The University of Waikato
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Technical Officer

Reports to:	Technical Team Leader – Field Based Sciences
Division:	STEM
Tenure:	Permanent
Location:	Hamilton
Date:	May 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

STEM, The Division of Science, Engineering and Computing comprises the Schools of Te Aka Mātuatua Science, Te Kura Mata-Ao Engineering and Au Reikura Computing and Mathematical Sciences. The Division also has several research units, including the Environmental Research Institute and commercial/equipment units which embody staff and research activities.

Te Aka Mātuatua School of Science is a research-intensive school with teaching and research activities that cover a broad range of science disciplines. We are passionate about science and the difference that it can make to some of the biggest challenges facing Aotearoa and the world. With excellent facilities and staff who are genuinely world-class, we are driven in the pursuit of

outstanding scientific teaching and research.

Te Aka Mātuatua School of Science provides teaching and research in several academic programmes including Aquaculture, Biomedical Science, Chemistry, Climate Change, Earth Sciences, Ecology and Biodiversity, Environmental Sciences, Marine Science and Molecular and Cellular Biology. The school offers a range of qualifications at undergraduate, and postgraduate levels which are delivered on both the University of Waikato Hamilton campus and the Tauranga campus. Our School name Te Aka Mātuatua is derived from a Waikato version of the traditions of Tāwhaki, who ascended through the heavens by climbing a sacred vine, overcoming obstacles and challenges so that he could obtain the baskets of knowledge for the benefit of humans. Te Aka Mātuatua references the importance of the vine and is used to represent the many subject areas within the School. It also signals the depth and the sacredness of the teaching and research areas.

2. POSITION PURPOSE

To provide Te Aka Mātuatua School of Science with high-quality technical support for teaching and research with a focus on Ecology and Biodiversity and Environmental Science in an aquatic environment.
You will be working within a team of technicians, each having an area of focus based on their specialist skills. however, the expectation is for all to work as a team.

3. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal:
Pro Vice-Chancellor STEM
Dean School of Science
Technical Manager, School of Science
Team Leader Field-Based Sciences
University staff and students
Services staff

External:
External clients and organisations, contractors, and suppliers
Relevant Research Institutes and Centres and external research agencies
School teachers and pupils

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Teaching session preparation and support

- Undertake operational duties to provide technical support for assigned teaching courses and research activities.
- Provide on-the-spot technical assistance during laboratories and fieldtrips.
- Planning and logistics service support for fieldwork and field trips for teaching.

Research Facilitation

- Source, install, and maintain specialised research instrumentation and software.
- Provide technical support for ecology and biodiversity, environmental science and aquatic science associated techniques.
- Operate laboratory analytical equipment for sample analysis (e.g., water nutrients(via Flow Injection Analysis FIA), turbidity, chlorophyll) and provide high quality technical knowledge, training and support to academics and students.
- Assist researchers with sampling, experimental design, data acquisition protocols, and troubleshooting.

- Planning and logistics service support for fieldwork and field trips for research with detail to health and safety.
- Undertake freshwater field sampling techniques including electrofishing.

Equipment stewardship and asset management

- Oversee day-to-day running of assigned equipment including upgrading and resource scheduling.
- Develop and execute preventative-maintenance schedules aligned with manufacturers and regulatory requirements.
- Arrange servicing, repairs, calibrations and warranty claims; maintain up-to-date service logs.
- Track inventory, coordinate equipment loans, and oversee safe storage.

Procurement and budget support

- Identify technical specifications for new equipment and consumables; obtain quotes and prepare purchase requests.
- Monitor stock levels of reagents, PPE, and disposables; implement cost-efficient re-ordering.
- Assist with capital-equipment planning and lifecycle replacement forecasting.

User training and documentation

- Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), quick-reference guides, and training for equipment and software.
- Deliver inductions and refresher workshops for students, academic staff, and external partners.
- Maintain a technical knowledge base and update change logs.
- Regularly review and update hazard and risk assessments for approval.

Quality assurance

- Implement QA/QC checks on instrumentation and analytical workflows.
- Undertake laboratory audits and contribute to audit preparation.
- Ensure laboratory and storage areas are kept clean and tidy.

Team Contribution and continuous improvement

- Work effectively as a member of the School of Science to support other team members and provide support to cross-cover, share workload and expertise.
- Work collaboratively to encourage transparency across activities, open sharing of knowledge, and the building of positive relationships to support a high-performance culture.
- Actively contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of new systems and processes.
- Work with other team members on projects.
- Support a positive culture and morale.

