UNIVERSITIES NEW ZEALAND – TE PŌKAI TARA

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title	**Executive Assistant**
Reports to	**Secretary General**
Hours	**37.5 hours per week**
Location	**Wellington**
Date	**October 2026**

BACKGROUND

Universities New Zealand – Te Pōkai Tara promotes the common interests of the New Zealand universities through coordination of action across the sector. It is a statutory body with responsibilities for the quality assurance of university academic programmes, university entrance, and scholarships.

Universities NZ (UNZ) assists the Vice-Chancellors of the universities at the interface between public policy and higher education, and assists the Vice-Chancellors in making an informed contribution to policy issues, engaging in dialogue between government and the universities and assisting the Vice-Chancellors in developing well-argued, unified responses to policy and to public debate that may impact on university autonomy, financial viability or university research and teaching, and student learning.

Led by a committee comprising New Zealand's eight Vice-Chancellors (the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee - NZVCC), much of UNZ's work is undertaken through committees and other groups generally comprising a representative from each university. Universities NZ's activities are supported by a small Wellington-based team.

PURPOSE

The Executive Assistant provides executive, governance and administrative support to the Secretary General, NZVCC and wider Universities New Zealand team.

The role coordinates the Secretary General's executive activities, supports effective governance and committee processes, and ensures meetings, papers, records and follow-up actions are well managed.

The position also coordinates office and wider Secretariat administration, ensuring essential activities are completed and enabling staff to focus on their core responsibilities.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive support to the Secretary General

- Provide proactive and confidential executive support to the Secretary General, including diary management, correspondence, scheduling and meeting coordination.
- Coordinate the Secretary General's engagements with Vice-Chancellors, university leaders, government agencies and other stakeholders.
- Prepare and coordinate briefing materials, correspondence, presentations and other documents as required.
- Manage travel, accommodation and associated arrangements for the Secretary General.
- Monitor correspondence, commitments and matters requiring attention, ensuring appropriate follow-up.
- Anticipate requirements, manage competing priorities and support the Secretary General to make effective use of their time.
- Handle confidential and sensitive information with discretion and sound judgement.

Governance and committee support

- Coordinate administrative arrangements for NZVCC meetings and other committees and working groups as agreed with the Secretary General.

- Work with the Secretary General and relevant UNZ staff to coordinate agendas, meeting papers and supporting documentation.
- Manage meeting schedules, invitations, venues, technology, travel and other logistical requirements.
- Prepare and distribute meeting packs, ensuring papers are accurate and circulated within agreed timeframes.
- Record minutes and decisions, or coordinate minute-taking arrangements, as required.
- Maintain governance records, decision and action registers, and follow up outstanding actions with responsible staff.
- Support consistent governance administration practices, working with staff responsible for individual committee portfolios.

Office and Secretariat administration

- Coordinate routine office administration, including facilities, supplies, equipment, purchasing and liaison with external service providers.
- Coordinate administrative aspects of IT support, including equipment requests, supplier liaison and staff onboarding and offboarding.
- Maintain office, equipment and access records, including periodic checks and updates.
- Support effective document management, filing, archiving and recordkeeping practices.
- Provide administrative and coordination support to UNZ staff, including meetings, events, travel, document preparation and general team requirements.
- Assist with administrative arrangements for recruitment, staff induction and other internal activities.
- Maintain relevant contact lists, distribution lists and administrative information, including routine website updates where required.
- Identify and implement opportunities to simplify administrative processes and make better use of systems and technology.
- Undertake other related responsibilities as reasonably required to support the effective functioning of the Secretariat.

KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Internal

- Secretary General.
- Chair, Deputy Chair and members of NZVCC.
- UNZ Directors, Managers and staff.
- Chairs, conveners and members of relevant UNZ committees and working groups.
- Staff across the eight universities.

External

- Government agencies and other stakeholders engaging with the Secretary General and NZVCC.
- Office, facilities, IT and other service providers.
- Meeting and event providers.

PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

Skills & Knowledge Required

- Significant experience providing executive assistance or senior administrative support, preferably within a professional, public sector or governance environment.
- Experience coordinating governance or committee meetings, including agendas, papers, minutes, decisions and follow-up actions.

- Excellent organisational and planning skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities, deadlines and changing requirements.
- Strong written communication skills, including preparing, editing and proofreading professional correspondence and documents.
- Experience handling confidential and sensitive information with discretion.
- Strong proficiency in Microsoft Office applications and experience using electronic records and document management systems.
- Experience coordinating office administration, suppliers and routine service arrangements.
- Strong interpersonal and relationship management skills, including confidence working with senior leaders and external stakeholders.
- A relevant qualification or equivalent experience.

Competencies

- Demonstrates initiative, anticipates requirements and takes responsibility for completing work.
- Exercises sound judgement and knows when to escalate issues or seek direction.
- Maintains accuracy and attention to detail while managing competing priorities.
- Builds constructive working relationships and communicates professionally.
- Is flexible, responsive and willing to support the wider team.
- Demonstrates an understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its implications for the university sector, together with a commitment to developing competence in te reo and tikanga Māori.