

JOB DESCRIPTION

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations)

ROLE TITLE	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations)
SECTION/DIVISION:	Operations Division
REPORTS TO:	Vice-Chancellor
DIRECT REPORTS (FTE):	Up to 13 FTE (tbc)
INDIRECT REPORTS (FTE):	41.2 FTE
PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:	The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations) is a senior executive role responsible for the strategic leadership, integration, and overall performance of the University's corporate, operational, and service functions. Serving as a core member of the Vice-Chancellor's Senior Leadership Team, the DVC (Operations) works in close partnership with the Vice-Chancellor, Provost, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and other senior leaders to translate strategic intent into sustainable operational delivery, strengthening organisational capability, resilience, and performance across all campuses. The role provides a principal point of executive accountability for the University's key strategic enablers — people, places, digital, structures, and processes — ensuring these are integrated, aligned, and delivered in ways that advance the University's academic mission and long-term institutional sustainability. With executive leadership and stewardship across a broad portfolio encompassing People and Culture; Property and Campus Development; Digital Technologies; Operations; Transformation; Student Services and Affairs; Sustainability; Risk, Assurance and Compliance; and Health, Safety and Wellbeing, the DVC (Operations) brings together the University's professional and service functions under a unified operating model, fostering a connected, service-oriented, and future-focused environment for staff, students, and the wider community.
STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP	The University's vision is expressed in <i>Pae Tawhiti – Vision 2040</i>, and operationalised through <i>Pae Tata</i>, our strategy to 2030, alongside supporting strategies and frameworks including <i>Ti Kōuka</i> (Sustainability Framework), the Digital Strategy, the Wellbeing Strategy, the Health and Safety Strategy, the Equity and Diversity Strategy, and strategic commitments to learner success and student wellbeing. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations): • Provides strategic leadership across operational domains, ensuring enabling strategies are coherent, integrated and aligned with institutional priorities. • Supports the University's Te Tiriti-led journey, sustainability ambitions, equity and inclusion goals, and non-academic elements of learner success. • Operates through a distributed leadership model, delegating operational implementation to portfolio leaders while retaining enterprise accountability for outcomes, integration, and institution-wide performance. • Focuses on stewardship, prioritisation, assurance, and leadership of the operating system rather than direct operational management. Through this leadership, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations) positions the University to respond effectively to financial, demographic, technological, and regulatory change, maintaining a strong focus on people, place and purpose.

ACCOUNTABILITIES:

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations) is accountable for ensuring that the University's enabling functions, systems and capabilities collectively support the achievement of Pae Tata Strategic Plan to 2030. This includes stewardship of people, places, digital capability, operating model, sustainability, risk, and service systems so that academic, research, and learner success priorities are delivered effectively, sustainably, and in alignment with the University's values and Te Tiriti-led commitments.

Enterprise Operational Leadership

- Provide strategic leadership for the University's corporate and service functions, ensuring alignment across operational delivery with strategic priorities and driving high-quality, consistent, and responsive services across all campuses.
- Establish and embed a coherent operating model integrating professional and service functions under clear governance, planning and performance frameworks.
- Drive operational integration, transformation, and continuous improvement, setting enterprise service expectations, performance measures and accountability.

Portfolio Leadership and Performance

- Provide executive leadership and oversight of the following portfolios, ensuring strong leadership, effective governance, and clear accountability for outcomes:
 - People and Culture
 - Property and Campus Development
 - Digital Technologies
 - Student Services and Affairs (including Colleges, Student Services and pastoral care elements)
 - Operations (including Transformation and Improvement, Divisional Services and Administration, Ask Otago and Enterprise Project Management Office)
 - Sustainability
 - Risk, Assurance and Compliance
 - Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Drive alignment of portfolio strategies and operations with university priorities, fostering an integrated and cohesive organisational model across functions.
- Provide enterprise oversight of portfolio governance, performance, and capability, ensuring effective strategy development, operational delivery and alignment across portfolios.
- Hold portfolio leaders accountable for delivering people-centred, culturally responsive and sustainable workforce practices that reinforce a positive staff experience and long-term institutional performance.

