

Job Description



Job Title:	Chief Data Officer
Department:	Information Systems and Technology
Reports To:	Chief Information Officer
Jobs Reporting:	Manager, Data, Integrations and Analytics; University Records Manager
Salary Grade:	USG 18
Effective Date:	September 2025

Primary Purpose

The Chief Data Officer (CDO) is accountable to the Chief Information Officer for providing strategic executive leadership and expertise to senior technology and administrative leaders across campus in the design and implementation of a holistic enterprise-wide data strategy, including governance, management and standards, as well as the appropriate controls and policies to guide both the institutional data program as well as institutional records and information management.

The CDO is a member of the University of Waterloo Information Systems & Technology Senior Leadership team, as well as leads and participates on Waterloo committees as directed by the CIO. The CDO works collaboratively with colleagues across campus, both IT and non-IT, including Vice-President (VP-)level offices, Faculties, and Academic Support Units, in order to create a positive institutional data culture and sound data practices amongst a distributed workforce of Data professionals.

Key Accountabilities

Creation and Operationalization of an institutional Data Governance model

- Define, establish, socialize and implement an overall Data Governance model and program at all levels of the university spanning the entire institution.
- Create and align the strategic, standard-setting, and operational activities of Data Governance and Management to institutional IT and Data Governance models, processes and policies.
- Organize and lead a data governance practice in the application of four major areas of focus: Data Principles, standards, policies and guidance.
- Work with the CIO, leaders in IST and other units, Institutional Analysis & Planning, and Legal & Immigration Services in the development, publication and maintenance of institutional data architecture, as well as the creation and curation of a roadmap for future development of data strategies to meet evolving institutional needs, including and especially unified processes, standards and procedures related to the interchange of data between units within the university.
- Create policies, controls, and an overarching data governance framework for the appropriate protection of enterprise information assets through a defined life cycle from acquisition or creation of a data element, to end of life disposal procedures.

Provide leadership, training, and support for the University Information Management roles across campus, and actively participate through the Canadian Higher Education IT community

- Champion the role of Data Stewards and Custodians across the University and provide senior mentorship to Data Analysts and Communities of Practice related to the common and appropriate use of data throughout the entire institution
- Performs advanced internal and external environmental scans in support of institutional data governance and provides summary reports and recommendations to senior university leadership

Lead and support the creation of institutional data standards and practices across campus

- Support Data Analysis groups across campus, as well as the Data, Integrations, and Analytics group within the incumbent's own group, to design and deliver meaningful business intelligence dashboards and metric analysis common objects and formulas for the University community in relation to data creation, storage, and data sharing, all in the service of decision making, planning and the operations of the university.
- Define and manage policies and programs for data stewardship and custodianship in partnership with Legal and Immigration Services, Information Security Services, and the Chief Risk Officer as well as various layers of government agencies.
- Provide oversight and strategic alignment for the University's data infrastructure and related business intelligence systems

Provide Institutional leadership and guidance for the practice of data management at all levels of the university

- Define, manage, and maintain institutional accountability over master data and metadata management policies, and standards, with a close working relationship with the Privacy portfolio of Legal and Immigration Services, the University Librarian, Institutional Analysis & Planning, Integrated Planning & Budgeting, as well as the Office of the Vice President Research and International for data related to university scholarship and research.
- Develop and maintain controls on data quality to ensure the various information technology systems and software applications across the University can communicate, exchange data and effectively use the information that has been exchanged in such a way as to effectively manage institutional risk.
- Work with the Chief Risk Officer and the University Risk Management committee to surface, report, and mitigate institutional risk as it relates to data, with additional reporting to the Board of Governors as required.
- Lead the deployment and management of data quality monitoring systems, including measurement of core university data objects, reference and research data (in partnership with the appropriate offices) to ensure compliance to policy, standards and conceptual models.
- In close partnership with Legal & Immigration Services, contribute to compliance and regulatory requirements regarding privacy of information, Privacy Impact Assessments, and relevant internal committees so that Data Governance and Management are aligned with the university's posture on information privacy.
- Align the efforts of their portfolio to key strategic priorities of the institution, such as Strategic Enrollment Management, efficient and effective use of modern Enterprise Resource Planning systems, and enablement of the use of emerging technologies such as Generative AI.

Required Qualifications

Education

- University degree (or equivalent experience) related to Data Science, Information Systems, Computer Science, Business Administration, Public Policy, or a related field
- Advanced training in data governance, analytics, information architecture, and enterprise systems.
- Demonstrated commitment to continuous professional development related to Data, with optional certifications related to Data an asset

Experience

- 10+ years of progressive experience in data management, analytics, or enterprise data architecture, with at least 3–5 years in a senior leadership or strategic role.
- Proven experience leading data governance programs in complex, decentralized environments (preferably in higher education).

Job Description



- Track record of collaborating across academic, research, administrative, and IT domains to align data strategy with institutional priorities.
- Experience with working with data privacy frameworks in partnership with Privacy Counsel.
- Experience implementing enterprise-wide data platforms and tools, including data catalogs, MDM (Master Data Management), and data quality frameworks.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Strategic thinking and visioning — ability to craft and execute a campus-wide data strategy that balances innovation, compliance, and academic/research needs.
- Excellent stakeholder engagement skills—capable of bridging academic, technical, and administrative stakeholders together to foster a common sense of data stewardship.
- Proven expertise in data governance best practices, including data ownership, stewardship models, metadata management, and lifecycle controls.
- Strong communication and change management skills—able to drive adoption of data governance practices and policies at all organizational levels, including the ability to independently create and deliver compelling strategic presentations at the senior executive and Board of Governors level.
- Excellent analytical acumen and systems thinking, with the ability to evaluate data use cases, tools, and standards in support of decision-making, research, and operational efficiency.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** External contacts include vendors and relevant government agencies, representatives of other academic institutions, etc. Internal contacts include staff and senior management across campus, including IT leaders throughout the university. Nature of interaction varies from client/vendor to information sharing to influencing, collaboration/partnership. Expert-level Relationship management required, with ability to resolve and manage sensitive issues at a senior level.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Responsible and accountable for the overall results of the data group within IST
- **Decision-Making Authority:** In consultation with the Chief Information Officer, responsible and accountable for establishing the priorities for the Data group
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a senior executive position operating within an office environment
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a senior executive position exposed to stress and pressure associated with senior level responsibilities.

**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.*