

Job Title: Manager, New Student Transition
Department: Student Success Office
Reports To: Associate Director, Student Transition & Learning Services
Jobs Reporting: Specialist, New Student Transition (Undergraduate) & Specialist, New Student Transition (Graduate)
Salary Grade: USG 10
Effective Date: June 2022

Primary Purpose

The Manager, New Student Transition plays a key leadership role in establishing strategic initiatives and direction for the Student Success Office (SSO) in the leadership, management and coordination of programs and initiatives that shape an engaging and supportive experience for all incoming students. The Manager will be responsible for moving forward new transition programs and initiatives that are responsive to the UWaterloo new student experience and be expected to ensure integration and coordination of any new transition programs with those currently offered by the SSO and campus and Faculty partners. The Manager will be expected to work closely with staff across the SSO as well as form and maintain strategic partnerships with staff/faculty and student groups across campus. The Manager demonstrates a commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism through their leadership and strategic direction of the new student transition portfolio.

The Manager has three primary areas of focus: 1) Provide strategic leadership and direction to the New Student Transition (NST) team and NST portfolio on behalf of the SSO, 2) Provide leadership and direction in the identification of opportunities to deepen and broaden the SSO's overall impact on the new student transition experience for all undergraduate and graduate students. The Manager will be knowledgeable of best practices, relevant theory, literature, and data related to new student transition with a focus on priority populations (e.g., equity-deserving students), 3) Maintain and initiative positive and collaborate working relationships with key campus and faculty partners to influence and execute campus-wide new student transition initiatives.

Key Accountabilities

Provide leadership and strategic direction on the new student transition experience

- Responsible for the creation and implementation of the strategic plan for the New Student Transition portfolio so that it complements and supports the SSO Strategic plan, the University of Waterloo Strategic Plan and Faculty-specific strategic plans.
- Consults on student transition for undergraduate and graduate students including providing leadership on initiatives outside of the immediate programs and services offered by the SSO connected to student transition; leadership will be informed by a solid understanding of the new student transition experience based on research, literature and best practice knowledge related to student retention, engagement, and development.
- Leads the New Student Transition team, setting clear and reasonable expectations, providing ongoing feedback, and establishing a solid foundation for performance through comprehensive training.

- Consults on the needs of new students attending post-secondary institutions including best practices at other institutions, current trends, and forecasting future developments in strategies to enhance the new student experience.
- The Manager works closely with the leadership team to ensure programs and strategies complement one another and, when appropriate are consistent in delivery and outcomes for all students.
- Responsible for leading the creation and delivery of strategies and initiatives designed to enhance the new student experience for all undergraduate and graduate students with ability to build capacity in programming for supporting priority populations including equity-deserving students.
- Operationalizes equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racist theory into strategic planning and overall programs and initiatives related to new student transition.

Maintain a strong understanding of current trends and best practices around the student experience in higher education

- Highly knowledgeable of the unique needs of Waterloo students particularly in the areas of student transition, student development; and student success; uses current research and student development theory to design intentional, proactive, and responsive programs that are in line with the changing needs of our new students and campus community.
- Works with the leadership team to summarize and disseminate key research related to the new student experience, factors that contribute to student development and student success, best practices at other institutions, developing and delivering intentional and engaging programs for new students as well as student leader training and development as appropriate.
- Knowledgeable and up to date on current Waterloo surveys as related to student transition including program surveys/evaluation, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Incoming Student Survey (ISS), Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC), etc. The Manager works with the leadership team to ensure this information is responded to and considered in the development of new programs and initiatives and the evaluation of current programs.
- Works closely with Data and Evaluation Specialists to design an integrated assessment approach to all new student transition programs that incorporates relevant research and best practices.
- Establishes performance indicators and assessment methods to measure achievement in all areas of responsibility including program goals and objectives and individual program success.
- Works closely with the Data and Evaluation Specialists to explore the new student experience of priority populations (e.g., equity-deserving students) to build specialized initiatives and supports.

Develop and maintain strong cross-campus relationships

- Establishes a network of relationships with campus partners and external organizations (CACUSS, etc.) to remain up to date on new research, strategies, and initiatives and to disseminate this to the broader campus community and within the office as appropriate.
- Develops and maintains excellent working relationships with faculty, staff, and campus partners to foster an environment for the transferring of ideas, skills, and/or resources around the new student experience.
- Manages collaboration and partnerships with services and departments on campus with the goal of enhancing and streamlining the new student experience; including but not limited to Food Services, Campus Wellness, Marketing and Undergraduate Recruitment, Waterloo

Undergraduate Student Association, Graduate Student Association, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs, Athletics, Housing and Residences, etc.

- Engages campus and faculty partners in meaningful conversations regarding factors that contribute to overall student development, student success, and student engagement, advocating for the needs of new students when appropriate.
- Represents the SSO at committees and meetings related to the new student experience.
- Consults with the leadership team to ensure programs and initiatives designed and maintained are meeting the needs of our faculty and campus partners.
- Fosters open and transparent dialogue with campus and faculty partners, creating conditions for highly collaborative and collegial working relationships.

**All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

Required Qualifications

Education

- University degree required; Master's degree or equivalent experience in a related field (e.g., Leadership, Higher Education, Student Services) strongly preferred.

Experience

- 5+ years of experience in a student experience/student affairs role required.
- 3+ years of experience managing/leading professional staff within a student service required.
- A record of and commitment to participating in ongoing learning and engagement in the areas of equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-racism, and accessibility. Demonstrated experience applying this learning to their leadership and strategy development.
- Experience developing, delivering, and evaluating large scale new student experience/student success strategies at post-secondary institutions strongly preferred.
- Program/project management experience is an asset.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Proven ability to take initiative and be both creative and flexible.
- Demonstrated ability to work as part of a cross functional team and build consensus. Sensitive to the diverse perspectives of stakeholders and works with them to resolve differences.
- Demonstrated ability to contribute to and thrive in a collaborative environment and to apply a positive team approach to working with colleagues.
- Demonstrated ability to use and interpret data to make decisions and communicate results effectively to various stakeholders.
- Demonstrated level of competence and professionalism appropriate to represent the Student Success Office to the university community and peers from other institutions.
- Knowledgeable and up to date on the needs of incoming University of Waterloo students, undergraduate, graduate and priority populations (e.g., equity-deserving students).
- Excellent verbal, written and presentation communication skills.
- High degree of political acumen.

- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the undergraduate and graduate new student experience as well as priority populations including but not limited to equity-deserving students.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Able to build collaborative working relationships across the university campus. The Manager will be required to lead the New Student Transition Team, their co-workers and campus partners in understanding the new student experience. Teamwork skills are crucial as is consensus building and strategic leadership.
- **Level of Responsibility:** The Manager is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the New Student Transition Team, setting priorities and managing internal and external expectations of this area. The Manager is responsible for ongoing performance management and yearly performance appraisals
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Manager will make decisions in collaboration with others about the strategic priorities relating to SSO and initiatives relating to enhancing student success. They determine the optimum course of action to solve problems and to exert a positive influence on other stakeholders on behalf of the SSO.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within a fast-paced service-oriented office environment; extensive periods of sitting and concentrated use of visual senses. Requires close attention to detail, thoroughness, and accuracy.
- **Working Environment:** Office space is in a comfortable indoor area, although location can change. Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions.