


HR191	POSITION DESCRIPTION	 UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD
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NOTES

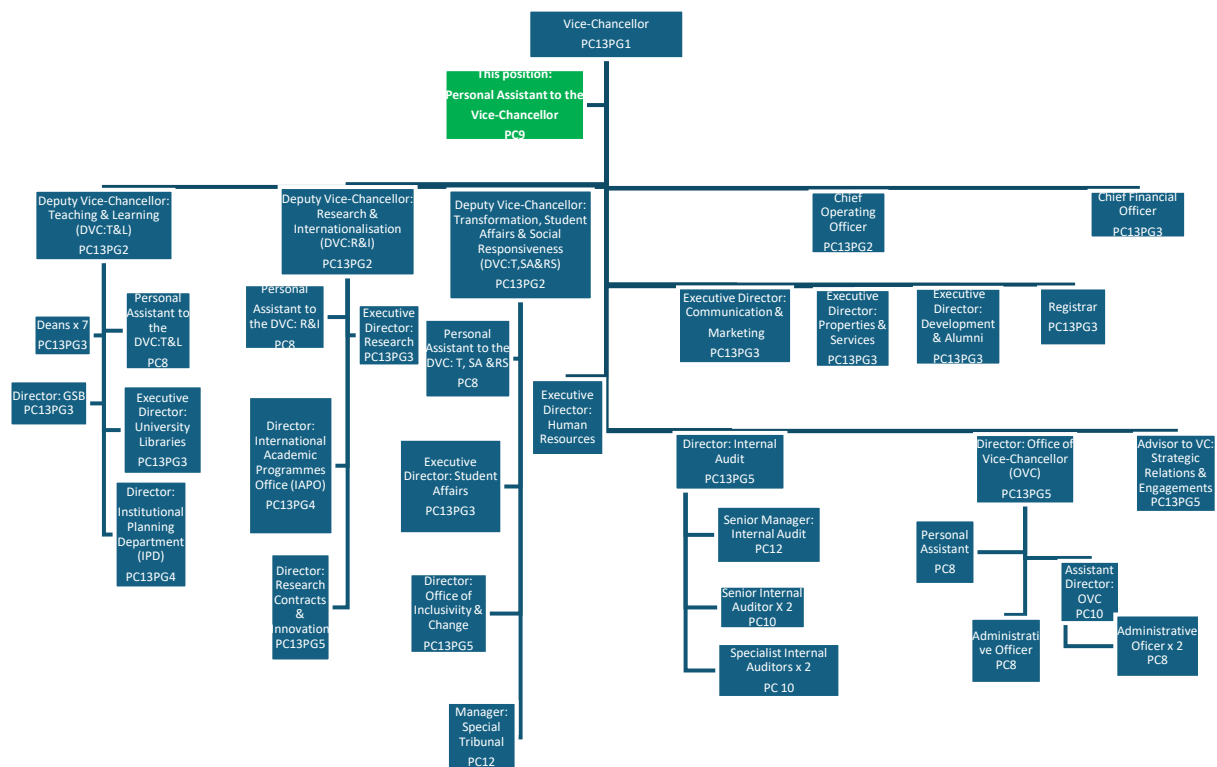
- Forms must be downloaded from the UCT website: <https://forms.uct.ac.za/forms.htm>
- This form serves as a template for the writing of position descriptions.
- A copy of this form is kept by the line manager and the position holder.

POSITION DETAILS

Position title	Personal Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (VC)		
Job title (HR Business Partner to provide)	Junior Administration Specialist		
Position grade (if known)	PC09	Date last graded (if known)	2024
Academic faculty / PASS department	Office of the Vice Chancellor		
Academic department / PASS unit			
Division / section			
Date of compilation	22 August 2025		

ORGANOGRAM

(Adjust as necessary. Include line manager, line manager's manager, all subordinates and colleagues. Include position grades)



PURPOSE

The main purpose of this position is:

The Personal Assistant (PA) to the Vice-Chancellor (VC) is a key member of the Executive Team and the Office of the Vice-Chancellor. The responsibilities are primarily administrative, and require great diplomacy, discretion, resourcefulness, and flexibility as the PA will be working closely with a diverse range of people within and outside of the organisation on a broad variety of issues. The PA role requires someone with very strong administrative experience, diplomacy, and the ability to build strong interpersonal relationships. This role provides insight on and exposure to the frontline activities and oversight of the workings of the University of Cape Town, the leading university in Africa.

