

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO
Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka

JOB DESCRIPTION

ROLE TITLE: Pacific Island Students' Transition Officer
DEPARTMENT: Pacific Islands Centre
SCHOOL / DIVISION: Student and Academic Services
REPORTS TO: Manager, Pacific Islands Centre (PIC)

1. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

- To support all new and first year students to ensure academic and personal success and increase the retention, achievement and completion rates of Pacific students at the University of Otago.
- To establish an effective and supportive relationship vital for both outreach and recruitment activities with the Schools' Liaison team in the External Engagement Division.
- To help students reach their full academic potential by providing a smooth transition to University through a comprehensive orientation programme and individualised support for all new students to settle in rapidly to University life and learn the correct tools to have an enjoyable and successful University experience.

2. ACCOUNTABILITIES:

Transition:

- Plan an efficient and comprehensive orientation programme, so that students are well prepared and adjust quickly to their first year at University.
- Provide advice, guidance and arrange the necessary support for all first year students, especially those living in flats, to experience a smooth transition and an enjoyable University experience.
- Actively mobilise new students to engage with the appropriate academic divisions and departments and to direct them to the appropriate support services on campus.
- Provide a vital link between the PIC and academic divisions to ensure early intervention and maximum student participation.
- Ensure course coordinators are aware of PIC support programmes and vice-versa.
- Liaise closely with all University departments to ensure PIC staff are aware of the resources, programmes and support services available within these departments and that students are accessing and using these resources to succeed academically.
- Promote and advertise PIC events to students to ensure maximum attendance at these events.
- Encourage increased participation and support of events by student.
- Display and distribute posters appropriately around campus.

Student Support:

- You will be the initial contact to help students with course approval processes, study link applications, blackboard access, student emails, opening bank accounts, finding accommodation and support networks to help reduce the feeling of homesickness and loneliness and increase motivation to succeed academically and personally.
- Take students to see lecturers and support services if necessary, to break cultural barriers and access the resources necessary for them to succeed academically and ensure the correct help is given to students.
- Conduct student interviews to assess student needs and refer students to the Academic Programmes Coordinator for additional academic support (supplementary tutorials, study plans, academic mentoring).

Reporting:

- Provide feedback, evaluation and recommendations on orientation events and student support.
- Provide end of semester reports on first year student retention, achievement and completion.
- Provide monthly reports to Manager on student contacts and activities.
- Provide progress reports, follow through and feedback on Pacific students' recruited via PIC outreach programmes such as Dare to Succeed, Hands on Otago and Pacific on Campus Experience.
- Ensure all student contact is entered accurately in student database.
- Conduct an annual student satisfaction survey to evaluate the effectiveness of student support offered and overall student experience.

Health and Safety Compliance:

- Report any identified hazards in accordance with the University's Health and Safety Policy and procedure.
- Report all accidents in accordance with the University's Health and Safety Policy and procedures.
- Know the relevant health and safety policies and comply with the requirements.

Other:

- Assist with community events, outreach programmes, Taimane Academic mentoring, Pacific graduation and where directed by the Manager.
- Provide a friendly face and helpful advice to students regarding University life and studies in general.
- Keep the Manager informed of activities and any problems/issues as they arise.
- Any other duties that may be deemed appropriate by the Manager of the PIC in discussion with the staff member involved.

3. KEY RELATIONSHIPS:

Internal

Directly responsible to: Manager, Pacific Islands Centre.

Under the overall direction of: Director, Student and Academic Services.

Functional relationships with: Pacific Islands students, other Pacific Islands staff, University staff, Pacific student associations, OUSA, all University divisions (as appropriate).

External

Functional relationships with: Ministry of Social Development (Studylink), Ministry of Education, Pacific Trust Otago and Pacific community groups (as appropriate).

4. QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Knowledge of the University of Otago is highly desirable.
- A University degree and experience in University life would be an advantage.
- Able to identify and respond to different cultural norms and expectations in a sensitive manner.
- Excellent interpersonal skills reflected in the ability to engage with people from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds, both academics and general staff.
- Knowledge, understanding and sensitivity of cultural and diversity issues, with a focus on working with Pacific Islands peoples and their cultures.

5. TECHNICAL SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

- Good organisational and time-management skills.
- Ability to communicate with a wide range of people both verbally and in writing.
- Ability to analyse data, evaluate programmes, write reports and recommendations.
- A high level of discretion in dealing with confidential matters.
- A positive, flexible attitude with the ability to remain calm under pressure.
- Ability to work both independently and in a team.

6. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Must be able to travel out of Dunedin and hold a current New Zealand driver's licence.

7. DIRECT BUDGET ACCOUNTABILITY

- To ensure travelling and other expenses are within the annual budget set.
- To ensure all resources ordered and invoices are within the Centre budget restraint.
- To ensure receipts/invoices are accurate from travelling expenditure and forwarded within three days of return to Office Administrator for payment.
- Allocation of MyPCard authority and signing authority.
- Any community gifts /meaalofa or koha will need to be discussed and approved by the PIC Manager.

8. MĀORI STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Act in a manner consistent with the principles and implications, as well as the University's commitment to the Treaty as articulated in the Māori Strategic Framework.

9. PACIFIC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Act in a manner consistent with the goals, as well as the University's commitment to the priorities as articulated in the Pacific Strategic Framework.

10. HEALTH & SAFETY

Act and work in a manner compliant with current health and safety at work legislation and University procedures, frameworks and guidelines. Role model safe behaviour and practices, share the responsibility to prevent harm and contribute to a safe campus and work environment, including raising workplace health and safety concerns for self, students, visitors and other staff.

11. SUSTAINABILITY

Act in a manner consistent with the University's sustainability commitments; role-modelling sustainable practices, with a particular emphasis on minimising the environmental impact of day-to-day activities.