

POSITION DESCRIPTION

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, TEACHING DESIGN AND INNOVATION

Reports to:	Assistant Vice Chancellor Academic Excellence
Division:	Deputy Vice chancellor Academic
Tenure:	Continuing
Location:	Hamilton
Date:	17 June 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, the Teaching Design and Innovation Studio provides University-wide leadership, oversight and service delivery for learning design, teaching innovation and pedagogical capability development. The Studio partners with academic leaders, staff, and professional services to enhance high-quality learning experiences across all modalities and to strengthen consistent, evidence-informed and student-centred teaching and assessment practice.

17 June 2026

he Studio supports academic units through consultation, design facilitation, resource development, and coordinated improvement activity. The Studio helps shift institutional culture by ensuring teaching excellence and innovation is visible and valued, support capability development so academic staff can make evidence-informed decisions, and enables sustainable practice change beyond individual projects. It contributes to curriculum coherence and constructive alignment, inclusive design (including accessibility-by-design), assessment quality and authenticity, academic integrity through design, and digitally mature teaching approaches, supported by robust evaluation, monitoring and recognition systems.

2. POSITION PURPOSE

The purpose of this role is to provide strategic and operational leadership for the Teaching Design and Innovation Studio, working with direction from the Assistant Vice-Chancellor Academic Excellence to ensure Studio services are delivered consistently, effectively and in alignment with the University's teaching and learning strategy and quality expectations. The role leads a specialist team and provides expert leadership across the University to strengthen curriculum and assessment design, inclusive and accessible teaching practice, and the effective, pedagogy-driven use of learning technologies.

Working in partnership with academic leaders and professional services, the role enables coordinated teaching design and improvement activity across academic units. It guides intake, prioritisation and resourcing of initiatives, ensures appropriate governance and quality assurance of Studio methods and outputs, and oversees evaluation, monitoring and impact reporting. The role uses data, insight and stakeholder feedback to identify opportunities and risk, provide decision-ready advice and recommendations to relevant leaders and committees, and support adoption of emerging pedagogical approaches. A key focus is leading and embedding change by building capability, strengthening communities of practice, and enabling sustained improvement in teaching practice and the student learning experience.

3. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal: Assistant Vice-Chancellor Academic Excellence

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic

Office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor Māori

Assistant Vice-Chancellor Pacific

Associate Director Pou Mātauranga

Associate Director Academic Quality

Associate Director Student Learning

Heads of School, Associate Deans Academic,

Programme and Course Convenors

Library

ITS

Planning, Finance and People and Capability partners

External: Sector networks and communities of practice

Peer universities and partner institutions

Professional bodies and accreditation representatives

Vendors and service providers for learning platforms and educational technology

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership

- Provide strategic and operational leadership for the Teaching Design and Innovation Studio, with direction from the Assistant Vice-Chancellor Academic Excellence to translate University priorities into annual plans, service standards and measurable outcomes that support teaching quality and innovation.
- Lead planning, intake and prioritisation for Studio services, aligning resourcing to institutional priorities and academic unit needs so improvements are sustained beyond single projects.

- Provide decision-ready advice, recommendations and reporting to relevant leaders and committees, using evidence, data and stakeholder feedback to inform priorities, manage risk and support effective adoption of innovations.
- Champion an institutional culture where teaching excellence and innovation are valued and prioritised, leading and embedding change through visible commitment and supporting appropriate recognition of effective practice.
- Manage Studio resources and finances (including budget planning, forecasting and reporting) to deliver agreed priorities, service levels and outcomes.
- Oversee evaluation and impact reporting for Studio activity, providing decision-ready insights to leaders and committees and ensuring findings inform prioritisation and investment decisions.

Design and Innovation Delivery

- Oversee delivery of integrated, high-quality learning design and teaching innovation services that improve curriculum coherence and constructive alignment at paper and programme levels.
- Lead innovation delivery by enabling safe experimentation, piloting and evaluation of emerging pedagogical approaches, and establishing adoption pathways so effective practice is sustained and scaled where appropriate.
- Embed student-centred and inclusive design across Studio delivery, including Universal Design for Learning and accessibility-by-design, so barriers are reduced and accessibility is built in at a foundational level.
- Strengthen assessment quality and authenticity through design support that promotes varied, real-world and developmental tasks that measure meaningful outcomes and support learning.
- Grow academic integrity through integrity pedagogy and assessment design that strengthens student understanding of expectations and reduces opportunities for misconduct.
- Improve digital teaching maturity by ensuring technology use is pedagogy-driven, interactive and engagement-focused, including coherent blended and online learning design.

Capability and Quality Systems

- Establish and steward Studio methods, guidance, templates and quality assurance checks that strengthen consistency, transparency and confidence in teaching design and assessment decisions.
- Lead capability-building programmes, resources and coaching that enable academic staff to develop and refine teaching philosophy and make evidence-informed teaching decisions.
- Enable the maturation of moderation and standards practices by supporting calibration, shared standards and quality conversations that improve consistency and fairness.
- Establish evaluation and recognition systems that support teaching excellence and scholarly teaching, such as multi-dimensional evaluation approaches, teaching portfolios and recognition pathways.
- Establish and use monitoring approaches (data, insight and feedback, including learning analytics where available) to track service performance and impact, and to identify systemic opportunities and risks.