Strategy Execution and Transformation

- Translate University strategy into executable operational plans, priorities and investment decisions.
- Act as executive sponsor and enterprise owner for major transformation initiatives, including digital transformation, service redesign, workforce transformation and campus development projects.
- Set priorities, approve investment, and hold portfolio leaders accountable for delivery and benefits realisation.
- Oversee the prioritisation, governance and delivery of major projects and programmes through a consistent enterprise framework.
- Manage enterprise interdependencies, sequencing, and resourcing trade-offs across the University's transformation portfolio.

Student Experience and Pastoral Care

- Provide executive leadership for service, support and operational systems that enable positive student experiences and contribute to learner success, particularly in the non-academic dimensions of the student journey.
- Provide executive assurance that the University meets its obligations for learner wellbeing, safety and pastoral care in accordance with the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021, including clear accountabilities across student services, residential colleges, accommodation, and digital environments.
- Oversee the integration of student services, colleges, accommodation, and pastoral care arrangements to support proactive, responsive, and equitable outcomes.
- Champion accessible, user-centred, digitally enabled and culturally responsive service models.
- Balance service quality, accessibility, and staff experience with affordability, sustainability and prudent resource stewardship.

Staff Experience and Organisational Capability

- Provide executive leadership for an operating environment, workforce systems, and service models that support a positive, inclusive and sustainable staff experience aligned with the People Domain of Pae Tata.
- Provide executive stewardship of organisational capability, workforce sustainability, leadership development, and staff wellbeing, working in close partnership with the Chief People Officer and other portfolio leaders.
- Champion a values-led, mana-enhancing organisational culture that supports engagement, retention, equity, and continuous improvement, and reinforcing the University's Te Tiriti-led commitments and wellbeing strategies.
- Foster a positive, inclusive, and values-led workplace culture across academic and professional staff.

Digital Enablement and Information Systems

- Provide executive leadership for digital strategies, platforms, data and information systems that enable contemporary teaching, research, student support and professional practice.
- Oversee digital investment, prioritisation, and integration to strengthen institutional capability, efficiency, accessibility, service quality and decision-making.
- Govern digital transformation initiatives to ensure sequencing, integration and delivery strengthens institutional capability and manages enterprise risk.

Places, Campuses and Infrastructure

- Provide executive leadership for campuses, facilities, and infrastructure that enable safe, inclusive, sustainable and high-quality environments for learning, research, work and student life, aligned with Pae Tata's focus on place and experience.
- Provide stewardship of campus development, asset management and capital investment to support long-term sustainability, effective utilisation and alignment with strategic priorities.
- Balance investment in physical environments with financial sustainability, safety, wellbeing and environmental responsibility.
- Oversee the integration of accommodation and campus-based pastoral care environments to support equitable outcomes for diverse learner communities.

Risk, Assurance and Resilience

- Provide executive leadership for enterprise risk management, assurance, compliance, emergency management and business continuity.
- Ensure health, safety and wellbeing frameworks across the University to support a safe, supportive and high-performing environment.
- Support the Vice-Chancellor and Council in maintaining strong governance, assurance and regulatory confidence.
- Oversee enterprise risk and assurance systems to ensure maturity, effective oversight, escalation pathways, and decision support.

Sustainability and Stewardship

- Lead the delivery of the University's sustainability commitments as they relate to operations, campuses, infrastructure and service delivery.
- Provide stewardship of resources, assets and infrastructure to support long-term institutional sustainability.
- Integrate sustainability considerations into investment decisions, portfolio governance and performance reporting.
- Represent the University on the Dunedin Zero Carbon Alliance.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS:

Internal

Vice-Chancellor
Provost
Deputy Vice-Chancellors
Pro-Vice-Chancellors
Registrar and Secretary to the Council
Chief Financial Officer
Chief People Officer
Director Strategy and Government Relations
University Council and Council Committees
Academic and Professional Staff

External

Central Government
Local Government and Territorial Authorities
OUSA and other representatives of the student body
Staff and leaders in other tertiary and educational institutions in Australia and overseas
Industry, community and iwi partners
Professional networks and sector bodies
External advisory groups and strategic partners
Universities New Zealand
Health New Zealand

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:

Essential

Postgraduate qualification (master's level or higher) in a relevant field such as:

- Business Administration
- Management / Project Management
- Human Resources
- Finance or Economics

Extensive senior leadership experience, including:

- Accountability for large, multi-function portfolios within complex organisations
- Extensive experience operating at executive or equivalent senior leadership level
- Leadership within large, complex, values-driven organisations
- Oversight of significant operational and capital budgets (OPEX and CAPEX)
- Business case development, investment prioritisation, and resource allocation at enterprise level
- Experience working closely with governing councils, boards, and associated sub-committees

Demonstrated executive leadership across multiple professional domains, commonly including:

- Property, facilities, and capital programmes
- Digital, IT, or information services
- Student administration and core operational services
- Human resources and people and culture
- Centralised services and operational functions
- Commercial and ancillary functions
- Risk, assurance, and compliance management
- Health, safety, and wellbeing

- Deep understanding of the higher education operating environment, including:
 - Academic and professional interfaces
 - Shared governance and committee-based decision making
 - Regulatory, funding, and compliance frameworks
- Student experience, learner success, and pastoral care obligations
 - Demonstrated experience in:
 - Leading large-scale organisational transformation and change
- Translating strategy into operational delivery and sustainable outcomes
 - Operating within complex stakeholder and governance environments
 - Providing enterprise-level leadership across distributed portfolios
- Strong cultural capability, including:
 - Understanding of Māori and Pacific communities
 - Awareness of Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and their application in organisational leadership
 - Understanding of tikanga Māori and commitment to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Demonstrated leadership capability, including:
 - Strong strategic and commercial acumen
 - Executive judgement and sound decision-making capability
 - Ability to operate with autonomy within strategic and governance frameworks
 - Commitment to the University's values and a leadership style characterised by integrity, openness, and respect
 - Experience delivering complex strategic initiatives and organisational transformation

Preferred

Membership or Fellowship of a relevant professional body, e.g. Institute of Directors, HRNZ.

Experience working in the higher education sector or a similarly complex public sector environment.

Experience operating within Te Tiriti-led organisational environments.

TECHNICAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:

Essential

Ability to build and sustain stakeholder relationships at executive level.

Highly developed interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills, including influencing at executive and governance levels.

Strong understanding of the strategic operating environment of a major research university.

Demonstrated financial, fiscal, and resource management capability at enterprise scale.

Experience leading large, diverse professional teams across multiple functions.

Knowledge of governance, risk, and assurance frameworks within large organisations.

Understanding of current and emerging trends impacting higher education, including digital transformation, workforce sustainability, and campus development.

Preferred

Experience leading large-scale digital or operational transformation programmes

Experience in capital planning and major infrastructure investment environments

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Some travel will be required, including travel between campuses and external stakeholder engagements

Ability to respond to major operational incidents, emergencies, or enactment of business continuity plans.

Staff must comply with the Public Records Act 2005 and the Privacy Act 2020 and are expected to complete training to understand and meet these requirements.

DIRECT BUDGET ACCOUNTABILITY:

Circa \$300M

**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.

**PACIFIC STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK:**

Act in a manner consistent with the strategies and goals contained in the University's Pacific Strategic Framework, role-modelling and promoting Pacific values, equity and diversity principles and cultural safety practices.

HEALTH AND 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.

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.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY:

Act in a manner consistent with the University's commitment to anti-racism and the co-creation of accessible, safe, respectful, and welcoming environments where all students and staff are supported to achieve their full potential.

CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK:

Capability Group	Capability Name	Level
ENGAGE	Communicate Effectively	Highly Advanced
	Commit to Customer Service	Highly Advanced
	Work Collaboratively	Highly Advanced
	Influence and Negotiate	Highly Advanced
ENABLE	Deliver Results	Highly Advanced
	Plan and Prioritise	Highly Advanced
	Think and Solve Problems	Highly Advanced
	Demonstrate Accountability	Highly Advanced
PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	Display Resilience and Courage	Highly Advanced
	Act with Integrity	Highly Advanced
	Manage Self	Highly Advanced
	Value Diversity	Highly Advanced
PEOPLE MANAGEMENT	Manage and Develop Capability	Highly Advanced
	Inspire Direction and Purpose	Highly Advanced
	Optimise Work Outcomes	Highly Advanced
	Change and Innovation	Highly Advanced
LANGUAGE AND CULTURE	Te Reo	Adept
	Tikanga Māori	Adept

CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK DESCRIPTORS

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations)

ENGAGE

Communicate Effectively	Commit to Customer Service	Work Collaboratively	Influence and Negotiate
<i>Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with respect</i>	<i>Provide customer centric services in-line with the University's and organisational objectives</i>	<i>Collaborate with others and value their contribution</i>	<i>Gain consensus and commitment from others and resolve issues and conflicts</i>
HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED
Articulate complex concepts and put forward compelling arguments and rationales to all levels and types of audiences Speak in a highly articulate and influential manner. State the facts and explain their implications for the organisation and key stakeholders Actively listen, and identify ways to ensure all have an opportunity to contribute. Monitor own and others' non-verbal cues and adapt where necessary Anticipate and address key areas of interest for the audience and adapt style under pressure	Create a culture which embraces high quality customer service across the organisation, ensuring that management systems and processes drive service delivery outcomes Engage and negotiate with stakeholders on strategic issues related to University policy, standards of customer service and accessibility, and provide expert, influential advice Ensure that responsiveness to customer needs is central to the organisation's strategic planning processes Set overall performance standards for service delivery across the organisation and monitor compliance Ensure that the organisation's systems, processes, policies and programs respond to customer needs	Establish a culture and supporting systems that facilitate information sharing, communication and learning across the sector Publicly celebrate the successful outcomes of collaboration Seek out and facilitate opportunities to engage and collaborate with stakeholders to develop organisational, whole-of-University solutions Identify and overcome barriers to strategic collaboration with internal and external stakeholders	Engage in a range of approaches to generate solutions, seeking expert inputs and advice to inform negotiating strategy Use sound arguments, strong evidence, and expert opinion to influence outcomes Determine and communicate the organisation's position and bargaining strategy Represent the organisation in critical negotiations, achieving effective solutions in challenging relationships, ambiguous and conflicting positions Identify contentious issues, direct discussion and debate, and steer parties towards an effective resolution

ENABLE

Deliver Results	Plan and Prioritise	Think and Solve Problems	Demonstrate Accountability
<i>Achieve results through efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes</i>	<i>Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances</i>	<i>Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions</i>	<i>Be responsible for own actions, adhere to legislation and policy and proactively address risk</i>
HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED
Create a culture of achievement, fostering on-time and on-budget quality outcomes. Use own professional knowledge and expertise of others to drive organisational and University objectives forward Initiate and communicate high level priorities for the organisation to achieve University outcomes Establish systems to ensure all staff are able to identify direct connection between their effort and organisational outcomes Identify and remove potential barriers or hurdles to ongoing and long term achievement of outcomes	Establish broad organisational objectives, ensure that these are the focus for all planning activities and communicate to staff Understand the organisation's current and potential future role within the tertiary sector and the community. Consider emerging trends, identify long-term opportunities and align organisational requirements with desired whole-of-University outcomes Drive initiatives in an environment of ongoing, widespread change, including whole-of-University policy directions Ensure effective governance frameworks and guidance enable high quality strategic, organisational, and operational planning	Establish and promote a culture which encourages initiative and emphasises the value of continuous improvement Apply lateral thinking and develop innovative solutions across a wide range of highly complex information and situations that have long standing, organisation-wide impact Identify and evaluate organisation-wide implications when considering proposed solutions to issues Ensure effective governance systems are in place to guarantee quality analysis, data gathering and innovation	Promote a culture of accountability and direct the development of effective systems for the establishment and measurement of accountabilities, and evaluate ongoing effectiveness Direct the development of short and long term risk management frameworks to ensure the achievement of University aims and objectives Ensure that legislative and regulatory frameworks are applied consistently and effectively across the organisation Inspire a culture which respects the obligation to manage University monies and other resources responsibly and with probity

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Display Resilience and Courage	Act with Integrity	Manage Self	Value Diversity
<i>Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change</i>	<i>Be ethical and professional and act in keeping with the University's values</i>	<i>Show drive and motivation, a measured approach, and a commitment to learning</i>	<i>Show respect for diverse backgrounds, experience, and perspectives</i>
HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED
Create a climate which encourages and supports openness, persistence and genuine debate around critical issues Provide sound explanation and argument for agreed positions while remaining open to valid suggestions for change Raise critical issues and make difficult decisions Respond to significant, complex and new challenges with a high level of resilience and perseverance Consistently use a range of strategies to keep control of own emotions and act as a stabilising influence even in the most challenging situations	Champion and act as an advocate for the highest standards of ethical and professional behaviour and reinforce them in others Drive a culture of integrity and professionalism across the organisation. Define, communicate and evaluate ethical practices, standards and systems pertaining to the organisation Create and promote a climate in which staff feel able to report apparent breaches of rules, policies and guidelines and act promptly and visibly in response to such reports	Promote and model the value of self-improvement and be proactive in seeking opportunities for growth Seek challenging and strategic goals and show commitment to their achievement Actively seek, reflect and act on feedback on own performance, manage challenging, ambiguous and complex issues calmly and logically Model initiative and decisiveness and maintain a high level of personal motivation when faced with challenging circumstances	Create and drive a culture where all staff value diversity of people, experiences and backgrounds Use diversity to foster innovation, drive change across the organisation and leverage organisational outcomes Develop and promote integrated workplace diversity principles across the organisation Ensure workplace systems, policies and practices allow individuals to participate to their fullest ability

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

Manage and Develop Capability	Inspire Direction and Purpose	Optimise Work Outcomes	Change and Innovation
<i>Engage and motivate staff and develop capability and potential in others</i>	<i>Communicate goals, priorities and vision and recognise achievements</i>	<i>Manage resources effectively and apply sound workforce planning principles</i>	<i>Support, promote and champion change, and assist others to engage with change</i>
HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED	HIGHLY ADVANCED
Ensure performance development frameworks are in place to manage staff performance, drive development of organisational capability and undertake succession planning Drive executive capability development and ensure effective succession management practices Implement effective approaches to identify and develop talent across the organisation Model and encourage a culture of continuous learning and leadership, which values high levels of constructive feedback, and exposure to new experiences Instil a sense of urgency around addressing and resolving team and individual performance issues and ensure that this is cascaded throughout the organisation	Champion the organisational vision and strategy, and communicate the way forward. Generate enthusiasm and commitment to goals and cascade understanding throughout the organisation Create a culture of confidence and trust in future direction. Communicate the parameters and expectations surrounding organisational strategies Negotiate clear performance standards. Communicate them effectively and monitor progress Celebrate organisational success and high performance and engage in activities to maintain morale	Ensure that organisational structure is aligned to the organisation's goals and responds to changes over time Engage in strategic workforce planning, and strategic resource utilisation to ensure achievement of organisational aims, goals and University's objectives Align workforce resources and talent with organisational priorities Ensure systems and processes are aligned to enable high performance and outcomes	Drive a continuous improvement agenda, define high level objectives and translate these into practical implementation strategies Build staff support and commitment to announced change, and plan and prepare for long-term organisational change, with a focus on the wider political, social and environmental context Create an organisational culture that actively seeks opportunities to improve

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Te Reo	Tikanga Māori
<i>Develop understanding and use of te reo Māori (Māori language)</i>	<i>Create knowledge and use of tikanga Māori (Māori cultural practices) in the workplace</i>
ADEPT	ADEPT
Demonstrate use of te reo Māori words and phrases regularly and in appropriate formal work place activities Communicate appropriately and accurately in te reo Māori with external parties in the course of formal work place events Encourage others to use and learn new te reo Māori words and phrases	Engage with subject matter experts and consider the University's Māori Strategic Framework principles when undertaking work planning activity. Model good practices and encourage others to adopt work place practices that show sensitivity for tikanga Māori. Has good knowledge of the Articles and Principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and encourages understanding in others. Encourage others to extend their understanding and knowledge of tikanga Māori.