

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Payroll Advisor

Reports to:	Payroll Manager
Division:	People & Capability
Tenure:	Permanent
Location:	Hamilton
Date:	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

Our motto Ko te Tangata (For the People) is at the heart of everything we do. It is our people who make this University distinctive, and the People and Capability team support all staff and managers to create a positive environment that enable our people to be successful.

Our team deliver core services relating to Talent Acquisition and Recruitment, Human Resources, Organisational Development, Payroll, Safety and Wellness, and Employment Relations.

2. POSITION PURPOSE

The purpose of this role is to ensure accurate and timely payroll processing, compliance with statutory requirements, and support continuous improvement of payroll operations. The Payroll Officer acts as a subject matter expert and provides guidance, as required, to other team members.

3. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal: People & Capability Team including:

- Payroll team
- HR Operations Team
- HR Business Partners Team

Finance

External: Inland Revenue, Third Party Partners, Statutory agencies.

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Process end-to-end payroll for all employees accurately and on time

- Collect and validate timesheets, leave records, and other pay-related data.
- Calculate gross pay, deductions, tax, benefits, statutory deductions, and net pay.
- Ensure correct application of pay rates, overtime, bonuses, and allowances.
- Execute payroll runs within scheduled timelines for all pay cycles.
- Handle off-cycle payments.

Ensure compliance with employment laws, tax regulations, third party organisations and organisational policies

- Stay updated on changes in employment law and associated regulations.
- Apply correct tax rates, third party deductions, statutory deductions, and other company deductions.
- Ensure adherence to internal payroll policies and audit requirements.
- Maintain accurate records for statutory reporting and audits.

Investigate and resolve payroll discrepancies and employee queries

- Analyse variances in pay calculations and identify root causes.
- Respond promptly to employee inquiries.
- Collaborate with Human Resources and Finance to resolve complex issues.
- Document resolutions for future reference.

Prepare and review payroll reports for management and audits

- Generate payroll reports from various reporting tools, Power Bi, and Ascender.
- Ensure accuracy and completeness of all payroll-related documentation.

Maintain and update payroll systems, including configuration and testing of changes

- Configuration of statutory individual employee deductions.
- Test system updates or patches before deployment.
- Troubleshoot system errors and coordinate with Payroll Manager and Vendor for fixes.
- Ensure data integrity with payroll systems.

Collaborate with HR and Finance teams on payroll-related projects and reporting

- Coordinate on employee data changes, benefits and terminations
- Support Finance with reconciliations.
- Assist HR with compensation analysis and reporting.
- Participate in cross-functional projects such as system upgrades or policy changes.

Team Contribution

- Work effectively as a member of the Payroll Team, 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
- Foster a collaborative and supportive team environment, offering guidance and mentoring to other staff.

Continuous Improvement

- Actively contribute to cross functional ongoing development and improvement of systems and processes.
- Identify inefficiencies and propose automation or process enhancements.
- Document new workflows and train staff in updated procedures.
- Participate in projects aimed at improving accuracy, efficiency, and reducing payroll cycle times.

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

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Payroll Advisor will be performing satisfactorily when:

- Outcomes and behaviours necessary for success are consistently demonstrated.
- All role-related deliverables are met within required timeframes and to a high standard.
- Effective collaboration occurs across People & Capability, Finance, and other university areas.
- 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

- Tertiary diploma in Accounting or Finance or similar or significant work experience

Desirable

- New Zealand Payroll Professional Certifications

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE

Essential

- At least 5 years in a complex payroll environment.
- Experience with HRIS/Payroll systems, particularly Ascender and Oracle HCM and exposure to integrations (HRIS to Payroll).
- Experience in end-to-end payroll processing.
- Proven ability to perform complex pay calculations, including, redundancy, retirement, overpayment, underpayment.
- Proven ability to deliver exceptional customer service, responding promptly and accurately to employee queries.
- Proven communication skills, explaining complex payroll/tax matters clearly
- Proven ability to prepare and validate payroll reports, dashboard, and audit packs using Power Bi, Excel, and Ascender.
- Functional knowledge of data quality and integrity practices, including data validation, error detection, and root cause analysis.
- Experience in payroll controls and audit requirements ensuring compliance and readiness for internal/external audits.

Preferred

- Advanced experience in Microsoft Excel, including formulas, pivot tables.
- Proven ability to use Power Bi.
- Functional knowledge of data privacy and security protocols, including secure file transfer and access control.
- Experience in reconciliations, including general ledger, variance analysis, and exception handling.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- 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.
- Commitment to diversity principles and the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi.