

HR191	<b>POSITION DESCRIPTION</b>	 <b>UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN</b> IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD
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**NOTES**

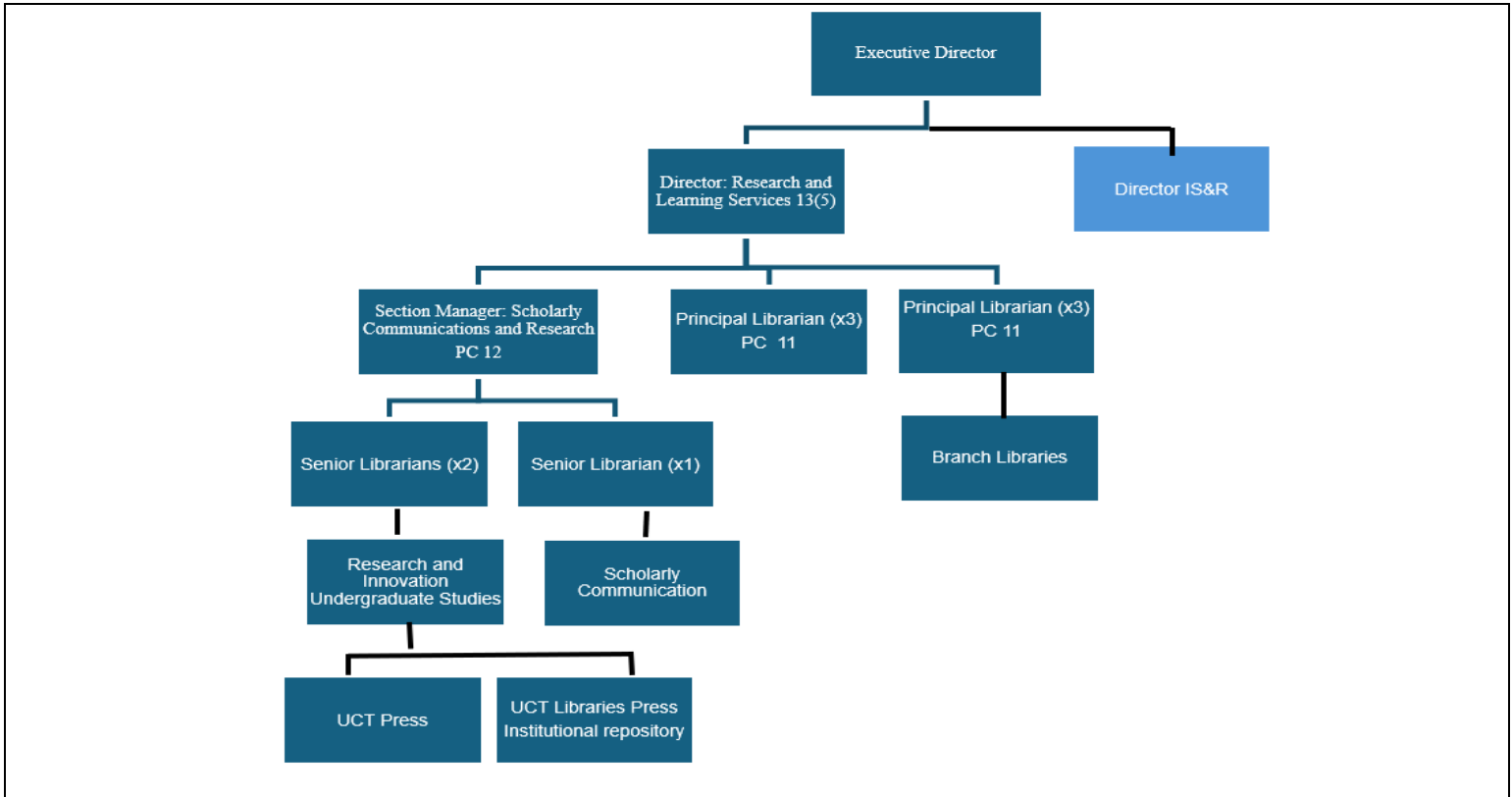
- Forms must be downloaded from the UCT website: <https://forms.uct.ac.za/forms.htm>
- This form serves as a template for the writing of position descriptions.
- A copy of this form is kept by the line manager and the position holder.

