

Te ratonga tūmatanui | The public service

Ka mahitahi mātou o te ratonga tūmatanui hei painga mō ngā tāngata puta noa i Aotearoa i āianeī, ā, hei ngā rā hoki kei tua. He kawenga tino whaitake tā mātou hei tautoko i te Karauna me āna hononga ki a ngāi Māori i raro i te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ka whakakotahingia mātou e te wairua whakarato ki ō mātou hapori, ā, ka arahina ā mātou mahi e ngā mātāpono, ngā tukanga me ngā tikanga matua o te ratonga tūmatanui.

Mō ētahi atu whakamārama, tirohia te paehono nei
<https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/about-us>

Being 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 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 <https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/about-us>

Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa | NZQA

We make sure New Zealand qualifications are recognised and respected, here and overseas, and that qualifications and credentials meet the needs of learners in the changing world.

More information can be found on our website at www.nzqa.govt.nz



Tō umanga | Your role

Principal Advisor to the DCE Strategic and Corporate Services

The Principal Advisor to the Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) Strategic and Corporate Services (S&CS) provides high-quality strategic advice, coordination and support to the DCE and the S&CS Division. The role supports effective advice, reporting and governance materials for the NZQA Strategic Leadership Team, Board and Board Committees.

The position requires a broad understanding of the issues facing NZQA, the public sector and government, together with excellent communication, judgement and attention to detail.

Success is measured by the quality of what you deliver and the impact it has on others: enabling people to thrive, supporting leaders to lead well, and contributing to a positive, inclusive workplace culture.

Job Title: Principal Advisor to the DCE Strategic and Corporate Services

Reports To: DCE Strategic and Corporate Services

Team: Strategic and Corporate Services

Salary Band: M2

Date: August 2026

Tō mahi | What you do

The role of the Principal Advisor is to:

- provide insight and advice on a range of matters to the DCE, via papers and materials to the Board and its committees
- facilitate effective solutions to urgent or ongoing issues
- maintain effective working relationships across NZQA, Ministers' Offices, government agencies and relevant external organisations, providing leadership, guidance and support as required
- ensure strong collaboration across the division to promote and increase business productivity
- lead NZQA's budget bid process.

The role also provides secretariat support for S&CS-led governance bodies and trusted advice on organisational matters as required.

You are accountable for:

Deputy Chief Executive support

- Provide high-quality advice on strategic, organisational and operational matters, including critical issues as they arise.
- Represent the DCE S&CS perspective on strategic and operational matters across NZQA and the Division.
- Keep up to date with public sector planning, outcomes and goals, and share relevant information with colleagues.
- Maintain awareness of key divisional issues and work programmes, providing early advice and support where needed.

Business optimisation

- Support the DCE and S&CS leadership team to improve operating model effectiveness and streamline business processes.
- Promote consistency, alignment and a solutions-focused approach to planning and delivery across the Division.
- Drive cross-divisional initiatives and performance improvements aligned with NZQA's direction and strategy.
- Monitor issues and developments affecting NZQA or S&CS, advising leaders on responses and escalation where needed.
- Work with the Strategy, Performance and Planning team to operationalise the organisational strategy into operational plans, with a focus on business optimisation.
- Ensure adherence to NZQA policy and fiscal and statutory requirements.
- Encourage quality practices across the Division.

Advisory and Ministerial Services

- Lead the interface with the Office of the Chief Executive and support teams with executive papers and responses leaving the Division, including Ministerial and Chief Executive papers, Parliamentary questions, Official Information Act requests, Select Committee questions and briefings.
- Develop and implement appropriate systems for seamless reporting and paper management.
- Build the S&CS Division capability required to produce high-quality information for governance bodies.
- Ensure materials for the DCE, SLT, Board and Committees are high quality, strategically aligned and meet governance expectations.
- Analyse reports and papers received by the DCE and S&CS Division, generating advice, responses and recommendations.



- Support quality and consistency in responses, advice and governance material.
- Liaise with staff to source and build knowledge in particular work areas.
- Lead NZQA's budget bid process, liaising with subject matter experts, Ministry of Education and The Treasury to ensure strong submissions.
- Identify strategic communication opportunities and issues, advising on appropriate responses and mitigation.

Relationship Management and Customer Engagement

- Develop effective working relationships with SLT, S&CS leaders and staff, broader NZQA staff, Ministers' Offices, other government agencies and customers.
- Identify opportunities to improve S&CS service delivery across NZQA, with a customer-first mindset.
- Support S&CS staff engagement, collaboration and wellbeing.
- Contribute expertise as an active team member to achieve NZQA and S&CS outcomes.
- Represent whole-of-NZQA views and protect NZQA's reputation in external interactions.

Equity

- Coordinate S&CS activity to support equitable service delivery for Māori, Pasifika and disabled customers.
- Ensure NZQA's Disability Action Plan is embedded in core service delivery.

You achieve this by bringing the following experience:

Essential

- Extensive experience in the public sector, including advising on policy, service delivery, parliamentary processes, and Ministerial issues. Experience in large service/community organisations would be useful.
- Sound knowledge of the Government's and the NZQA's Board's direction, policy priorities, planning and budgeting processes.
- Strong written and oral communication skills with the ability to tailor complex messages to a range of audiences.
- Able to facilitate and lead conversations with groups to achieve outcomes. Experience with service design practices would be beneficial.
- Experience working strategically and applying critical thinking, as well as sound judgement in the development of options and provision of advice.
- Experience working with subject matter experts to develop, monitor and adapt action plans with clear goals, timelines and measures.
- Experience managing integrated communications strategies and plans for complex projects and issues.
- Experience developing and presenting clear, robust advice, papers and reports.
- A proven ability to use data and insights to identify trends, risks, and opportunities, to influence and guide organisational and system-level decision making.
- A thorough understanding of the Machinery of Government.
- Experience developing and influencing relationships internally and externally, including at senior levels.
- An understanding of NZQA's focus on equity for Māori ākonga, Pacific learners, and disabled learners.

Desirable



- Familiarity with the Treaty of Waitangi and its application to the work of NZQA.
- Knowledge and understanding of the education system, and desirably of NCEA.

Qualifications

Essential

- A qualification to at least Level 7 of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework or higher, or equivalent experience in a similar role.

Desirable

- A degree level qualification in public administration, social policy or similar qualification is desirable.
- Previous experience in similar roles and working with political nuance, for example with a Minister's Office.

Tō tūranga | Where you belong

Te Wāhanga Rautaki Ratonga me te Rangapū | Strategic and Corporate Services works across NZQA as a trusted business advisor. The Division provides strategy and performance monitoring, finance, information services, customer insights, internal audit, portfolio management, risk and legal expertise to enable NZQA's service delivery now and into the future.

Tō haerenga ki te angitu | Your journey to success

At NZQA, we believe in the power of learning - not just for the students we serve, but for our people too. When you join us, you'll be supported to thrive in a career that's both meaningful and future-focused.

Our Te Whanake Pūkenga (Development Competencies) framework sets out capabilities to support performance, growth, and career development. These include:

- Behavioural competencies – how we work together
- Technical competencies – what we need to know and do
- Specialist skills – unique to your position

We're especially committed to building cultural capability, including upskilling in te reo Māori and tikanga Māori. These are core to our work and central to our development pathways.

You'll work with your leader to shape a personalised development plan that supports your success - whether that's deepening your current skills or expanding into new areas.

This is your chance to apply what you know, grow what you don't, and be part of an organisation that invests in your journey.

