

ACTPS Recruitment Policy and Guidelines

Tool 2 – Writing a Position Description



What is the main goal?

The Position Description defines the position, the duties and responsibilities and the requirements of the role. It serves several purposes during the employee life cycle, from providing information about the role during the recruitment process, to giving both the manager and the employee a good understanding of what is expected in the role and also assists with performance development plans and the identification of learning and development opportunities.

During the recruitment process, the Position Description provides potential applicants with information about the role, assisting them to determine their suitability. When drafting a Position Description, the goal is to convey succinct and accurate information that will be easily understood by someone who has never encountered the role. A well written Position Description is more likely to attract applicants who are the best fit for the role.

Conduct a Job Analysis

Job Analysis is the process of gathering and analysing information about the content and the requirements of a job, as well as the context in which the job is performed. It is an opportunity for any manager to critically analyse and understand the outputs and accountabilities of their team and the individual positions in their team or business area, and also consider the potential changes that may take place in future. Job Analysis will determine what the overall purpose of any role is and will inform the development of the duties and responsibilities as well as the requirements. The Position Description will result from a detailed analysis of what is required in the position. Please seek advice and assistance from your Directorate Human Resources area.

Things to consider:

- What is the position's classification, salary range, work location and is it required full-time or part-time or on a shift work arrangement?
- Consider current and future requirements of the team and the position.
- What are the main duties and responsibilities of the position? What outcomes is the employee expected to achieve and deliver?
- What capabilities are required to succeed in the role? Outline the required knowledge, skills and behavioural capabilities.

Did you know?

Mandatory qualifications can only be included where a source of authority exists under industrial processes (e.g. classifications in awards and work level standards). Otherwise, qualifications can only be requested as "highly desirable" or "desirable" in the Position Description.

For more information, refer to: Tool 9 – Understanding Pre-Employment Checks

- What are some possible, measurable key performance indicators?
- How will the role contribute to the team, branch and Directorate's outputs?
- What level of responsibility is required?
- What is the reporting structure of the position? Does the position have supervisory / leadership responsibilities?
- Are there any citizenship and/or security clearance requirements?
- Are there any other requirements such as licences, professional registrations, physical fitness and other standards inherent to the nature of the job?
- What qualifications would be required? Are these mandatory or desirable qualifications?
- Are there any transferable skills that can be considered?

Evaluate the position's classification

If the duties, responsibilities, and requirements of the position have changed, or the position is a new position, or the relevant union or an employee has requested a review of classification, managers must take the necessary action to ensure the classification reflects the true nature of the position before advertisement. The Work Level Standards and Classification Schedules found on the employment portal should be used for the assessment of the classification.

When writing a Position Description:

Always ensure that you are using the latest template for your Directorate. There is a generic ACTPS template (**see Tool 3 – Position Description template**), but some Directorates have customised it and the templates are updated from time to time. The template contains information and guidance material to assist with the drafting of the document.

For the latest Position Description template, please refer to:

Tool 3 – Position Description template

- ✓ Provide a brief overview of the Directorate, division and business unit (where appropriate) and a summary or overview of the overall purpose of the position
- ✓ Include information about ACTPS and directorate specific values and the code of conduct
- ✓ Provide an overview or summary of the role, detailing what the position does and why it does it. Explain how the position contributes to the division and/or business unit's core business and purpose. Include details about shift work and rosters.
- ✓ The Position Description should provide details of the duties, responsibilities and accountabilities of the role, starting with the most critical. This is detailed in the **"WHAT YOU WILL DO"** section. List the main duties/responsibilities in order of their importance and criticality to the role. Start sentences with an active verb (the action), follow with the context of the activity performed and

the purpose (required outcome or standards) of the activity. Add a KPI measure if relevant and appropriate.

Example: Maintain the Division's records management system in accordance with ACT Government guidelines. Provide monthly reports to the Manager detailing all changes.

Example: Consult with community organisations and other stakeholders in relation to strategic policy issues.

- ✓ The person requirements are captured in the **"WHAT YOU REQUIRE"** section. These are the criteria, capabilities or competencies that any individual occupying the role will need to have to successfully perform the duties of the role. This section is divided into the **"Professional / Technical Skills and Knowledge"** and **"Behavioural Capabilities"** sub-sections. The **"Compliance Requirements / Qualifications"** sub-section is the last in this section.
- ✓ Ensure Technical Skills and Knowledge, as well as all Behavioural Capabilities are relevant and easily understood. Keep it simple and separate the capabilities, i.e. include only one capability in each statement. Think carefully about what capabilities a successful performer in the role will have, and capture these.

Example: Knowledge of Microsoft Windows Server and Desktop platforms.

Example: The ability to develop and maintain productive working relationships with team members and stakeholders at all levels of the organisation.

- ✓ Write the Position Description in plain language, be succinct and accurate.
- ✓ Write sentences in the present tense and use the active voice.
- ✓ A statement about the ACTPS prescribed core values of respect, integrity, collaboration and innovation, as well the related signature behaviours is included in the template. Add any relevant or additional Directorate-specific information.
- ✗ **DON'T** Limit the qualities, capabilities or attributes required for the position to someone who is currently, or has previously, performed the role.
- ✗ **DON'T** use jargon or acronyms that people outside the ACTPS may not know or understand.
- ✗ **DON'T** use discriminatory language. This includes references to age, gender or marital status. Language used should include **all** rather than exclude **any** potentially suitable applicants. Focusing on the capabilities required to be successful in the role, ensures equity and allows the Position Description to accurately reflect the position requirements.

Review

This document is an attachment to the ACTPS Recruitment Policy and Guidelines 2021 and is due for review in line with the policy.

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