**POSITION DETAILS**

Position title	Director: Research and Learning Services		
Job title (HR Business Partner to provide)			
Position grade (if known)	13(4)	Date last graded (if known)	12.01.2026
Academic faculty / PASS department	Libraries		
Academic department / PASS unit			
Division / section	Research and Learning Services		
Date of compilation	12 January 2026		

**ORGANOGRAM**

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



**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this position is to provide strategic leadership, vision, partnership and institutional influence for research and learning services across UCT Libraries, ensuring alignment with the university's academic mission and vision. This role drives policy development, fosters innovation, and cultivates partnerships at both national and international levels, thereby positioning UCT Libraries as a leader in scholarly communication, research support, and digital transformation. As a member of the Directorate, the incumbent works collaboratively across the library system to ensure the integration, coherence, and continual enhancement of services in support of the University's broader academic goals.

**CONTENT**

Key performance areas		% of time spent	Inputs (Responsibilities / activities / processes/ methods used)	Outputs (Expected results)
E.g.	General and office administration	25%	<p>Takes, types up and distributes minutes and agendas for monthly departmental meeting.</p> <p>Greets visitors, enquires as to the nature of their visit and directs them to the appropriate staff member</p>	<p>All staff members receive an electronic copy of accurate minutes and agendas, in the departmental template/format, a week before the meeting.</p> <p>Visitors are directed to appropriate staff member in a professional and efficient manner</p>
1	Strategic Leadership and vision	30%	<p><b><i>Vision and Direction:</i></b> Define and implement long-term strategies for Research and Learning Services with institutional priorities. Research emerging trends in scholarship and library services to inform strategy and drive innovation.</p> <p><b><i>Policy and Strategy Development</i></b> Develop, implement, and monitor strategies, frameworks, and policies that enhance the support for teaching, learning, and research. Influence policy, practice and initiatives that expand the library's role at national, continental, and international levels.</p> <p><b><i>Partnerships and Networking</i></b> Build and sustain collaborations with academic, research, and professional partners locally and globally. Take leadership in national and international forums to influence library policy and practice.</p> <p><b><i>Impact and Accountability</i></b> Ensure that services demonstrably support institutional teaching, learning, and research priorities. Establish measurable outcomes and regularly assess services to demonstrate impact, maintain relevance, and excellence.</p>	<p>A section that is strategically aligned with the university's mission and is proactive and responsive to future needs. Recognition as an innovative leader in shaping research and learning services.</p> <p>Robust frameworks that support teaching, learning, and research. Expanded influence of the library beyond the institution to national, continental, and global spheres. Consistent and sustainable practices that strengthen the library's role in advancing open scholarship and equitable access.</p> <p>Strong collaborations that extend the library's reach and impact. Enhanced institutional reputation through active participation in national and international networks.</p> <p>Clear evidence of the library's contribution to teaching, learning, and research priorities. Strengthened credibility and trust with institutional leadership, funders, and stakeholders.</p>