Major Duties:

- Provide effective and efficient high level administrative and secretarial support.
- Ensure the smooth running of a responsive, empathetic and accessible office.
- Ensure professional interactions with internal and external stakeholders, nationally, regionally and internationally.
- Manage and coordinate the Vice-Chancellor's diary, ensuring that engagements are appropriately and sensitively prioritised and managed in order to meet both the University's and the Vice-Chancellor's requirements.
- Act as a gateway to the Vice-Chancellor and ensure that requests and demands on the VC's time are handled timeously and efficiently.
- Ensure all documentation is prepared and received timeously for attendance at daily meetings and other commitments.
- Maintain an events and meetings schedule and distribute it weekly to relevant staff members.
- Make all logistical arrangements, including local and overseas travel, for the Vice-Chancellor.
- Respond and advise efficiently to electronic or verbal enquiries and complaints as well as re-directing queries to the appropriate department, using own initiative.
- Ability to work without supervision in a methodical manner, independently or as part of a team.
- Deal with sometimes distressing situations on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, as first point of contact with parents and students.
- Meet and greet visitors on arrival and oversee logistical arrangements in terms of parking, maps & directions, refreshments etc.
- Prepare correspondence and other documentation as requested by the Vice-Chancellor.
- Be responsible for advising the Vice-Chancellor of impending internal and external work deadlines.

The above information has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by the PA to the Vice-Chancellor. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties and responsibilities required of the employee assigned to this job.

Key performance areas		% of time spent	Inputs (Responsibilities / activities / processes/ methods used)	Outputs (Expected results)
1	Schedule and Meeting Coordination	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a high level of confidential and professional PA support service to the Vice-Chancellor. • Maintain a daily schedule (electronic) for the co-ordination of the Vice-Chancellor's commitments. • Manage the VC's calendar across all functional areas and responsibilities ensuring that meetings align with VC's strategic priorities • Schedule regular meetings with key stakeholders, including the DVCs, COO, Registrar, the Chair and Deputy Chair of Council, the Ombud and the SRC President. • Ensure that all papers (electronic or paper) are received for attendance at daily meetings and other commitments. • Prepare correspondence and other documentation as requested by the Vice-Chancellor. • Liaise with Executives and PAs in high-level offices, UCT Exec PAs, CMD, DAD and meeting and event organisers to prioritise events and meetings in the VC's diary in line with strategic priorities. • Handle incoming phone calls. • Deal with high volumes of email requests and enquiries and respond timeously whenever possible. • Manage daily mail in conjunction with the OVC Administrative Officers and initiate responses where appropriate. • Advise the Vice-Chancellor of internal and external work commitment and deadlines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the confidentiality of sensitive information and handling it with the utmost discretion. Contributing to the smooth operation of the VC's responsibilities by providing a reliable and professional support service. This ensures that the VC can focus on core duties and responsibilities with confidence in the support provided. • A well-managed and up-to-date electronic schedule that supports the VC in efficiently navigating daily commitments, thereby contributing to the overall effectiveness and success of his/her role. • A well-organised and prioritised calendar for the VC, with meetings and events that are in line with strategic priorities. • The VC is kept abreast of any relevant matters impacting his/her office which results in timely resolution of issues and strengthened relationships amongst colleagues and key stakeholders. • All necessary documents and materials required for the meeting or commitment are gathered and available in hard copy or accessible electronically before the meeting or commitment begins. • Accurate and well-written documents that meet the VC's requirements and expectations. • A well-managed and organised VC's diary with scheduled events and meetings that align with UCT's strategic priorities. Effective coordination to ensure the availability and attendance of the VC in strategic initiatives and at key events and meetings. • Written and telephonic communications and queries are managed in an efficient and professional manner, • based on urgency or importance to ensure that critical and time-sensitive emails receive immediate attention, always maintaining a high standard of professionalism in order to present a positive image of UCT. • To provide the VC with a clear understanding of his/her work obligations and deadlines, allowing effective time management and planning.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with meeting participants and organisers, schedule, and confirm meeting venues and / or video- or tele-conference facilities or links and arrange dry runs and technical checks. Ensure the VC has the necessary links and passwords and is able to connect to remote meetings and arrange ICTS assistance. Manage a large number of speaking engagement requests. Prepare and distribute a weekly schedule which lists meetings and events with external stakeholders, school and student engagements, newsworthy events, VC's speeches, up-country trips, overseas trips, meetings with donors and alumni and any other relevant meetings so that the VC is kept informed about up-coming meetings and events. The weekly events schedule is also sent to the VC's speech-writer, the Global Visibility Office, VC's Special Advisor, Director: OVC, CMD and DAD. CMD and the VC's speech-writer are alerted to newsworthy events and can prepare executive briefs, speeches / talking points and order of proceedings timeously for events. The Global Visibility Office will take note of overseas trips and opportunities to meet with partners, the Development and Alumni Department are alerted when the VC meets with donors or alumni and when he/she will be travelling up-country and overseas so that they can arrange meetings and events with alumni and donors and prepare briefing notes and thumbnail profiles etc. timeously. The VC's Special Advisor is notified when the VC meets with stakeholders and the Director: OVC is alerted to meetings where a VC's report is required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively scheduling the meeting, confirming the necessary facilities, and communicating all relevant information to the VC and other participants. The VC will successfully connect to remote meetings using the provided links and passwords, joining without any technical issues and will be able to participate in the meeting effectively. The VC will deliver engaging, impactful and relevant presentations that meet the expectations of the audience and event organisers. The purpose of this schedule is to keep the VC informed about upcoming meetings and events, allowing time to prepare accordingly. By providing a comprehensive overview of the week's activities, the VC can effectively prioritise his/her time and ensure that he/she is fully prepared for each engagement. By sharing the events schedule with these individuals and departments, the university ensures that everyone is on the same page and can effectively support the VC in their engagements and events. It also allows for proper planning and preparation to make the most of these opportunities for the benefit of the university.
2	Travel and Event Management	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange flights, hotel accommodation, visas, ground transportation, and other travel logistics for the VC. Liaise with event organisers to coordinate event logistics for the VC including travel arrangements, communications, and pre-meeting materials and briefings. Advise on opportunities for meetings or engagements with key stakeholders. Prepare comprehensive and sometimes complex travel itineraries for overseas trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrupulous attention to detail of each trip to ensure a smooth and seamless travel experience for the VC, allowing him/her to focus on the business objectives and minimise any potential travel disruptions. Visa applications are prepared well in advance to avoid any last-minute delays in the return of the visa by the embassy concerned. Provide the VC with Executive briefing / OOPs and talking notes for the event, details of key participants, and any other relevant information. This helps the VC navigate the event effectively and ensures the VC's participation in the event is smooth, well-coordinated, and that he/she has all the necessary information and support. Meetings with key stakeholders overseas lead to improved relationships, increased understanding, stakeholder support and collaboration. A detailed travel itinerary that includes all the necessary information for the trip, such as flights, accommodation, transportation, meeting dates and times, event details, addresses, maps, contact details and any other relevant information.

3	Relationship Management	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as the point person for external institutions and individuals who need to contact the VC. • Work closely with the offices of the Chancellor and the Chair of Council. • Work closely with the Development and Alumni Department to schedule dates for donor and alumni events and meetings (locally and overseas) in order to assist the Vice-Chancellor in developing and maintaining relationships with donors, prospective donors, public figures, alumni, etc. and to ensure that profiles and thumbnails are received timeously for these meetings and events. • Monitor and track documents, projects and tasks, ensuring attention to time-sensitive issues and longer-term initiatives, providing relevant background information when required. • Prepare thorough briefings and provide relevant documents for meetings and travel when needed, including minutes. • Work closely with the Communications and Marketing Department to schedule dates for annual and ad hoc events, media interviews etc. and ensure that the VC has the relevant documentation e.g. Order of Proceedings for events and speaking engagements. • Work closely with the speech writers regarding speeches and talking points for up-coming events and on occasion, reports for up-coming meetings. • Work closely with various people on planning of the VC's overseas trips, relationships with other universities and strategic partnerships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To streamline communication between the VC and external entities, ensuring that interactions are smooth, timely, and reflect positively on UCT. • Facilitate the flow of information between the offices, ensuring that each office is well-informed about developments and decisions that impact on their respective roles. • Meticulous planning, relationship management, timely information gathering, and effective communication to support the VC in engaging with donors, alumni, and other key stakeholders. • Creating an organised and efficient system for monitoring and tracking, addressing both immediate and long-term needs, and facilitating effective communication with stakeholders. • Thorough preparation, effective organisation, and clear communication to support successful meetings and travel experiences. • Effective collaboration, meticulous planning, and attention to detail ensure that the VC's participation in events and media engagements is well-coordinated and professionally executed. • Eloquent and impactful speeches that effectively convey the VC's intended message at events, as well as VC's reports to Council, the UCT Foundation and Convocation, amongst others, that provide relevant information and align with the goals of Vision 2030. • Well-organised and fruitful overseas trips that contribute to UCT's global presence, enhance collaborations with other universities, and strengthen strategic partnerships for mutual benefit.
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4	Office Budget / Finances / Administration	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All financial matters to be dealt with promptly and according to policy. • Work within an office budget, keeping costs to a minimum. • Submit Subsistence & Travel applications for the VC's travel. • Post VC's and the PA's monthly Pcard expenses timeously on the online SAP Pcard reporting system, provide details of expenses and attach all supporting documentation. • Claim travel expenses from outside agencies when necessary and arrange reimbursement into the office fund. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate financial transactions, adherence to UCT Finance policies and procedures, and maintaining financial records with a high level of accuracy. • Operating within the allocated budget, demonstrating financial responsibility and ensuring that resources are used wisely. • Completing and submitting S&T applications accurately and in a timely manner ensuring that the VC's travel expenses are appropriately covered and in compliance with UCT's policies and procedures. • Posting expenses timeously and accurately resulting in an up-to-date and well-documented record of Pcard expenses. • Reimbursement of travel expenses, with the funds deposited into the designated office account. This process contributes to maintaining financial sustainability, ensuring that incurred travel costs are recovered in a timely manner, and supporting the overall financial well-being of the office.
5	Teamwork, Transformation and contribution to the effectiveness of the Service Area and Institutional citizenship	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide necessary back-up for other PAs and broader OVC team. Contribute to buddy-system with fellow PA colleagues. • Work in a flexible manner, create, maintain, and enhance constructive working relationships with other staff in the Vice Chancellor's Office, the Executive Team and their support staff, the wider University community and relevant external bodies, outside organisations, students and members of the public. • Continually review the service and seek ways to enhance and improve service delivery, keeping up to date with developments in IT and best practice in administration. • Proactively contribute to the creation of a welcoming and inclusive environment for the executive support team, the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, and the University as a whole. • Contribute to departmental and university wide initiatives and responsibilities. • Contribute to the University's commitment to environmental sustainability in order to reduce its waste, energy consumption and carbon footprint and deliver value for money services that optimise the use of resources. 	<p>A well-coordinated and supportive work environment where team members can rely on each other, ensuring that tasks are efficiently handled and workflow is smooth, even in the absence of a team member. This collaborative approach contributes to a positive and effective work culture within the OVC team.</p> <p>A harmonious and cooperative work environment, effective collaboration with diverse stakeholders, and a positive reputation for the Vice Chancellor's Office within the broader community.</p> <p>Making the best use of available resources, ensuring that service delivery aligns with the latest standards and utilises the most current IT advancements, which contributes to a responsive and forward-thinking approach in the Vice Chancellor's Office.</p> <p>A work environment where all individuals feel valued, respected, and included, which will enhance collaboration, creativity, and overall well-being within the team and contribute to the broader goal of creating an inclusive and positive atmosphere throughout the University community.</p> <p>A meaningful and positive impact on the success and progress of initiatives. This collaborative approach enhances the collective efforts toward achieving common goals and objectives.</p> <p>A measurable reduction in environmental impact, demonstrating the University's dedication to sustainability goals and optimising resource utilisation to ensure efficiency and cost-effectiveness.</p>

