#### Trent University LogoEXEMPT JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Senior Director, Academics and Quality Assurance

**Job Number:** X-252 | VIP: 1041

**Band:** EXEMPT-10

**Department:** Office of the Provost & Vice-President, Academic

**Supervisor Title:** Provost & Vice-President, Academic

**Last Reviewed:**  November 21, 2024

#### **Job Purpose:**

Reporting to the Provost and Vice President Academic, the Senior Director, Academics and Quality Assurance has a significant level of responsibility and accountability within the academic portfolio. Representing the Provost, the Senior Director supports the University’s academic priorities and strategic initiatives by providing leadership and direction on matters that are essential to operations, reputation and the sustainability of the University. The Senior Director has extensive expertise and an understanding of academics, the University, its culture and their interrelationships to provide direction and problem-solving support on a wide range of issues.

Responsibilities are broad, diverse and complex in nature. The Senior Director deals with current and emerging problems or issues that require immediate attention and resolution; issues may be academic-specific or extend across the University. The Senior Director provides strategic advice and guidance, assesses potential risks and recommends solutions to minimize overall impact on students, faculty, staff or the university in its entirety. The Senior Director has the authority to empower committees, academic units, faculty, deans and staff.

Specific areas of responsibility include oversight for academic policies, academic committees, faculty personnel decisions and quality assurance.

#### Key Activities:

##### Strategic Initiatives and Academic Priorities

* The Senior Director works collaboratively with senior management to advance key initiatives and priorities that are of critical importance to the University. Builds and maintains effective relationships at all levels across the University
* Provides management on MCU related issues (e.g., review and modification of CIP codes as they relate to STEM programs; drafting of STEM Report to support Ministry funding; review of agreements and the need to seek legal advice/AVP review of financial commitments; interpretation and modification of academic regulations; understanding how experiential learning connects to SMA3 – Metric 7 and Ministry funding and information collected as part of the USC curriculum process). Anticipates needs and proactively resolves issues
* Leads quality assurance processes for new program development which directly impacts/supports student recruitment and enrolment, and the University’s financial wellbeing. Assessment of new investment required for launch of new program; all of which are incorporated into budget projects (e.g., instructional resources, course development, space requirements). Instrumental in setting and meeting timelines to ensure program is launched as planned
* Supports strategic initiatives/special projects at their induction and prior to their launch (e.g., preparation of grad data to assist with faulty staffing plans; researched co-op fees and prepared report for Board of Governors; process for microcredentials; support of successful eCampus VLS projects). Researches topics to further initiatives and decision-making (e.g., policies, tuition, comparable programs)
* Overarching understanding and ability to navigate the culture and political aspects of the University. Strong understanding of the interconnectedness of how academic functions fits within the overall broader university and the links between programming, services and policy (e.g., inclusion of new programs in University recruitment materials; connected external review process with the Provost’s Annual Academic Planning exercise; artificial intelligence as it pertains to academic integrity and student module offered through academic skills; faculty relations and awards).
* Provides interpretation, context and background information to advise and influence senior leadership in their decision-making. Draws upon past decisions implemented and documentation to support discussions and proposals (e.g., organizational structures, committee terms of reference, departmental reviews, and new/modified policies). Alerts the Provost to possible opportunities and potential risks based on Director’s knowledge and experience

##### Quality Assurance

* The Senior Director is the leading authority and university specialist in quality assurance, providing strategic direction and oversight for new program development, program review and curricular revision. The Senior Director has latitude to make independent decisions in all areas of quality assurance and is the primary contact for the Ministry and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance
* Strong understanding of sector and University’s priorities. Remains informed of current and relevant developments that may impact the approval of new degree programs (e.g., sector priorities – skills, competencies, job outcomes and the need to demonstrate labour market demand, tuition increases)
* Provides evidence of labour market demand and mandatory experiential learning for Ministry submissions. Responds to follow up requests from Quality Council and the Ministry, and revises initial submissions as required (e.g., program objectives/learning outcomes, library support, evidence of assessment and evaluation)
* Ensures that the University’s policy aligns with the Quality Assurance Framework and provides a culture of continuous improvement and the enhancement of student learning and experiences. Manages compliance issues and helps safeguard the University’s reputation for offering high quality programs. Initiates change and improvements to quality assurance policy and establishes best practices across the University
* Provides expert advice on the design and development of new programs, including the planning and timeline for launching of new degree programs. Responsible for a wide spectrum of planning, execution, reporting, and communications that involves effective and interrelated activities across University departments (Finance, Graduate, OIPA, CTL, Library) and committees (USC/GSC, AP&P, CPRC, Faculty Board, Senate)
* Strong understanding and knowledge of learning outcomes, pedagogy, assessment and evaluation

##### Academic Policies

* Provides direction for the development and implementation of academic policies. Responsible for identifying and initiating revisions to existing academic policies and the drafting of new policies. Oversight for the academic portion (degree and special programs) of the undergraduate academic calendar
* Collaborates and consults with senior administrators in the development/revision of academic policy
* Ensures alignment of academic policies with University policies and processes
* Interprets, advises and recommends on the application of university and academic policies, guidelines, and practices (e.g., merit, new department, academic integrity, alcohol, relocation, alcohol)
* Ensures changes are communicated and implemented within the University
* Approves exceptions to policy as required (e.g., academic integrity, closure of degree program, inclusion of allowable alcohol charges for recruitment and cyclical review)

##### University Committees

* Provides expertise and oversight for academic committees, ad hoc committees, and search committees for senior administrators. Senior Director has overall institutional knowledge of committees, their importance and relevance
* Responsible for major academic committees, including Senate subcommittees that have oversight for making recommendations to academic standards, curriculum and educational quality (e.g., Cyclical Program Review Committee, Academic Planning & Policy Committee, Undergraduate Studies Committee, Faculty Board, Provost’s Planning Group) several major committees, including Senate subcommittees that have responsibility for the oversight of academic standards and educational quality (e.g., review of degree programs, revision of academic policies)
* As a committee member, represents the Provost’s interests and University’s priorities; consults and communicates with senior administration; and informs Provost and Deans of emerging issues
* Develops best practices for committee deliberations and decision-making processes
* Initiates revisions and restructuring of committees, terms of reference and membership composition
* Develops committee work plans

##### Faculty Personnel and Relations

* Strong overarching knowledge and understanding of faculty complement, personnel issues and hiring practices (e.g., grievances, disciplinary, leaves, complaints, faculty MoUs). Develops guidelines, processes, and best practices (e.g., allocation of EYS, merit review process, adjunct faculty). Interprets and advises senior administration on faculty issues as they relate to the TUFA Collective Agreement
* Manages the University’s promotion and tenure process as consultant to the Committee on Academic Personnel and as advisor to the Provost
* Provides data analysis on faculty (TUFA and CUPE) to support new investment and budget decisions
* Extensive knowledge of faculty (e.g., placement on University committees, sensitivities, political issues)
* Supports the Provost and Deans/University Librarian with the recruitment and retention of faculty to the University; provides guidance on hiring practices and recommends faculty starting salaries

##### Financial Management

* Provides advice and direction to Provost on the development and implementation of the Provost’s budgets. Works closely with the Provost to determine new investment requirements and in-year expenditures
* Monitors and reports on the financial status of major strategic and operational priorities (e.g., start up funds, new course development, international travel, and endowment funds)
* Manages RFP processes related to consultative services and executive searches
* On behalf of the Provost, reviews and approves staffing requests (HRFs), and expenses from direct reports
* Approves funding requests to support events/activities, and new course development

#### Education Required:

* Master’s degree in higher education, public administration/policy or related field

#### Experience/Qualifications Required:

* Twelve to fifteen (12-15) years of experience in a post-secondary environment with evidence of progressive leadership experience
* **Academic Environment** – Demonstrated knowledge and experience with academic structures, standards, and expectations, as well as faculty priorities and university culture. In-depth knowledge of academic and support units as they relate to cross-functional collaboration and the enhancement of academic activities. Experience with academic planning, process improvement, and change management in an academic environment
* **Quality Assurance and Curriculum Design** – Demonstrated leadership and experience of quality assurance in higher education, specifically program development, evaluation and assessment, and curriculum revision. Proven success in translating quality assurance frameworks into practice and providing authoritative and effective advice and guidance. Demonstrated level of competency with program objectives, learning outcomes, curriculum mapping and strong understanding of pedagogical and educational practices
* **Problem Solving** – Ability to identify emerging issues of high importance and ensure all are addressed with an understanding of how unconnected activities and programs may have unintended repercussions. Ability to foster a culture of timely and evidence-based decision-making and accountability. Excellent analytical and critical thinking skills, including the ability to identify and propose solutions for existing issues as well as an ability to anticipate challenges and potential opportunities
* **Relationship Building and Communication** – Ability to establish credibility and ability to work with senior administrators, faculty and external stakeholders. Proven record of success in building relationships and communicating with diverse audiences on any number of issues. Evidence of competence and excellence in report writing. High level of integrity, and diplomacy to deal with issues in a balanced and fair manner
* **Academic and University Policy** – Extensive understanding and experience in policy development and implementation. Understanding of academic regulations and degree requirements
* **Portfolio Management** – Effectively manage and prioritize multiple activities, as they relate to the University’s strategic objectives, change initiatives and normal operations and functions, to meet commitments and deadlines. Ability to function effectively within an evolving, high volume and high-profile environment. Works well under pressure with outstanding management and planning skills
* **Higher Education** – Broad understanding of the goals and objectives of a university, governance processes (bicameral governance), and a solid understanding of the issues affecting higher education. Aware of current issues that impact the economic landscape in which the University operates
* **Financial Management** – Proven financial management with experience in budget development and allocation
* **Supervisory Experience** – Proven ability to manage staff and associated human resource functions