

A wānanga as provided under section 398D of the Education and Training Act 2020, is an institution that: “Māori, have been instrumental in establishing; a wide diversity of teaching and intellectual endeavour that is closely interdependent; associated with higher learning; and are kaitiaki of Mātauranga Māori, te Reo Māori, and tikanga Māori within the tertiary education sector. A wānanga positions themselves within the networks of indigenous tertiary institutions across the world and contributes to the setting of international indigenous standards of teaching and intellectual endeavour”.

Tūranga / Position:	Senior Specialist - External Strategic Engagement	
Uepū / Wāhanga / Department:	Strategy and Transformation	
Takiwā / Rohe / District:	Te Puna Manaaki	
Wāhi Mahi / Location:	As per Letter of Offer	
Reports to:	Paemanu (Director) – Strategy and Engagement	
Whakatau ki / Direct reports:	1	
Indirect Reports:	n/a	
Māka Pūtea / Salary Grade:	9	
Wā Roanga / Tenure:	As per letter of offer	
Key Relationships:	Internal:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Te Kura Toroa • Ngā Pouwhakahaere • Te Mana Whakahaere and Governance committees • TPT Office dedicated and support kaimahi • Directors • Kaimahi
	External:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultants • External Stakeholders (Contractors and Suppliers) • Taura, iwi, hapū and whānau • Relevant external agencies and providers (TEC, MoE, NZQA)

Pūtake Tūranga / Role Purpose

The primary purpose of the Senior Specialist - External Strategic Engagement is responsibility for leading external communications strategies that enhance the visibility, reputation, and influence of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. Reporting to the Director, Strategy and Engagement, this role ensures consistency of message, cultural integrity, and alignment with organisational priorities across all external platforms.

This role plays a pivotal part in shaping the public narrative of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, supporting Ministerial and media engagement, and identifying strategic opportunities to elevate the voice of the Wānanga in national and sector-wide forums. The role collaborates closely with the internal communications team to maintain brand and tone alignment.

Key Responsibilities	Deliverables / Accountabilities
Role Specific Requirements	External Communications and Public Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead the development and execution of strategic communications plans that reflect Kaupapa Matua and the strategic direction of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. - Manage media relations, including the preparation of media statements, responses to inquiries, and coordination of interviews. - Develop and maintain relationships with key journalists, media outlets, and public relations networks. - Support the Director and Te Kura Toroa with messaging for high-profile communications, including speeches and briefings. Public Positioning and Influence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify opportunities to position Te Wānanga o Aotearoa in national policy and education discourse. - Ensure external messaging is consistent, evidence-based, culturally aligned and aligned with Te Pae Tawhiti 2030. - Develop positioning statements and narratives to support engagement with iwi, Ministers, TEC, MoE, NZQA and sector partners. Strategic Campaigns and Thought Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan and deliver strategic campaigns that enhance organisational visibility and public engagement. - Curate and promote success stories, insights and outcomes that illustrate the impact of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. - Collaborate across the organisation to source content that supports thought leadership and policy influence. Brand and Tone Stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the internal communications and design teams to ensure brand consistency and integrity across all external communications.

Key Responsibilities	Deliverables / Accountabilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide oversight for external publications and digital communications to ensure tone, voice, and messaging reflect organisational values. <p>Ministerial and Executive Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare briefings, speeches, media kits and official communications for Te Kura Toroa and Pouwhakahaere. - Anticipate external communication needs related to government engagement and prepare timely and strategic responses. <p>Communications Issues Management and Risk Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead the development of external communications protocols and risk mitigation strategies. - Manage sensitive and reputational issues in collaboration with the Director, ensuring timely and culturally responsive communication. <p>Cultural Alignment and Integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure all external communications and engagement activity reflect and advance Te Kaupapa Matua. - Champion Te Ao Māori perspectives communications. - Maintain cultural integrity in all internal and external relationships and communications outputs <p>Environmental, Safety and Wellness Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead and take responsibility for coordinating Health, Safety, and - Wellbeing activities at the operational level. - Demonstrate a commitment to Te Wānanga o Aotearoa health and safety rules and procedures and take reasonable care to look after your own health and safety at work, your fitness for work, and the health and safety of others.
<p>Driving for Business Performance:</p> <p>Role content specific to the relevant subject matter expertise or specialism of this role.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accountable for task completion and quality. - Sets clear direction for self. - Seeks own development and takes accountability. - Provides feedback and builds trust. - Contributes to team capability and cohesion.

