



# Job Description

## Principal Evaluator | Te Pou Kōrero

Business Group	Te Pou Kōrero   Digital and Data
Location	Wellington
Delegations	No
Direct reports	No
Reports to	Manager, Evaluation and Research
Salary Band	A9

## What we do

**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 learners and families.
- shaping the policies, settings and performance of the education system so that it is well placed to deliver equitable outcomes for learners and their families, from early learning through tertiary.

## Te Pou Kōrero | Digital and Data

Te Pou Kōrero | Digital and Data sets the digital and data direction that enables a modern, efficient and seamless experience for those interacting with education services. The Group is accountable for the digital and data strategies and enabling capability plans, as well as maintaining the products and services. The Group provides overall leadership for development and implementation of integrated education and digital and data solutions working closely with other parts of the education sector and Ministry, enabled by a strong evaluation and evidence base.

The Group has both internal and external customers – with a strong focus on innovation by exploring new technologies and overseeing research, testing and prototyping activities.

The Group has three key priorities:

- Sector digital and data delivery: Interfacing with Education expertise to bring innovative

Digital and Data to support education outcomes. This includes monitoring emerging digital opportunities and working with the sector to improve solutions and their evaluation.

- Ministry digital and data operating model: Developing and implementing the Ministry digital and data strategy that guides prioritisation of digital and data investments and accelerates performance across the Ministry. This includes managing the digital and data portfolio in the context of education sector needs.
- Digital and data enabled strategic planning: Leading strategic planning for future needs and investments for the Education Sector, driven by sound evidence and evaluation capabilities. This includes leading the enterprise architecture and solutions that meet educational needs, complies with government standards and utilises industry good practice.

## Role Purpose

The Principal Evaluator provides leadership and guidance in evaluation design, coordination of evaluation activities, and helps build evaluation capability across the Ministry to support the use of high-performing data and evidence to inform decision-making against the Education Priorities.

The Principal Evaluator is responsible for promoting the effective use of evidence by providing high quality advice so that the Ministry, early learning providers, schools, education professionals, parents, whānau, learners and communities can put their efforts in the right place, in the right way, at the right time, to enable learners to succeed.

## Role Accountabilities

As a Principal Evaluator this role is accountable for:

- Design and, where appropriate, oversee complex research and evaluation projects that enhance our understanding of the Education Sector.
- Contribute to policy and implementation to shape a programme of timely, high-quality, and strategic evaluation within the organisation which supports the Ministry's priorities and is relevant to the Ministry's strategic goals.
- Advise on innovative ways to improve the communication and translation of data and evidence to strengthen policy and decision-making.
- Provide original thinking, challenge the status quo and design innovative ways to present the Ministry's advice.
- Manage the development, implementation, and maintenance of frameworks and methodologies, quality assurance processes and professional practice models across the Ministry that strengthen and contribute to a standardised evaluation and evidence process.
- Mentor and direct the team to provide high quality service to the Ministry and Government as a centre for research and evaluation expertise and excellence.
- Support the growth of team members' capability to respond to changing client

expectations and to take on cross-team roles and tasks within the Data & Insights Group.

- Shape the development and implementation of Ministry-wide research and evaluation standards, both within the Ministry and with partner agencies.
- Lead and shape the research and evaluation agenda across the Ministry.
- Lead and support activities that actively grow and contribute to evaluation capability building across the Ministry.
- Guide (or manage project teams, procure, or manage contracts to undertake) Ministry research and evaluation activity associated with specific educational policies, programmes and practices.
- Provide advice and direction for the team in identifying relevant issues and information in response to strategic policy and operational needs.
- Where required, provide input into Ministerial correspondence (ministerial office requests, draft replies, parliamentary questions, Official Information Act requests), ensuring that the required information is clear, concise, accurate and timely.
- Advise staff in the appropriate processes to follow and the nature and style of communication required in Ministerial correspondence.
- Maintain awareness of the political sensitivity of financial and other information handled and produced by the team and apply this effectively.
- Manage relationships with key stakeholders and ensure that the work of the team is aligned with Ministry objectives.
- Actively seek feedback on the performance of the team and promote a culture of continuous improvement.
- Work to develop and improve quality control in the team ensuring that work withstands internal and external scrutiny.
- Ensure documentation procedures are developed and maintained.
- Ensure that legislative requirements (Official Information Act, Public Finance Act, Privacy Act) are met.

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

## **Knowledge, Skills and Professional Experience**

- Specialist tertiary qualification in a relevant field, or equivalent level of practical experience.
- Principal level experience in evaluation and research design and methodologies, such as survey design and analysis, qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, and cross-cultural methodologies.
- Experience in giving practical effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi through evaluation and research design.
- Experience in Kaupapa Māori and/or Pacific Island research and evaluation

methodologies.

- Experience in engagement practices, including working with hard-to-reach communities, young people, and Māori and Pacific Island communities.
- Experience working for government, Education Agencies, or other large organisations.
- Experience in building relationships and partnerships to achieve shared outcomes.
- Project/programme management experience or knowledge.
- Experience in social investment and 'value for money' approaches to evaluation and analysis.
- Experience working with senior leaders and across agencies to identify strategic priorities and ensuring that work programmes and approaches align with these.
- Experience in implementing a governance structure and working with and delivering to a governance groups.
- Excellent interpersonal, written and oral communication skills including negotiation and facilitation skills, applied across a range of cultural contexts.
- Experience communicating technical information to a non-technical audience.
- Knowledge and understanding of relevant professional research and evaluation codes and standards and the ethical issues involved in releasing sensitive information into the public arena.
- A continuous improvement approach, willingness to adopt new ideas and constructively challenge existing data, information, systems, and processes.
- Ability to navigate complex political situations effectively and efficiently to function under pressure or in situations which are highly ambiguous.
- Ability to work collaboratively and develop and maintain a shared work programme with other agencies in the Education sector.
- Demonstrated highly developed problem solving and analytical skills and experience. Able to see innovative solutions to technical problems.
- Ability to relate well to all kinds of people, at all levels, inside and outside the organisation, build appropriate rapport and constructive and effective relationships.
- Effective use of diplomacy and tact to diffuse tense situations.
- Ability to provide thought leadership, vision, and drive.
- Integrity, initiative, and commitment to quality and excellent service.
- Adaptability and the capacity to cope with a rapidly changing environment.
- A commitment to honouring our responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Confident in working in partnership with Māori organisations, providers, and sector partners.
- Confident in giving practical effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and building respectful, effective relationships grounded in te ao Māori perspectives.

- Confident in using Māori knowledge, methodologies, and evidence to inform improved insights.
- Confident in critical analysis of equity to support improved and equitable outcomes for Māori.
- A commitment to ongoing personal and professional development.

## Equal Opportunity Statement

The Ministry of Education is an equal opportunity employer committed to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and respectful workplace. We believe that diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives strengthens our organization and drives innovation. All employment decisions are based on business needs, job requirements, and individual qualifications, and we strive to ensure a fair and equitable recruitment and employment process.

## Working in the Public Service

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 Te Tiriti o 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; [Role and purpose - Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission](#).

## Leadership Success Profile - 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.

In addition, the Ministry expects all leaders to role model behaviours in alignment with the Ministry of Education Leadership Expectations.

## Approvals

Date Reviewed and Approved	April 2026
Approved By	HR Advisory



**Te Tāhuhu o  
te Mātauranga**  
Ministry of Education



**Te Kāwanatanga  
o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government