

## ACADEMIC HEAD OF DEPARTMENT ROLE PROFILE

**Role Title:** **Academic Head of Department** (or equivalent roles such as Deans in Te Tumu and Schools of Physiotherapy and Surveying)

**Reports To:** Pro-Vice-Chancellor of their Division; or Dean in Division of Health Sciences for Heads in Otago Medical School Campuses/Faculty of Dentistry; or Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic for Head of Higher Education Development Centre.

### A. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

Academic Departments have a central role in sustaining stimulating and collegial environments that contribute to the University being a centre of internationally renowned research and teaching excellence.

A Head of Department:

- acts in the best interests of the University and constructively contributes to Divisional leadership
- is part of the collective leadership of the University
- has primary responsibility for ensuring the department achieves University strategic goals in an effective and sustainable manner
- provides academic leadership for staff and students to develop a vibrant, diverse culture focused on research, teaching and learning, and external engagement.

### B. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide effective leadership that inspires staff and students with a shared sense of purpose and accountability, and aligns departmental activities to achieve University and divisional goals and priorities<sup>1</sup>.
2. Lead and foster excellence in research as part of ensuring that the Department actively contributes to the University's national and international reputation as a research-led University.
3. Lead and foster excellence in research-informed teaching and the provision of an enriching student learning experience.
4. Lead and oversee departmental external engagement activities that are relevant to local, national, and international contexts.
5. Honour and uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi and demonstrate strong leadership in the Department to achieve the goals of the Māori Strategic Framework by identifying what the department could practically do to increase implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> These priorities are captured in the resources listed in Schedule 1.

6. Uphold and promote equity outcomes and provide clear leadership focused on the goals of the Pacific Strategic Framework.
7. Lead and promote a healthy, fair and inclusive department culture.
8. Manage departmental resources responsibly to make sound decisions that align with Divisional and University priorities.

### **C. ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO ROLE CONTEXT**

The nature and extent of activities undertaken by a Head of Department varies according to different disciplines and size of Department. It is expected that a Head of Department will:

- continue to be involved in teaching and maintain their research while they fulfil the role.
- be supported in their leadership role by staff within the Department as well as professional staff from across the University.

#### **Academic Head - Core Activities**

1. Lead and foster a work learning environment recognised by open communication, individual accountability, the valuing of contributions, and the achievement of agreed and shared goals.
2. Foster the role of research, which includes informing teaching in the discipline, enhancing the capacity for outstanding research, and advancing the wellbeing of people, society and environment.
3. Enable and develop knowledge exchange, application of research, and, where appropriate, commercialisation, to enhance the impact the University has on national and international development.
4. Lead excellence in teaching and the provision of an enriching student learning experience by promoting strong research-teaching synergies, fostering innovative and flexible teaching delivery, and ensuring that currency and relevancy are evaluated during the design and delivery of programmes.
5. Lead a department that is recognised for the high standard of pastoral care and as a place of active scholarship.
6. Lead departmental external engagement activities that include: outreach and community engagement; sharing research findings with media and public; recruiting high-calibre students; engaging with alumni; linking with partner institutions; and promoting philanthropic giving.
7. Build and maintain productive working relationships, as appropriate, between the Department, mana whenua, tangata whenua, Pacific communities, government, local and regional bodies, professional organisations, and industry.

8. Ensure that the Department's processes and practices uphold and promote equity outcomes and that the individual differences that enrich its community are valued.
9. Uphold and foster the behaviours underpinned by the University Staff Values [respect, integrity, curiosity, and community / manaakitanga, pono, mahirahira, and whakawhanaungatanga] in their interactions and in decision-making.
10. Foster a culture that values the contribution of all staff to a vibrant, diverse Department by employing strategies such as: recruiting and retaining high-calibre staff; effective workload planning; recognition of University service in the community; development of academic careers including providing timely and factual feedback as part of confirmation, promotion, and performance-review processes; and, where necessary, addressing performance and behaviour issues.
11. Lead the integration of sustainable practices such as administration and governance, research, teaching and learning, and external community engagement.
12. Constructively participate in the Divisional/School Leadership Team by collaborating with peers, building a strong working relationship with own manager, representing the interests and needs of the Department, and engaging in evidence-based decision-making for the Division that aligns with University strategy.
13. Maintain effective departmental governance and management structures and processes are in place, to ensure that responsibilities under legislation and University policy are met for staff, students, health and safety, finances, contracts, technology, and space in ways that enable the Department to achieve strategic goals.
14. Lead the planning and response to operational and strategic issues to minimise business and reputational risks.
15. Lead a culture of accountability and continuous improvement that includes benchmarking with similar Departments elsewhere as well as leading the Department through the Quality Advancement Unit review process and subsequent implementation of recommendations.
16. Build and maintain effective relationships with senior managers and advisors in Service Divisions to ensure the smooth, inter-connected, and effective performance of all aspects of the Department's operations.

### **Professional and Clinical Discipline Activities**

17. For a Head of Department working in clinical and/or professional disciplines (e.g. accountancy, law, physiotherapy, and surveying) there is an expectation that they will provide effective clinical/professional leadership in the department. This includes engaging with professional registration organisations and ensuring that accreditation requirements are met.

## **D. ROLE SPECIFICATION**

1. Committed to being a University leader.
2. Proven capability as an academic leader working collaboratively in service, research and teaching.
3. Committed to sustaining and excellence in research, teaching and learning, service, and other departmental activities.
4. Knowledge and ability to lead the Department's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to achieving the University's goals in the Māori Strategic Framework.
5. Effective communication and relationship management skills with the ability to build trust and create an inclusive work and learning environment for staff and students.
6. Demonstrated skills of working constructively with others, leading by example, and acting with integrity and professionalism.
7. Able to engage and relate effectively on behalf of the Department with a range of people and stakeholders within and outside the University.
8. Able to identify issues in a timely manner and make sound decisions that are consistent with University policies and procedures regarding the use of resources necessary to achieve departmental, divisional, and University goals.
9. Proven potential to identify opportunities and risks for the Department and to incorporate this information into strategic planning and implementation.
10. Ability to innovate, adapt, and lead the Department in response to changing organisational and external contexts, practices, and processes.

## **KEY RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Internal**

- Senior leaders within the Division and across the University.
- Members of the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group.
- Office of Māori Development staff.
- Office of Pacific Development staff.
- Vice-Chancellor's Office staff.
- Senior managers, advisors and staff in Research Division, Academic Division, External Engagement Division, Financial Services Division, Human Resources Division, Operations Division.
- Other University related organisations such as Otago Innovation Limited and Pathways, Te Huarahi, and the Language Centre
- Other University staff, students, and community.
- Otago University Student Association.

## External relationships

- Leaders and peers from other universities.
- Mana whenua, tangata whenua and Pacific communities.
- Professional organisations and community groups.
- Research-funding agencies and industry.
- Government departments, institutions, and agencies.

## Other Relationships dependent on Role Context

Depending on specific context, it is expected that most Heads of Department will develop working relationships with the following areas.

- Members of the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group (VCAG) including Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer, Deputy-Vice Chancellor Academic, Deputy-Vice Chancellor Research, Deputy-Vice Chancellor External Engagement, Registrar, Director Office of Māori Development, Chief Financial Officer, Director of Human Resources, Director Strategy Analytics and Reporting.
- Research Division staff (e.g. Dean and members of the Graduate Research School, Director of Research Division, Business Development Managers, Research Advisors; PBRF and Publications/Outputs office)
- Academic Division staff (e.g. Pacific Development Office, Distance Learning, Higher Education Development Centre, Quality Advancement Unit, Summer School and Continuing Education staff, Distance learning) and Student and Academic Services staff (e.g. Proctor's Office and Campus Watch, Māori Centre, Pacific Islands Centre, Disability and Information Support Office, Head of Office of Student Success, Career Development Centre, Chaplaincy, Te Whare Tāwharau, Social Impact Studio)
- External Engagement Division staff (e.g. Development and Alumni Relations Office including Divisional Development Managers, Communications office including Divisional Communications Advisor, Marketing Services including Divisional Marketing Advisor, Schools Liaison team, Undergraduate Entrance Scholarships Office staff, International Office staff)
- Office of Māori Development (Director)
- Divisional staff for their department (Associate Deans, Business Manager, Senior Manager Client Services, Lead Administrator, Client Services staff, Student Advisors)
- Financial Services Division staff (e.g. Chief Financial Officer, Financial Controller, Accountants, Finance Advisory team, Strategic Finance team, Procurement team)
- Human Resources Division staff (e.g. Director, Divisional HR Manager/Advisor, Manager of Promotions and Remuneration, Senior Change Manager)
- Operations Division staff including:
  - Chief Operating Officer's Office (e.g. Chief Operating Officer)
  - Shared Services staff (e.g. Director, Client Services, Finance Services, Student Experience, IT Support, Ask Otago, HR Services, Manager Performance and Delivery)
  - Property Services (e.g. Director, Facilities Managers, Space Planner)

- Information Technology Services (e.g. Directors, IT Advisory staff, Managers)
- Campus and Collegiate Life Services (e.g. Director, Heads of College, Student Health Service staff)
- Risk Assurance and Compliance Office team
- Sustainability Office team
- Health and Safety staff (e.g. Head, Occupational Health staff, Health and Safety Advisors, Specialist Advisors, Animal Welfare Office staff)
- Campus Development staff (e.g. Director, Capital Project Managers, Strategic Resource Planner)
- Enabling Excellence team
- Project Office team

## SCHEDULE 1

### RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES REGARDING PRIORITIES, VALUES AND POLICY

**NB: This list will change with additions and updates that reflect the strategic and operational requirements of the University.**

- University priorities are outlined in the University Strategic Framework ([Strategic Directions to 2021](#) and successor Vision to 2040)
- [Māori Strategic Framework 2022](#)
- [Pacific Strategic Framework 2013-2020](#)
- [Sustainability Strategic Framework 2017-2021](#)
- [University of Otago's contribution as signatory to the UN Sustainable Development Goals Accord](#)
- [Equity and Diversity Framework](#)
- [University of Otago Staff Values](#)
- [Health and Safety Framework](#)
- [Risk Management Framework](#)
- [University of Otago Teaching and Learning Plan 2013-2020](#) and [Guidelines for Teaching at Otago](#)
- [University of Otago Policy Library](#)