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<p>Responsibility for specific KPIs or performance and or reporting metrics.</p> <p>Role in organisational success (e.g. service delivery, financial targets, culture).</p>	
<p>Problem Solving Requirements including but not limited to:</p> <p>Decision-Making Authority & Delegations</p> <p>Level of autonomy in strategic, operational, or tactical decisions.</p> <p>Impact of decisions across the organisation or sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes task decisions within role scope. - Escalates complex, strategic or people-related issues.
<p>Kaupapa Matua</p> <p>Te Wānanga o Aotearoa has a unique history and operating context. Te Kaupapa Matua o Te Wānanga o Aotearoa tells our history, guides our future and shapes the unique identity of our Wānanga. There is therefore an expectation that kaimahi will follow and work by these guiding principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Able to articulate the history, evolution and unique context of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. - Actions are aligned with Te Wānanga o Aotearoa leaders. - Ngā Uara are applied in a manner that protects the mana of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, leadership peers and kaimahi
<p>Communications and Relationship Management</p> <p>Effectively builds and maintains relationships that uphold the reputation and mana of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication style and frequency supports internal and external contact with stakeholders.
<p>Information Management</p> <p>Te Wānanga o Aotearoa records are created and maintained in corporate information systems, meeting specified information management standards and legislation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet the statutory responsibilities detailed in the Data, Information, and Records Management Tikanga Whakahaere. - Create and manage records of TWoA activities in accordance with TWoA privacy, data, information, and records management policies and procedures.
<p>Health and Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report potential risks, incidents and near misses so the

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<p>Uphold and comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.</p> <p>Demonstrate a commitment to Te Wānanga o Aotearoa health and safety policies and procedures and take reasonable care to look after your own health and safety at work, your fitness for work, and the health and safety and well-being of others.</p>	<p>organisation can investigate, and eliminate or minimise harm or risk of harm, in accordance with TWoA Health and Safety policies and procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotes personal and team wellbeing. - Recognises and actively manages stress.
Other Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake other duties as required by the employer provided the kaimahi has the required skills and qualifications.
<p>The kaimahi shall be required to exercise all their skills and knowledge to achieve the position objectives and follow any current or future procedures and policies related to achieving them.</p> <p>The responsibilities and expectations outlined in this position description may alter as business needs change. In addition, specific objectives and outcomes will be agreed upon with the upline manager on an annual basis.</p>	

Person specification

Qualifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant tertiary qualification in Communications, Journalism, Public Relations, Political Science, or a related discipline. - Postgraduate qualification desirable. - Full NZ Drivers Licence (Class 1)
Essential Experience and Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7+ years' experience in senior communications or media roles within complex organisations. - Proven experience managing public positioning and reputation in high-profile or public-sector environments. - Demonstrated understanding of te ao Māori and kaupapa-based organisations. - Experience preparing executive-level and ministerial briefings and messaging. - Confidence engaging with media, Ministers and stakeholders in high-stakes environments. - Able to craft strategic narratives that align with vision and values.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balances proactive messaging with responsive media handling. - Understands the political, media, and education landscape and leverages opportunities for influence. - Manages reputational risk with composure and foresight. - High-quality writing and editing skills across platforms. - Can develop content that is clear, impactful, and audience-appropriate. - Builds trust with senior leaders, partners, and media. - Acts as a trusted advisor and strategic communicator. - Performs well under pressure and in fast-paced environments. - Responds to complex or urgent communication needs with agility and care. - Acts with transparency, humility and integrity in all engagements. - Role models ethical behaviour and expects the same of others. - Builds trust through empathy, fairness and emotional maturity, even in challenging environments.
Āhuatanga Māori	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrated commitment to participating fully in cultural activities (e.g., pōwhiri / karakia /Te Whāriki) and exemplify Māori values. - Prepared to increase knowledge, understanding and everyday use of te reo and āhuatanga Māori and support other kaimahi in the same endeavour. - Te Kaupapa Mātua is understood and applied to mahi and relationships.
Essential Attributes:	<p>Governance Awareness & System Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understands governance roles. - Adheres to delegated authority. <p>Critical Thinking and Strategic/Planning Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understands organisation's purpose.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can articulate how their role contributes to organisational goals. - Contributes ideas. Understands how tasks relate to wider goals. <p>Financial Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses resources responsibly. - Understands cost implications. <p>Communication, motivational and empowerment skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses storytelling to influence behaviour and inspire teams to achieve goals and link to organisation purpose. <p>Digital & Technology Fluency, Adoption & Modernisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses basic digital tools. <p>Data-Informed Decision-Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understands simple data. <p>Innovation & Continuous Improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suggests improvements. - Adapts practices.
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