Collaboration

- Build and sustain strategic partnerships with academic leaders and professional services to enable coordinated teaching design and innovation activity across Divisions and Faculties.
- Strengthen cross-institution collaboration by establishing and supporting networks and communities of practice that sustain pedagogical dialogue, peer learning and shared problem-solving.
- Represent the Studio in relevant University forums and external networks, promoting best practice, shared learning and coordinated approaches to teaching excellence and innovation.
- Provide authoritative advice and practical support to staff involved in teaching and assessment design, strengthening consistency of practice and enabling uptake of evidence-informed approaches.
- Maintain a responsive, service-oriented approach to stakeholder engagement, using feedback to improve Studio services and strengthen trusted relationships.

People and culture

- Lead, coach and develop the Studio team to deliver high-performing, student-centred services, including setting clear expectations, supporting capability development and enabling effective workload planning.
- Foster a culture of collaboration, accountability, care and continuous improvement, supporting staff to apply inclusive, evidence-informed practice and sound professional judgement.
- Establish team ways of working that enable open sharing of knowledge, consistent practice and timely peer support, strengthening sustainable practice change across the University.
- Demonstrate cultural competence and culturally safe practice in all interactions, supporting equitable outcomes for Māori, Pacific and diverse learner communities.
- Embed continuous improvement in team practice through effective planning, reflection and peer learning, strengthening ways of working and service quality.

Compliance

- Ensure Studio activity complies with relevant University policies, procedures and delegated authorities, including confidentiality, privacy and sound information/records management.
- Maintain and promote a safe and healthy environment for staff and students by complying with, and supporting others to meet, responsibilities under the University's Health and Safety Policy and relevant statutory obligations.

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

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Associate Director, Teaching Design and Innovation will be performing satisfactorily when:

- A demonstrable shift in institutional culture toward valuing teaching excellence, innovation and emerging pedagogical approaches, evidenced through increased academic engagement with teaching scholarship, stronger dialogue about teaching practice, and visible leadership commitment.
- Academic staff demonstrate increased confidence in articulating teaching philosophy and making evidence-informed decisions about teaching, learning activities and assessment design.
- Improvements in TLA extend beyond individual projects, with clear adoption pathways and academics independently applying design principles and sharing effective practice with colleagues.
- Strong networks and communities of practice across the university enable regular pedagogical dialogue, peer learning and shared problem-solving across disciplines.
- Curriculum coherence and constructive alignment improve at paper and programme levels, including inclusive design (accessibility-by-design), stronger assessment quality and authenticity, and maturing moderation and standards practices through calibration and shared standards.
- Academic staff move from early adoption to sustained integration and adaptation of innovations, including digitally mature teaching approaches and integrity-by-design assessment practices suited to their contexts.
- Engagement with academic and professional service stakeholders is professional, timely and solutions-focused; advice is decision-ready, evidence-informed and aligned with University policies and quality expectations.
- The Studio is effectively represented in relevant forums, and communities of practice and cross-functional relationships enable coordinated improvement activity, shared learning and consistent practice.
- Studio methods, guidance and outputs are quality assured and consistently applied; evaluation, monitoring and recognition systems evidence impact, inform improvement, and support teaching excellence, including scholarly teaching and career progression through teaching portfolios and recognition pathways.
- University policies and procedures are followed, including confidentiality, privacy and sound information management; safe and healthy work practices meet statutory and University obligations.
- Leadership and conduct demonstrate integrity, respect, and alignment with the University's

values and partnership with Māori.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- Doctoral degree or equivalent professional experience in education, education technology, or relevant discipline.

Desirable

- Formal qualification in educational leadership or management

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Minimum 8 years' experience in higher education teaching and leadership
- Demonstrated strategic planning and change leadership, including stakeholder engagement and financial/resource management to deliver agreed priorities and sustained improvements.
- Demonstrated expertise in contemporary pedagogical approaches and curriculum design
- Demonstrated expertise in inclusive design and accessibility-by-design (e.g., Universal Design for Learning principles) across teaching, learning activities and assessment.
- Demonstrated capability in assessment design for authenticity and academic integrity (integrity-by-design), including approaches that reduce misconduct risk and support student understanding of integrity expectations.
- Experience establishing and using evaluation and impact frameworks (including data, insight and learning analytics where available), and applying Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and evaluation methodologies to inform decisions and report outcomes.
- Demonstrated capability delivering complex programmes and projects, including prioritisation, resource allocation and risk management.
- Demonstrated experience strengthening moderation and standards practices, including enabling calibration, shared standards and consistency/fairness in assessment.
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to provide decision-ready advice, briefings and reporting, and to influence senior leaders and committees on teaching quality, assessment and innovation priorities.
- Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and mātauranga Māori, and the ability to apply this in decision-making and service delivery in ways that support meaningful partnership with Māori, advance equitable outcomes, and reflect the University's founding relationships and strategic obligations.

Preferred

- Experience leading cross-institutional teaching innovation initiatives
- Experience building and sustaining communities of practice or cross-institution teaching networks that support peer learning and shared problem-solving.
- Experience designing and leading adoption pathways for teaching innovations (from pilot through evaluation to embedding and scaling), including digitally enabled approaches and emerging pedagogical practices.
- Track record of securing external funding for teaching enhancement projects
- International experience in higher education contexts

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Visionary and innovative thinker with strategic mindset
- Collaborative and inclusive leadership style
- High emotional intelligence and cultural competence
- Resilience, adaptability in dynamic environments, and able to manage challenging conversations

-
- Commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusive teaching practices
- Strong ethical framework and professional integrity
- Consultative, inclusive and adaptable to successfully engage with a diverse range of stakeholders and at all levels of the organisation.
- A demonstrated commitment to challenge the status-quo and drive continuous improvements.
- Strong technical ability with systems and processes
- Collaborative team player that develops positive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders/users
- Ability to monitor multiple tasks, prioritise and maintain progress.