Student engagement and retention

- Participate in and help plan School, Division and University promotional activities including stakeholder engagement, outreach programmes, marketing and events.
- Support student recruitment and retention by showcasing laboratories and facilities during open days and other events, as well as providing technical demos for prospective students

- Ensuring an engaging and insightful learning environment that encourages student retention and success

Health, safety, wellness and compliance

- Enforce laboratory biosafety, chemical-handling and fieldwork protocols.
- Laboratory Safety Supervisor responsibilities for specified laboratories particularly marine and freshwater laboratories, storage spaces and the Aquatic Research Centre.
- Ensure proper storage, handling and disposal of hazardous materials according to University and Division Health and Safety work practices.
- Support the management of the OHS and Environmental responsibilities for laboratory-related areas
- Conduct risk assessments, maintain safety data sheets (SDS), and organize annual training.
- Ensure compliance with university, governmental, and professional-body regulations.
- Participate in the maintenance of a safe and healthy work environment for self and others including students. Comply with and undertake responsibilities as set out in the University's Health and Safety Policy

Any other duties

- Any other duties as required that are consistent with the position held, other than in exceptional circumstances such as rehabilitation after injury or sickness.

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

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Technical Officer will be performing satisfactorily when:

- An effective and efficient technical support service is provided
- Tasks and projects are undertaken in a professional and timely manner to ensure expected outcomes are achieved. Staff and students receive a high standard of support.
- Scientific data are processed, analysed, and archived in an accurate and timely manner according to documented procedures and protocols.
- Research functions, training functions, plans and development are supported. Users of the laboratories are trained and supervised to standards required for safe work practices.
- All equipment and materials are maintained to high operational and safety standards and is available for use when required.
- The School of Science, Division and the University is promoted positively.
- All staff and visitors have a safe and secure environment in which to work, maintenance issues are addressed promptly.
- SOPs are completed to University and Division requirements.
- Laboratory and storage areas are safe, tidy and instrumentation and equipment accounted for
- Interactions in the course of performing duties are conducted professionally, respectfully and collaboratively.
- Valuable contribution and participation in relevant meetings and/or projects are 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

- Relevant tertiary qualification in Ecology and Biodiversity or Environmental Science

Desirable

- A Masters qualification or equivalent experience.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Demonstrated knowledge of Occupational Health and Safety legislation, including experience in storage, handling and management of hazardous substances.
- Familiarity with operating and maintaining analytical laboratory instruments
- Relevant work experience to support research and provide training with a high level of expertise in ecology and biodiversity, environmental science and aquatic science associated techniques.
- Experience in field sampling methods and sample collection techniques.
- Willingness to travel and be involved in fieldwork, including undertaking full days of field sampling, overnight trips, and multi-day travel as required.
- Ability to test, calibrate and operate instruments and contribute to development of new resources.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills. High level of ICT skills with strong analytical and data management skills.
- Excellent planning, organisational and time management skills with the ability to set priorities and manage a complex workload with multiple deadlines.
- Ability to be flexible with timing to accommodate varying lab and research schedules.
- Experience and knowledge of Health and Safety requirements.
- Demonstrated skills in troubleshooting and problem solving.
- Full New Zealand driver's licence or equivalent.

Preferred

- Relevant work experience in a tertiary scientific academic or research programme.
- 4WD experience and certification.
- Boating experience and qualifications.
- Certified Handler, Hazardous Substances
- Microscopy experience.
- Electrofishing experience and qualifications.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Builds and sustains positive and productive collegial working relationships.
- Demonstrates cultural safety
- Flexibility with timing to accommodate varying lab schedules.
- Attention to detail and exceptional organisation and time management skills and a willingness to work flexibly.
- Commitment to ongoing professional development to maintain a relevant and up-to-date skill set to successfully operate a range of analytical instruments.
- Sufficient strength and physical dexterity to perform duties and responsibilities of this job.
- Ability to work well under pressure, and ability to successfully maintain multiple tasks.
- Demonstrated ability to use initiative, prioritise work and problem solve to meet competing deadlines.

May 2026

- Ability to work autonomously or as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- Willingness to learn technical skills as directed. Vision to develop and improve processes, proactive about upskilling.
- Conscientious and service driven with a customer focussed positive attitude.
- Ability to relate effectively and sensitively to students from a variety of backgrounds and cultures.
- Can deal with conflict or disagreements, working with all parties to achieve a positive outcome.
- Commitment to a culture of openness, flexibility, and cooperation to achieve excellence in academic programmes, research, and service.
- Commitment to equal opportunity and to the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi.