

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Change and Communications Lead

Reports to:	Head of Project Delivery
Division:	ITS
Tenure:	Permanent
Location:	Hamilton Campus
Date:	December 2025

Vision

Ko te tangata

A research-intensive university providing a globally connected, innovative and inclusive studenty 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 Information Technology Services (ITS) Division is responsible for the coordination of information and communications technology (ICT) planning for the University; the delivery of robust, reliable core ICT infrastructure and enterprise systems, and the provision of professional ICT consultancy and customer-focused support services.

The ICT vision is “To engage, enable, innovate and protect our ICT services, and empower the University of Waikato to leverage the value of ICT to achieve its strategic goals.”

2. POSITION PURPOSE

The Change and Communications Lead is responsible for ensuring ITS projects succeed by enabling people to adopt and use new systems, processes, and ways of working. The role provides change leadership across the ITS project portfolio, integrating change management and communication activities into project delivery from initiation through to operational handover.

The role lifts change maturity across ITS by coaching project managers, business analysts, and other project stakeholders, embedding structured change methodologies, and enabling leaders to champion change effectively. It develops and delivers clear, targeted communication that supports engagement, readiness, and adoption.

This position acts as one of the connectors between ITS, the wider University change community, and key governance groups to ensure cohesive, user-centred change outcomes aligned to the University's vision and values.

3. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal:

- Project Delivery Office (project managers, business analysts, test analysts)
- Project sponsors, steering groups and governance forums
- ITS Senior Leadership Team
- ITS Enterprise Systems, Infrastructure, Architecture, Security and Operations teams
- Faculties, Schools and Divisional leadership teams
- Office of the Chief Operating Officer
- Organisational Development and People & Capability
- Communications and Marketing
- Student Services teams
- Change champions and stakeholders across the University

External:

- Technology vendors and implementation partners
- Consultants and specialist change providers
- External training, professional, or sector networks
- Peer institutions in the tertiary sector (as required)

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Change Leadership & Strategy

- Lead the planning, design and delivery of change management strategies for ITS projects and programmes.
- Apply structured change methodologies (e.g. Prosci/ADKAR) to ensure readiness, adoption, and sustained behaviour change.
- Conduct impact assessments, stakeholder analysis, change readiness assessments, and risk assessments.
- Provide advice to project sponsors and senior leaders on change implications and required leadership actions.
- Align ITS change activity with the University's strategic goals, Te Tiriti obligations, and organisational change frameworks.

Change Planning & Execution

- Develop and maintain change plans integrated into overall project plans.
- Manage change activities including engagement, training, resistance management, and benefits realisation.
- Coordinate and facilitate change workshops, briefings, training sessions, and stakeholder engagement forums.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of change interventions and adjust approaches as needed.
- Ensure smooth transition to operational teams with clear post-go-live support mechanisms.

Communications & Engagement

- Develop communications strategies tailored to diverse audiences including staff, students, researchers, and senior leaders.
- Produce high-quality written and visual communication that clearly explains changes, timelines, and impacts.
- Manage communications channels in partnership with Marketing & Communications and internal ITS teams.
- Ensure messaging is consistent, accessible, and aligned with University values and change principles.
- Support project teams to create and maintain user-centred documentation and learning materials.

Stakeholder & Relationship Management

- Build trusted relationships across faculties, divisions, and project teams.
- Manage expectations and ensure transparent, timely communication with all impacted stakeholders.
- Support leaders and sponsors to demonstrate effective change leadership behaviours.
- Develop change champion networks and communities of practice that promote adoption and continuous improvement.

Capability Building & Coaching

- Coach project managers, business analysts, and ITS staff in applying change methodologies and tools.
- Support the integration of change practices into project and business analysis frameworks.
- Build organisational capability in digital adoption, change readiness, and communication best practice.
- Provide mentoring, guidance and knowledge transfer to uplift maturity within the Project Delivery Office.

Reporting, Measurement & Benefits Realisation

- Report change progress, risks, issues, and adoption metrics to governance forums, as required.
- Define and monitor success measures for people-side change outcomes.
- Collect and analyse feedback to inform improvements and measure benefits realisation.
- Ensure project close-outs include change lessons learned and sustainability planning.

Team Contribution

- Work effectively as a member of the Project Delivery Office to support other team members and provide support and/or coverage of functions.
- Work collaboratively to encourage transparency across activities, open sharing of knowledge, and the building of positive relationships to support a high-performance culture.
- Work with other team members on projects.

- Support a positive culture and morale.
- Comply with and undertake responsibilities set out in the University's Health and Safety Policy

Continuous Improvement

- Actively contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of Project Delivery Office systems and processes.

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

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Change and Communications Lead will be performing satisfactorily when:

- Change management is integrated into project planning and delivery, leading to successful adoption outcomes.
- Stakeholders report clear, timely, and relevant communication that supports their readiness and engagement.
- Change artefacts (impact assessments, plans, communications, training materials) are high quality, accurate, and strategically aligned.
- Measurable improvements in adoption, usage, and user experience are demonstrated across ITS projects.
- Project teams demonstrate increased confidence and capability in applying change and communication practices.
- Relationships with faculties, divisions, and governance bodies are constructive, transparent, and outcomes focused.
- Interactions in the course of performing duties are conducted professionally, respectfully and collaboratively.
- Valuable contribution and participation in relevant meetings and/or projects is provided.
- Advice provided complies with professional standards, University policies and procedures and supports the University's strategic objectives.
- 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 relevant tertiary qualification in communications, organisational change, business, or a related discipline.
- Change management certification or practical training (e.g. Prosci/ADKAR or equivalent).

Desirable

- Qualifications that will aid the success of this role
- Post-graduate study in organisational change, leadership, or communications.
- Project management qualifications (e.g. PRINCE2, PMP) or equivalent experience.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Demonstrated expertise in leading change management for technology-enabled change.
- Proven ability to design and deliver structured change plans, engagement strategies, and communication campaigns.
- Significant experience working in complex organisations, preferably within ICT environments.
- Functional knowledge of project delivery lifecycles and methodologies.
- Experience providing advice to senior leaders and supporting governance forums.
- Excellent interpersonal, verbal, and written communication skills; can tailor messages to diverse audiences.
- Ability to build strong, trust-based relationships across a wide range of stakeholders.
- Commitment to equal opportunity and to the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi. Demonstrated awareness of Māori and Pacific cultures.

Preferred

- Experience in the tertiary or public sector.
- Experience developing training materials or leading training activities.
- Familiarity with digital adoption tools or enterprise change platforms.
- Experience working with vendors or multi-disciplinary ICT implementation teams.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Consultative and adaptable, with the ability to engage constructively across all levels of the organisation.
- Strategic thinker able to simplify complexity and communicate with clarity.
- Confident facilitator who can influence, challenge constructively, and enable better decision-making.
- Resilient, organised, and able to manage multiple priorities in a changing environment.
- Strong team player who contributes to a positive culture and high trust environment.
- Commitment to continuous improvement, equity, diversity, and partnership with Māori. Commitment to diversity principles and the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi.