

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

### Palu Navigator (Excellence, Success & Higher Degrees)

<b>Reports to:</b>	Taki Ako Pacific Teaching and Learning Lecturer
<b>Division:</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Portfolio, Office of the Vice-Chancellor
<b>Tenure:</b>	Continuing, 1.0 FTE
<b>Location:</b>	Hamilton Campus
<b>Date:</b>	March 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 Office of the Vice-Chancellor is the administrative headquarters and the chief executive office of the University. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic's (DVCA) portfolio provides comprehensive academic and student services to the University and our students. The Assistant Vice-Chancellor Pacific (AVC Pacific) portfolio provides strategic leadership for the university's

March 2026

efforts to deliver better outcomes through tertiary education for Pacific learners, staff, families, and communities.

The University of Waikato is committed to building and enhancing the Pacific dimensions of our institution, and to realising the educational aspirations and success of Pacific people. The AVC Pacific team (also known as Pacific at Waikato or PaW) plays a pivotal role at the University of Waikato in advancing the success and wellbeing of Pacific learners, staff, families, and communities as it coordinates activities necessary to deliver the objectives of the Pacific Plan, including:

- Objective 1: Demonstrate and grow leadership on Pacific success.
- Objective 2: Illuminate, clear and open Pacific learner success pathways.
- Objective 3: Deliver substantive outcomes for Pacific learners.
- Objective 4: Promote and deliver high-quality teaching and learning support.
- Objective 5: Foster and support lifelong success.
- Objective 6: Value, grow and attract Pacific staff.
- Objective 7: Grow Pacific researchers and research excellence.

*The AVC Pacific portfolio, also known as Pacific at Waikato (PaW), currently delivers eight programmes ranging from high school and transition into study to higher degrees, research and professional development which are designed to smooth pathways through cultural legacies of learning and leadership.*

## **2. POSITION PURPOSE**

Palu are master traditional wayfinders from Micronesia who navigate open-ocean voyages without instruments. They utilize expert knowledge of astronomy, weather systems, animal behaviour, and other environmental cues to navigate the biggest ocean in the world, Moananuiākea (the ocean of the great and vast expanse (Hawai'i)). Palu treasure, protect and pass down virtual libraries of Pacific know-how to help their communities to find success.

The Palu Navigator (Excellence, Success & Higher Degrees) role is inspired by these master Pacific wayfinders. The role works closely with the Taki Ako Pacific Teaching and Learning Lecturer to promote, deliver and develop programmes designed to enhance Pacific learner academic excellence and successful completion of undergraduate study and higher degrees. The role also works one-to-one with students, helping them individually to better navigate educational success, as well as families, schools, communities and other key stakeholders in Pacific learner success.

### **Purposes of the role include:**

- To provide excellent support for Pacific learners as they seek to achieve academic excellence, successfully complete undergraduate study and transition to and find success in higher degree study at the University of Waikato.
- To engage with, empower and build meaningful relationships with Pacific learners, their families, and communities to enhance their knowledge of educational options and resources,

*March 2026*

including in the latter part of undergraduate study and throughout higher degree study.

- To improve success for Pacific learner, families and communities through tertiary education, including in aspects of academic excellence and graduate and postgraduate outcomes.

**Key responsibilities include:**

- Student advising, support coordination and proactive triaging to services.
- Increasing participation in PaW initiatives.
- Promotion, preparation and delivery of PaW initiatives, including workshops, seminars and other events and activities.
- Enhancing engagement with learners, families, community organisations, and other key stakeholders.
- Proactive monitoring of student cohorts and data capture to improve timely intervention.

### 3. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

**Internal:** Taki Ako Pacific Teaching and Learning Lecturer  
Assistant Vice-Chancellor Pacific  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic (DVCA)  
Pacific at Waikato team  
DVCA portfolio  
Student Services  
School of Graduate Research, including Scholarships  
Te Puna Ako Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning  
Pacific staff and students

**External:** Work-integrated learning and postgraduate internship providers, potential employers, research funders, community organisations and other key stakeholders

### 4. KEY TASKS

**Study Advising and Support Coordination**

- Provide study and support coordination for new to study, re-entry and other students that connects them with the right people, services and networks to address concerns and improve outcomes.
- Proactively monitor student cohorts and capture relevant learn success data to improve timely intervention and the quality and effectiveness of targeted learner success initiatives.
- Proactively and culturally responsively triage to support services.