2	Institutional policy and governance	15%	<p>In collaboration with the Executive Director (ED), the Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serves as a key member of the Library’s senior leadership team, contributing to overarching strategic planning and development, policy formulation, and resource allocation</li> <li>Participates in high-level decision-making processes about the library system’s policies and financial resources</li> <li>Identifies and prioritises services and activities and ensures alignment with the budget and other available resources.</li> </ul> <p>Contribute to university-wide academic and research development.</p>	<p>The Libraries serve users effectively and efficiently, incorporating the latest technologies and best international practices relevant to our context.</p> <p>Policies and resources are directed to appropriate services and collections, with informed decisions made regarding library priorities and strategic directions.</p> <p>Services are coordinated across all teams and locations, including branches, to provide consistent, high-quality support. This coordinated focus ensures that roles and priorities are understood throughout all areas of the libraries.</p> <p>Collaboration and a team's mindset is strengthened across UCT Libraries. Staff skills and talents are optimized.</p>
3	Leadership development and talent management	15%	<p><b><i>Build leadership capacity within the Libraries</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide direction and guidance to line managers (1 x PC12, 6 x PC11)</li> <li>Empower managers to take ownership of decisions taken.</li> <li>Mentor and support professional development.</li> <li>Foster a collaborative and high-performing leadership and team-based culture.</li> <li>Monitor performance against set goals and objectives.</li> <li>Ensure optimal efficiency of the R&amp;L Section (a total of 65 staff ranging from PC05 to PC12)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Capacity Building and Team Leadership</i></b></p> <p>Foster a culture of excellence, innovation and continuous learning</p> <p>Foster a collaborative, inclusive, and professionally developing environment for the Research and Learning team.</p>	<p>A cohesive, strategically aligned, and well-managed senior management team and section</p> <p>Strengthened leadership capacity and readiness for succession.</p> <p>Enhanced library service delivery and innovation.</p> <p>Defined accountability with clear evidence of impact on institutional priorities.</p> <p>A highly skilled, motivated, and innovative workforce.</p> <p>A sustainable culture of excellence, adaptability, and continuous learning.</p> <p>Improved staff retention, morale, and leadership pipeline within the library.</p>

4	Innovation and service transformation	15%	<p>Research, design and deliver cutting-edge, user-centered library and information services that scaffold the development of research skills throughout the student experience</p> <p>Leads digital transformation initiatives to improve access, discoverability, and impact of knowledge, including the use of technology and active learning techniques in information fluency</p> <p>Collaborate with faculty and research centres to integrate library resources and expertise into grants, research projects, and institutional reviews</p> <p>Investigate, pilot, and drive innovations in scholarly communications, open access, research data services, and digital scholarship</p>	<p>The Library is positioned as a proactive partner in the research lifecycle.</p> <p>Seamless, user-centered services that contribute to institutional goals.</p> <p>A future-ready library poised at the forefront of digital transformation and service excellence.</p>
5	External engagement and partnerships	15%	<p>Serve as an advocate, champion, and representative of UCT Libraries within national and international networks</p> <p>Thought Leadership and Knowledge Dissemination: Actively network with peers and stakeholders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position the library as a thought leader</li> <li>• Influence the direction of library and information discourse</li> <li>• Advance strategic collaborations and partnerships</li> </ul> <p>Research and secure strategic national and international collaboration</p> <p>Provide strategic leadership in identifying, securing, and cultivating funding opportunities for priority projects</p>	<p>Enhanced Institutional Visibility: strengthen the library's profile and influence within academic and library communities through continued engagement and publications.</p> <p>Influence on Policy and Practice: forge stronger collaborations with national and international peers, leading to joint initiatives, projects, and knowledge exchange.</p> <p>The Director and institution are established as authoritative voices in the field through peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, and professional outputs.</p> <p>Enhanced institutional profile and influence in the academic and library communities through sustained engagement and published scholarship.</p>
6	Academic publishing leadership (UCT Press, UCTL Press, and the African Platform for Open Scholarship (APOS))	10%	<p>Strengthen the strategic relationship with the UCT Press Board and ensure effective management of the Press</p> <p>Oversee UCT Libraries' academic publishing programme, including scholarly journals, monographs, and open access platforms.</p> <p>Develop and implement publishing policies that align with international standards and institutional priorities.</p> <p>Membership of and participate in national and international publishing forums, such as IFLA and Library Publishing Coalition.</p> <p>Drive innovation in digital publishing while ensuring compliance with copyright, licensing, and open access mandates.</p> <p>Build and maintain partnerships with academic departments, research centers, and external scholarly organizations to expand UCT and UCTL's publishing reach.</p>	<p>Both UCT Press and UCTL Press are positioned as strategic publishing partners within the University.</p> <p>APOS is recognized as the collaborative platform for open publishing on the African continent.</p>

			Secure sustainable funding models and explore revenue-generating opportunities for publishing initiatives. Ensure quality assurance through peer review processes and editorial governance.	
7.	Transformation		Contributing to the University's transformation agenda through participation in the working community of the office.	

## MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Minimum qualifications	NQF 9 in LIS			
Minimum experience (type and years)	15-20 years of experience with at least 10 years of demonstrated senior line management experience in an academic library at a research-intensive academic or research-related environment			
Skills	<p>Strategic Leadership</p> <p>Decision-Making and Problem-Solving – Demonstrating exceptional analytical skills and sound judgment to navigate complex scenarios. Utilize relevant policies, data analyses, and market trends to make informed decisions that advance organizational goals.</p> <p>Service Innovation – Leading transformative initiatives by fostering a culture of creativity and collaboration. This includes designing and implementing innovative services and solutions that meet current stakeholders’ needs while anticipating future demands and industry shifts.</p> <p>Networking at National and International Levels – Building strong professional networks to enhance the organization's influence and visibility. This involves forming strategic partnerships and collaborations that expand the organization's reach and efficacy on both national and international platforms.</p> <p>People and Talent Management – Committed to developing high-performing teams through targeted recruitment, continuous professional development, and strategic mentorship of senior staff. Promoting an inclusive and motivational work environment that empowers employees and improves overall organizational performance.</p> <p>Communication and Influence – Acting as a credible representative of the organization by effectively articulating its vision and advocating for key initiatives. Using strategic communication techniques to influence decision-makers, stakeholders, and the broader community to align with the organization’s objectives.</p> <p>Digital and Technological Competency – Leveraging cutting-edge technology to optimize service delivery and operational efficiency. This involves using digital tools and platforms to create impactful strategic outcomes, thereby enhancing the organization’s overall effectiveness and innovation capacity.</p>			
Knowledge	<p>In-depth knowledge and comprehensive understanding of the LIS discipline at national and international levels</p> <p>Awareness of the higher education and research landscape, including current trends, challenges, and opportunities in the global and African higher education sectors.</p> <p>Familiarity with research support and learning services, covering the entire research lifecycle, bibliometrics, research impact assessment, academic integrity, and teaching &amp; learning support services. This includes scholarly communication and publishing, digital libraries, and emerging technologies, and traditional academic library services.</p> <p>Record of scholarship or professional service in the field of academic librarianship</p>			
Professional registration or license requirements	Registration with the national LIS professional body, LIASA			
Other requirements (If the position requires the handling of cash or finances, other requirements must include 'Ability to handle cash or finances'.)				
Competencies (Refer to <a href="#">UCT Competency Framework</a> )	Competence	Level	Competence	Level
	Analytical thinking / Problem solving	4	Developing Others	3
	Building interpersonal relationships	3	Communication	3
	Building partnerships	3	Conceptual thinking	4
	Client / Student Service and Support	3	Continuous learning	4

## SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Functions responsible for	A staff cohort of 65 plus staff spread across 7 branch libraries, and a team of student assistants
Amount and kind of supervision received	High-level strategic supervision where impact can have negative implications for the University
Amount and kind of supervision exercised	The Director has strategic and operational oversight of Section Managers and Principal Librarians, guiding the planning, development, and delivery of all library services and initiatives.

Decisions which can be made	The Director exercises independent decision-making in the planning, development, and delivery of library strategies, services, and operations as it relates to Research and Learning Services
Decisions which must be referred	Decisions that carry significant financial, legal, or institutional implications are taken in consultation with the Executive Director

**CONTACTS AND RELATIONSHIPS**

Internal to UCT	Academic Deans and Department Heads; Faculty and Academic Staff; Library Working Group; Administrative and Support Units (Finance and HR); University Committees and Working Group
External to UCT	Funders, International NGOs, Executive of AAU, University Library Management at national and international level