement / commercial practices and University policy, including RFI and RFP processes, tender documentation and specialist consultancy services
- Lead negotiations on behalf of ITS and the University for new or renewed contracted services with vendor partners
- Monitor compliance to contracted conditions and service level agreements, and address any non-performance appropriately
- Sustain positive relationships with vendors and contract partners to the benefit of the University.

ITS leadership contribution

- Work effectively as a member of the ITS team to support other team members and provide support to projects and/or coverage of functions where appropriate
 - Actively participate in and contribute as a senior member to ITS leadership team activities to encourage transparency across activities, open sharing of knowledge, ownership of risks/issues, and actions to build a high performance high-performance culture
 - Contribute to digital governance groups as relevant through activity reporting and specialist technical advice for mitigating risk and maximising investment
 - Proactively take a leadership role within the organisation when representing the ITS Division or the Chief Information Officer
 - Contribute to regular Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Planning exercises across ITS teams and wider University stakeholder groups, and proactively take a leadership role in the event of a real-life occurrence
 - Identify emerging technology and innovation opportunities that could be leveraged to benefit the University in the future
- Comply with and undertake responsibilities set out in the University's Health and Safety Policy.

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

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Associate Director Service Operations will be performing satisfactorily when:

- The Service Operations teams operate as a high performing, professional and responsive team
- The ICT service management and procurement practices operate efficiently and seamlessly across ITS teams and deliver service benefits to the wider University community
- Practice standards for change, incident and problem management function as intended, with compliance monitoring established, and action taken as appropriate for non-compliance
- Planned change and outages are well communicated to stakeholder groups with minimal impact to services; unplanned outages are promptly addressed, communications/notifications are timely, and resolution is managed to minimise disruption to services
- Service levels are achieved across all functions for all business areas and positive feedback is received from business and customer stakeholders

- Budgets are well managed, and variances reported promptly, and overall ITS budget is favourable at year end
- Risks are appropriately identified, documented and managed
- Positive relationships are developed across the team and wider University, and with external partners
- Safe and healthy work practices are followed that comply with University policies and procedures, relevant work standards and statutory obligations.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- A Bachelors Degree in Computer Science or similar or maybe equivalently obtained through experience within the industry.
- Industry certifications, such as ITIL certification, COBIT, TOGAF, Microsoft certifications etc.

Desirable

- Qualifications that will aid the success of this role

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Proven industry experience in a senior ICT operations/service management role with a focus on improvement and transformation (10+ years minimum)
- Proven experience in leading ICT service management teams in a large and complex organisation
- Proven staff leadership skills and experience in managing technical teams through change
- Demonstrated understanding of ITIL service management practices, procurement processes and supply-chain management
- Financial management experience across operational and project budgets
- Demonstrated contract negotiation skills and successful contract management capability
- Solid oral and written communication skills, particularly within a business environment
- Demonstrated capability to build positive relationships with key stakeholder groups (across the organisation and industry) and ability to leverage these to achieve mutual success
- Demonstrated capability and confidence to 'have the hard conversations' with key stakeholders or staff and align expectations
- Strong customer orientation in engagement and interactions with teams and stakeholders
- An understanding of industry trends and significant influences in ICT, particularly as they relate to tertiary education and business operations

Preferred

- Knowledge of the University environment, particularly within a technology context
- Ability to apply information and communication technologies to achieve desired outcomes and maintain and update those skills.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Confidence to engage, present and communicate with all levels of staff and key stakeholders from other divisions, University-wide
- Inspires, motivates and guides others toward goal accomplishments
- A demonstrated commitment to challenge the status-quo and drive continuous improvements.
- Strong technical ability with systems and processes
- Consistently develops and sustains cooperative working relationships

- High level of integrity, especially in relation to confidential and sensitive information
- Flexibility and team player, seeking out and listening to the views and ideas of others
- Knows where to obtain relevant information, checks facts and data, and absorbs information quickly
- Demonstrates a readiness to make decisions, take initiatives and originate actions
- Positively manages stakeholder groups in a complex business environment
- Commitment to a culture of openness, flexibility and cooperation
- Commitment of equal opportunity and to the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi.

July 2026