- Become knowledgeable about, and stay up-to-date with, University teams, services and opportunities.
- Connect with, grow meaningful relationships with and contribute to the wider family-like network of support for Pacific learners and other students at the University of Waikato.

### **Pacific at Waikato Initiatives**

- Increase participation of Pacific learners, staff, families and communities in PaW initiatives through relationships, proactive recruitment and innovative approaches.
- Work with the Taki Ako Pacific Teaching and Learning Lecturer and other members of the PaW team to promote, prepare and deliver PaW initiatives, including workshops, seminars and other events and activities.
- Enhance engagement with Pacific and other key external stakeholders by building and nurturing relationships.
- Travel and work after normal business hours and on the weekend at times to better engage with learners, staff, families, communities, and other key stakeholders.
- Capture and utilize data ethically and respectfully to improve learner outcomes and continuously improve initiatives.

### **General Administrative Tasks**

- Process purchasing, invoicing, and payments promptly and consistently with University policies.
- Use University finance, human resources, and administrative systems confidently.
- Ensure that spending is consistent with University policies and within approved budget.
- Maintain accurate records and documentation related to role, including using systems to record attendance and other data at events and activities.
- Stay up-to-date with systems and processes training, regularly upskilling.

### **Collaboration, Compliance and Quality**

- Work collaboratively with other teams, faculties, divisions, and services.
- Comply with University policies and procedures.
- Actively uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi and equity commitments.
- Support health, safety, and wellbeing practices.
- Participate in and contribute to continuous improvement initiatives.

### **Team Contribution**

- Work effectively as a member of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor Pacific team (also known as Pacific at Waikato or PaW) 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 strategic projects.

- Support a positive culture and morale which embodies Pacific values of alofa/ofa/aloha (being present/love), manaakitanga (care), tautua (service-based leadership), kuleana (responsibility), fakatokilalo (humility), and sautu (communal wellbeing).
- Comply with and undertake responsibilities set out in the University's Health and Safety Policy and other relevant University policies and procedures.

### **Continuous Improvement**

- Actively contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of Pacific at Waikato systems and processes.
- Participate in leadership and professional development opportunities individually and with the PaW team.

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

## **4. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The Palu Navigator (Excellence, Success & Higher Degrees) will be performing satisfactorily when:

- The role is considered a trusted professional partner.
- High-quality support is provided to the Taki Ako Pacific Teaching and Learning Lecturer.
- Relevant programmes run smoothly.
- Key events and communications are well supported.
- The role contributes to a culturally grounded, inclusive, and collaborative working environment.
- Interactions while performing duties are conducted professionally, respectfully and collaboratively.
- Valuable contribution and participation in relevant meetings and/or projects is provided.
- Work and actions comply with professional standards, University policies and procedures and supports the University's strategic objectives.
- Safe and healthy work practices are followed and comply with University policies and procedures, relevant work standards and statutory obligations.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

#### Essential

- A tertiary qualification in a relevant field or demonstrable experience.

### SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE

#### Essential

- Demonstrated cultural competence and experience working in partnership with Pacific people and communities.
- Strong organisational skills with the ability to manage competing priorities and be well prepared.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills.
- Microsoft Office skills, including Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
- 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

- Fluency in a Pacific language and familiarity with one or more Pacific cultures.
- Demonstrable experience working with Pacific learners, staff, families, and/or communities.
- Experience working in a tertiary education environment, especially in supporting students.
- Knowledge of the university, divisional and faculty/school services available to students
- Experience using university systems used by students, eg learning platforms such as Moodle.
- Experience using university systems used by staff to support students, eg customer relationship management software and student information technology.
- Experience producing social media for professional communication.

### PERSONAL QUALITIES

#### Essential

- Commitment to improving outcomes for learners.
- Professional, personable, calm, and proactive.
- Culturally responsive and respectful.
- Attention to detail and commitment to quality work.
- Collaborative and service-oriented.
- Agile, adaptable and growth-minded.

- Consultative, inclusive and able to successfully engage with a diverse range of stakeholders
- A demonstrated commitment to challenge the status-quo and support continuous improvements.
- Collaborative team player that develops positive and productive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders/users.
- Ability to prioritise, monitor and complete multiple tasks, prioritise and maintain progress.
- Commitment to principles of equity and diversity and the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi.