



Job description

Nau mai, haere mai. This job description is your go-to place for all the ins and outs of this role at the Charter School Agency | Te Tari Kura Hourua.

Contract Lead

Location	Wellington
Salary band	B4
Job type	Permanent

What we do for Aotearoa New Zealand | To mātou aronga

Our mission is to lift student achievement, strengthen and diversify New Zealand's education system. We do this so that every child has the opportunity to learn, grow and succeed.

Charter schools | kura hourua offer high quality education with diverse choices for students and families, greater flexibility for educators, and increased accountability.

With the child at the heart of what we do, we achieve better outcomes together.

About our Agency | Mātau rōpū ake

We are a departmental agency established to implement and operate the charter school model. We receive services and support from the Ministry of Education and are accountable to the Associate Minister of Education. We are the secretariat for the Authorisation Board, which approves sponsors for new and converting charter schools, oversees charter school performance, and decides on interventions with charter schools.

You can find more information at: www.charterschools.govt.nz/about-us.

About the role | Tēnei tūranga

The Contract Lead is accountable for the end-to-end contract, contracting, and funding framework for charter schools. You will provide authoritative contract advice to the Agency leadership and the statutory Authorisation Board, lead complex negotiations with charter school sponsors, and ensure contracts are legally robust, financially sound, and aligned with statutory and regulatory requirements. You will be responsible for the contract management of the Charter School Agency contracts and have a focus on continuous improvement and provide high quality advice on opportunities for simplification and effective delivery.

Operating in a high-risk, high-trust public sector environment, you will safeguard the integrity of public funding, support effective performance management, and lead continuous improvement of contracting systems and processes across the Charter School Agency

Accountabilities | Ngā haepapa

As a Contract Lead your key responsibilities will be:

Contract strategy, negotiation and contract management

- Lead delivery of the end-to-end negotiation and contracting approach for charter schools, ensuring contracts are contractually sound, legally robust, and fit for purpose.
- Ensure all contract management activities are based on good commercial practice and are aligned with the Ministry of Education's Contract Management Framework (CMF) and Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) Framework
- Provide clear, evidence-based contract advice to the statutory Authorisation Board to inform decisions on charter school approvals and to support strong negotiation positions.
- Work closely with the applications team to support the assessment process and ensure contract considerations are appropriately reflected.
- Lead complex negotiations with charter school sponsors through to contract agreement, ensuring sponsors are fully briefed on contractual obligations, including the Performance Plan.
- Provide contract advice to the Authorisation Board on contractual options when considering interventions, including contract amendment or termination, in response to unsatisfactory performance.

Funding, modelling and payments

- Lead the development and application of funding models for each charter school, ensuring accuracy, transparency, and alignment with statutory settings.

- Ensure sponsors and internal stakeholders are well briefed on funding models and financial implications during negotiation and contracting.
- Lead the quarterly charter school payment process, working with the data analyst and Ministry funding and modelling teams to ensure accurate payments and wash-ups.
- Maintain oversight of funding impacts arising from contract variations and performance outcomes.

Contract management and performance oversight

- Embed the Ministry's contract management framework, plans, and processes across the Charter School Agency.
- Work with Performance Monitors to manage contract variations throughout the contract term, including ensuring relevant changes are gazetted where required.
- Ensure contractual, statutory, and other obligations are met, and that contract management activity adds value to the charter school programme.
- Maintain the charter school tracker to ensure complete, accurate, and up-to-date information is available across the Agency to support decision-making and reporting.

Continuous improvement and system leadership

- Lead continuous improvement of contracting systems, processes, and tools to strengthen efficiency, transparency, and assurance.
- Contribute to the implementation and evolution of innovative, fit-for-purpose contract frameworks that respond to current and future challenges.
- Act as a senior contract advisor, sharing specialist knowledge across the organisation, raising capability and supporting operational-level decision-making.

How you will work

In delivering your responsibilities, you will:

- Ensure commitments are delivered to agreed expectations and clearly communicated to stakeholders.
- Use data and insights to make evidence-based decisions and recommendations on operational and contract issues.
- Build and maintain effective relationships across the Agency, with charter school sponsors, and with external partners.
- Contribute to a positive, high-performing team environment that supports collaboration, problem-solving, and continuous learning.
- Lead the resolution of complex issues, balancing contract outcomes, statutory obligations, and public accountability.

- Use established contract and supplier relationship management frameworks developed by the Ministry and keep closely connected and aligned to the Ministry's Commercial team.

What success looks like in this role

Success will be demonstrated by:

- Charter school contracts that are robust, auditable, and aligned with statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Effective contract advice that supports confident decision-making by the Agency leadership and Authorisation Board.
- Accurate and timely payments with minimal post-payment corrections.
- Well-managed contracts, variations and interventions that support performance delivery and improvement.
- Continuous improvement in contracting capability, systems, and processes across the Agency.

Skills and experience | Ngā pūkenga me te wheako ngaio

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

Essential experience

- Proven contract management and negotiation experience, including managing high-value and/or politically sensitive matters.
- Demonstrated experience embedding statutory and regulatory requirements into contracting and contract processes.
- A strong track record of building relationships and partnerships to achieve shared outcomes.
- Experience identifying, analysing, and designing solutions to complex contract or operational problems.

Desirable experience and qualifications

- Eligible for or working towards MCIPS Level 6 and/or a relevant tertiary qualification in Business, Accounting, or a related field.
- Full membership (Level 6 / MCIPS / MBA) is highly desirable.

- Experience advising senior governance bodies or operating within a public sector or regulatory environment.

Capabilities and competencies

- Excellent written and verbal communication, with strong influencing skills.
- Advanced contract acumen, including funding oversight and complex negotiation capability.
- Resilience and sound judgement when operating under pressure and in ambiguous or evolving environments.
- Strong action orientation, with the ability to manage competing priorities and deliver high-quality work at pace.
- High attention to detail in contract development, funding management, and reporting.
- Ability to build credibility and effective working relationships at all levels.
- Demonstrated commitment to ongoing personal and professional development.
- Proven ability to drive performance improvement and implement effective reporting frameworks.

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

Ka mahitahi mātou o te ratonga tūmatanui kia hei painga mō ngā tāngata o Aotearoa i āiane, ā, hei ngā rā ki tua hoki. He kawenga tino whitake 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.

You can find out more about what this means at: www.publicservice.govt.nz/role-and-purpose

Approvals | Ngā whakaaetanga

Date reviewed and approved	April 2026
Approved by	HR Advisory Team