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Minimum qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A relevant NQF 6 or equivalent qualification. 			
Minimum experience (type and years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 10 years recent and relevant professional experience providing high-level executive administrative support in a fast-paced office setting, or educational equivalent effectively balancing competing priorities Experience with coordinating international travel and complex logistics. 			
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to work independently and take initiative; must be a quick learner, able to multi-task and easily adapt to changing circumstances. Advanced organisational skills and capacity to handle multiple assignments and meet deadlines with attention to detail and quality. Ability to effectively work in a team in a complex, fast-paced environment. Proficiency in Microsoft Office and familiarity with a range of productivity tools. Exceptional interpersonal skills including ability to interact professionally with culturally diverse staff, students, members of the public and public figures. Pleasant disposition, patience, a positive attitude and flexible working hours. Strong client service values. Communicate effectively in verbal and written formats. Ability to draft reports and synthesis information for the VC. 			
Knowledge	Knowledge of academic processes, PA work. Knowledge of a range of productivity tools.			
Professional registration or license requirements	None			
Other requirements (If the position requires the handling of cash or finances, other requirements must include 'Ability to handle cash or finances'.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of professionalism, confidentiality and client service orientation. Flexibility to work outside standard office hours and travel nationally or internationally as required, supporting the Vice-Chancellor's engagements. Ability to handle manage finances and or administration thereof. 			
Competencies (Refer to UCT Competency Framework)	Competence	Level	Competence	Level
	Communication	2	Stress tolerance	2
	Planning and Organisation	2	University Awareness	2
	Building interpersonal relationships	2	Analytical Thinking/Problem Solving	2
	Client/Student services support	2		

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Functions responsible for	Administration; logistics and all other functions within the Personal Assistant scope.
Amount and kind of supervision received	Minimal supervision – expected to work independently.
Amount and kind of supervision exercised	n/a
Decisions which can be made	All decisions within the scope of their own job.
Decisions which must be referred	All decisions that impact the broader OVC, budget related matters, external liaison decisions.

CONTACTS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Internal to UCT	All departments, faculties and UCT community, including students, SRC and unions.
External to UCT	Council members, Alumni, Funders, Donors, Dignitaries, Parents, Industry Partners, Other Higher Education institutions, Service Providers, all stakeholders interacting with the Office of the VC.