Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

Ngā Kōrero e pā ana ki te Tūranga

Job Description

Principal Advisor, Sector Engagement

Business Group	Te Pau Taunaki - Learning Support
Location	Wellington preferred (alternate locations considered)
Salary band	A9

Mahi i roto i te Ratonga Tūmatanui | Working in the Public Service

Ka mahitahi mātou o te ratonga tūmatanui kia hei painga mō ngā tāngata o Aotearoa i āianei, ā, hei ngā rā ki tua hoki. He kawenga tino whaitake tā mātou hei tautoko i te Karauna i runga i āna hononga ki a ngāi Māori i raro i te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ka tautoko mātou i te kāwanatanga manapori. Ka whakakotahingia mātou e te wairua whakarato ki ō mātou hapori, ā, e arahina ana mātou e ngā mātāpono me ngā tikanga matua o te ratonga tūmatanui i roto i ā mātou mahi.

In the public service we work collectively to make a meaningful difference for New Zealanders now and in the future. We have an important role in supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi. We support democratic government. We are unified by a spirit of service to our communities and guided by the core principles and values of the public service in our work.

Mō ētahi atu kōrero hei whakamārama i tēnei kaupapa, haere ki | You can find out more about what this means at Role and purpose - Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission.

To Mātou Aronga | What we do for Aotearoa New Zealand

At Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga | Ministry of Education, delivering our purpose makes a real difference to all ākonga of Aotearoa:

He mea tārai e mātou te mātauranga kia rangatira ai, kia mana taurite ai ōna huanga
We shape an education system that delivers excellent and equitable outcomes

We fulfil our purpose by:

- delivering services and support nationally, regionally and locally to and through the education sector and in some cases directly to ākonga and whānau
- shaping the policies, settings and performance of the education system so that it is well placed to deliver equitable outcomes for ākonga and their whānau, from early learning through tertiary.

Tēnei Tūranga | About the role

The Principal Advisor – Sector Engagement provides strategic leadership in how Te Pou Taunaki | Learning Support engages with the education sector to improve outcomes for learners with additional needs. The learning support education sector is diverse and includes, for example, regional learning support service staff, schools, kura, early learning providers, iwi, communities, whanau, kaupapa Māori organisations, NGOs, other Government agencies and contracted service providers.

The role leads complex engagement initiatives, shapes engagement strategy, and ensures strong, trusted relationships with sector partners, including schools, kura, early learning providers, and wider communities. It provides high-level advice to senior leaders and ensures sector voice is meaningfully reflected in decision-making, learning support service design, and system improvements.

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Ngā Haepapa | Accountabilities

As a Specialist within Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga | the Ministry of Education you will:

- Share specialist knowledge across the organisation and with stakeholders, working with others to inform operational level decision making.
- Contribute to an effective team with a positive approach to the work environment that encourages and supports high performance, collaboration and problem solving.
- Lead the resolution of issues, identifying risks and solutions to protect and enhance the integrity and reputation of the Ministry.
- Lead or contribute to the development and implementation of innovative and fit-for purpose solutions and frameworks for current and future challenges.
- Develop and use data and insights to make evidence-based decisions and recommendations on operational issues.
- Build capability in others through coaching, quality assurance, and proactively sharing knowledge and expertise.

As the Principal Advisor, Sector Engagement you will:

Strategic Engagement Leadership

- Lead the development and implementation of sector engagement strategies and approaches
- Provide expert advice on engagement to inform system priorities, service design, and operational policy
- Ensure engagement approaches are inclusive, equitable, and responsive to diverse communities
- Drive a consistent and coordinated approach to engagement across the business group

System Influence and Advisory

- Provide strategic advice to senior leaders on sector needs, risks, and opportunities
- Translate sector insights into actionable recommendations for improvement
- Identify emerging pressures and system-level issues affecting learning support delivery
- Represent Te Pou Taunaki in key forums and external engagements

Relationship and Partnership Management

- Build and maintain high-trust relationships with sector leaders and stakeholders
- Enable meaningful partnerships with education providers and communities
- Support collaboration across regional, frontline, and central teams
- Facilitate engagement that strengthens system alignment and shared outcomes

Insights and Continuous Improvement

- Lead the synthesis of sector voice, insights, and feedback into strategic advice
- Identify opportunities to improve services, engagement approaches, and outcomes
- Ensure engagement insights inform planning, performance, and service improvement

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Leadership and Capability

- Provide leadership and mentoring to sector engagement advisors
- Build engagement capability across the organisation
- Foster a culture of collaboration, inclusion, and continuous learning

You will make decisions in accordance with the Ministry's policies and delegations framework.

Wheako | Experience

To be successful in this role you will have the following experience:

- Experience at a leadership level, ideally in a complex organisation
- Experience leading and contributing to strategic initiatives, work programmes or projects that have organisational impact.
- Experience in driving organisational change aligned to a shared vision and strategic priorities that delivers intended outcomes.
- Experience in building relationships and partnerships to achieve shared outcomes.
- A proven track record of building and maintaining trusted relationships with (as appropriate):
    - colleagues
    - stakeholders
    - Māori and iwi
    - Ministers
- Extensive experience in stakeholder or sector engagement within complex environments
- Experience leading complex initiatives and working across organisational boundaries

Ngā Āheinga | Capabilities

To be successful in this role you will have the following capabilities and competencies:

- A proven track record of bringing people together and leading, coaching and mentoring others to achieve outcomes.
- A proven ability to use data and insights to identify trends, risks and opportunities, to influence and guide organisational and system-level decision making.
- Sound political awareness and ability to navigate government processes and navigate ambiguity in a complex environment.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- A commitment to ongoing personal and professional development.
- Advanced facilitation, communication, and influencing skills
- Ability to synthesise insights and translate them into strategic recommendations
- Proven ability to provide strategic advice and influence senior decision-making

- Strong understanding of the education sector and/or learning support system
- Understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and commitment to equitable outcomes

Tātai Pou | Our Cultural Competency

Tātai Pou is the Ministry's Māori Crown Relations capability framework. Tātai Pou is designed to support our people and organisation to give effect to the articles of te Tiriti o Waitangi in our work. The work-based capabilities have four focus areas and describe four levels of competency (high, confident, developing and essential) that enable us to deliver our partnership approach so that Māori enjoy and achieve educational success as Māori.

Pou Hono | Valuing Māori	Confident
Pou Mana | Knowledge of Māori content	Confident
Pou Kipa | Achieving equitable education outcomes for Māori	Confident
Pou Aroā | Critical consciousness of racial equity for Māori	Confident

Leadership Success Profile - Te Kawa Mataaho | Public Service Commission

Leadership matters. Strong leadership at every level in the Public Service will transform the experiences of New Zealanders. The Leadership Success Profile establishes "what good looks like" for leadership at all levels. Information about how the Leadership Success Profile applies to this role is available on the Ministry's intranet.

Ngā Whakaaetanga | Approvals

Date Reviewed and Approved	19/08/26
Approved By	Bridget White, Hautū, Te Pou Taunaki I Deputy Secretary, Learning Support