The University of Waikato
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Doctoral Assistant

Reports to:	Head Tutor, CMS
Division:	School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences, STEM
Tenure:	Fixed Term
Location:	Hamilton
Date:	October 2026

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 School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences comprises of four departments being the Departments of Computer Science, Software Engineering, Design and Mathematics. The Departments comprise of academic staff, technical support staff and academic support staff. The undergraduate programme covers a diverse range of papers, with students selecting an area of expertise from the fields of Machine Learning, Cyber-Security, Networks, Digital Libraries, Human Computer Interaction, Formal Methods, Design, Information Systems & Databases,

Artificial Intelligence, and Software Engineering. Our research activities are based around seven research laboratories, involving research support staff and graduate students.

2. POSITION PURPOSE

This is a part-time, fixed-term position offering doctoral candidates exposure to academic life. The position is subject to continued enrolment for a PhD and the incumbent maintaining a satisfactory level of performance in the programme of study as a condition of employment. Doctoral Assistants give tutoring, marking, research and related support to paper convenors, and are encouraged to be involved in paper development and curriculum design. Doctoral Assistants may be offered the opportunity to take a more substantial role in level 3 and 4 papers relevant to their research and in addition, with senior colleagues, may provide full teaching support for relevant level 5 papers.

Appointments are normally 8 hours per week on average. The term of appointment will normally be one academic year because of uncertain enrolments. The department determines each year or semester whether funding is available to appoint a doctoral assistant to help with a particular paper.

Doctoral Assistants are required to enrol in a doctoral programme within the relevant School/Faculty and maintain a satisfactory level of performance in their programme of study as well as in the performance of duties as a condition of employment.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Doctoral Assistant is responsible to the Head/Dean of School/Faculty.
The Doctoral Assistant is supervised by the academic staff responsible for relevant papers.

4. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

Internal: Head/Dean
Other School/Faculty staff
Sessional Assistants
Students

5. KEY TASKS

Having regard to the aims and objectives and long-term strategic goals of the School/Faculty, Division and University the primary objectives of a Doctoral Assistant include:

- Teach in specific undergraduate and graduate papers.
- Contribute to tutoring, laboratory work, or fieldwork support as appropriate.
- Carry out paper marking and assessment activities including, where appropriate, the setting of examinations.
- Contribute to paper administration.
- Develop curriculum, teaching resources and materials related to area of expertise.
- Participate in the maintenance of a safe and healthy work environment for self and others including students. Comply with and undertake responsibilities set out in the University's Health and Safety Policy.
- Any other duties that are consistent with the position held, other than in exceptional circumstances such as rehabilitation after injury or sickness.

6. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Doctoral Assistant will be performing satisfactorily when:

- Teaching and other paper commitments are met to the satisfaction of paper convenors.
- Student learning is appropriately facilitated in accordance with School/Faculty, Division and University goals and objectives.
- Academic programmes are enhanced through curriculum development and the provision of quality teaching resources.
- Contributions made to paper administration and associated activities demonstrate initiative and a willingness to support School/Faculty goals and objectives.
- Safe and healthy work practices are followed. University policies, procedures, relevant work standards and statutory obligations are complied with.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- A Masters degree in a relevant discipline.

TRAINING, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Essential

- Demonstrated knowledge of specialist subject area through quality of Masters degree, previous publications and/or conference presentations.
- Research skills and the pre-requisites to enrol for a PhD.
- Some marking and assessment skills with high levels of accuracy.
- Organisational and administrative ability.

Preferred

- Skills in teaching at the tertiary level.
- Curriculum development skills.
- Ability to use ICT to achieve desired outcomes and maintain and update those skills.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Self-motivation and a pro-active approach.
- Willingness to contribute and operate as part of a team.
- Ability to maintain a professional approach while under pressure.
- Ability to relate effectively and sensitively to students and staff from a variety of backgrounds and cultures.
- Commitment to a culture of openness, flexibility and cooperation to achieve excellence in academic programmes, research and service.
- A commitment to equal opportunity and to the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi.

October 2026