

Purpose

A Position Description (PD) outlines the **primary purpose, significant responsibilities, inherent job requirements** and **nature of the job**. It's not intended to record every task performed in the job or every expectation of the occupant - these are captured in individual work plans.

Importantly, a PD should be an honest and accurate reflection of the position **as you require it to be performed now**. The PD will:

1. Identify and define each role, particularly the inherent (essential) requirements
2. Clarify why a role exists, the key objectives and areas of responsibility
3. Link the role to the business plan – how does the position contribute to reaching these goals?
4. Enable each role to be classified in accordance with Council's Enterprise Agreement
5. Provide the basis for a sound, valid and fair selection process which has regard to the gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness measures specified in Council's Workforce Plan and are requirements under *Section 48(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 2020*
6. Include the relevant components of our Core Capability Framework
7. Set out the Key Selection Criteria to enable applicants to be compared against a set of assessable criteria to identify the best applicant based on merit. Consider what skills you require, rather than a focus on qualifications and/or a defined length of experience.

Relationship to Council's Enterprise Agreement

Council's [Enterprise Agreement](#) incorporates the former Victorian Local Authorities Award 2001. It is this Award that sets out the minimum requirements for PDs, including:

1. that PDs are to be reviewed annually in consultation with the employee, ideally during the annual PDP
2. the competencies used to decide the Band level of each position. At Council, we have an eight band classification structure, plus Senior Executive Officer and Senior Officer contracts for positions classified above Band 8.

Templates

Templates are available and are to be used to ensure a consistent look and feel to the documents. The goal is to present a professional and plain English document that is not cluttered with unnecessary and repetitive detail.

[The templates are all available to download from The Source.](#)

There are four PD templates. Each aligns with the applicable Core Capabilities for the level. The relevant template is to be used depending on the type of role:

1. Team Member (positions without people leader responsibilities)
2. People Leader (positions with people management/supervision responsibilities below Business Unit Manager level, including Coordinators)
3. Manager (Business Unit Managers)
4. Executive (Directors)

Writing style

1. Use plain English. Visit [The Plain English Foundation for](#) tips and tricks and resources
2. Avoid gendered language. After writing the PD, it is recommended you copy and paste the text into this [free online gender decoder tool](#) and adjust if the PD is heavily skewed towards a particular gender.
3. Ensure you have only included the 'must have's' in your list of requirements – a long list of requirements can result in fewer women applying.
4. Avoid using acronyms and jargon as this can prevent, for example, talented young people from applying for entry-level positions because they feel unqualified.

5. As per [Council's Corporate Style Guide](#), don't use -
- semicolons after dot points
 - & (show as and)
 - It is (show as it's)
 - Avoid acronyms. If you must use an acronym, define it first followed by the acronym in brackets following the definition, e.g., Maternal and Child Health (**MCH**). Then, in further references through the PD, use the acronym MCH only.
 - Use Australian English (**s** and not **z** – organisation, summarise, maximise, etc).
 - If your bullet points include a large amount of information, use full sentence bullet points – start with a capital letter and end with a fullstop. Avoid bullet points longer than 3 sentences.
 - Use capital letters when writing a publication/department name in full for the first time (i.e write the Playgroup Support Officer for the first time then the "officer" thereafter.

Sections

Within each template, there are multiple sentences/sections/prompts highlighted in yellow. These are for your reference and are to be deleted before the PD is finalised.

Position details	• Complete each box
Position Objectives	• Why does the job exist? If the job was being performed successfully, what impact would it have on the community or customers • Include only 1-3 primary objectives
Key Selection Criteria Parts 1 and 2	Part 1 • What are the 6 or 7 essential knowledge, skills, attitudes, qualifications the position occupant must possess now to enable them to competently deliver the position objectives? • Job applicants are shortlisted and assessed against these criteria. • We only use 'essential' criteria. We do not include 'desirable' criteria. Criteria of secondary importance should not be included but if absolutely necessary, say 'preferably with' or 'will be highly regarded'. • You must be able to assess each one in terms of observable behaviour. This is why 'behavioural' questions are used during the selection process. • Criterion based on years of experience may not be lawful and of limited value because years of experience does not equate to competency. Instead, base the criteria on the knowledge or skills that would have been developed whilst gaining the experience [including transferrable skills]. • You must be able to assess each knowledge, skill, attribute on its own merits, so each must be standalone, i.e. instead of 'oral and written communication skills', include as two separate criteria: 1. 'Well-developed oral communication skills' 2. 'Advanced written communication skills' • Don't overstate skills by requiring a tertiary qualification where a lesser qualification or relevant transferrable skills gained through experience would suffice. • Be specific about any qualifications that are required, including the variety that would be considered. • Avoid using criteria that could only be obtained if the person had previously worked in the advertised position. Skills and knowledge are transferrable and can be trained. • Don't use gendered language. Be mindful of unconscious biases and terms which may directly or indirectly discriminate. • Under each heading, list only the main responsibilities and outcomes. Don't list tasks - these belong in the work plan. There is no need for repetition.

	Use action verbs to start each statement. A list of suggested action verbs is found at the back of this guide.
	Part 2 - Only list licences, accreditations, registrations, and certificates that are mandatory for the position - Ensure criteria do not directly or indirectly discriminate against a person with a particular attribute or disability. For example, requiring a driver's licence where the role does not require travel for work purposes, or where alternative transport means would still enable the work to be carried out.

Position Specific Responsibilities	First Aid – If the position does not require the occupant to hold and maintain a First Aid & CPR certificate, delete this entire section. Managers have specific responsibilities for first aid activities and there are three mandatory statements that must be included in each manager PD.
Core Organisational Capabilities	- All PDs are required to reference Council's Core Capabilities. - The PD templates include the relevant capabilities appropriate for the level of the role
REACH Values	- All PDs are required to reference Council's REACH values. - The PD templates include the REACH values as an attachment
Organisational Responsibilities	These are included in every position description regardless of position. They are obligations relevant to every position

Inherent requirements of the position Uses include: - Pre-employment capacity checks - Consideration of reasonable workplace adjustments - Improved information for job applicants	Flexible Work Policy	- This paragraph must be included in every office-based position PD. - Delete statement if duties are predominantly field based
	Vision & Hearing requirements	If applicable, check the relevant box - School Crossing Supervisors require vision and hearing tests - Jobs exposed to noisy environments require biennial hearing tests at Council's expense.
	Cognitive requirements	- Every PD must have the cognitive requirements of the job identified - Consider what the role involves and check the relevant frequency - For emotional resilience, it is best to be as specific as possible about the types of interactions the role has
	Physical requirements	- Every PD must have the physical requirements of the job identified - Only jobs that have >10-15% of the day spent on physical requirements will have a Task Analysis for the role which is prepared by a qualified allied health professional. Where this is the case, copy/paste information from the Task Analysis. - For jobs with <10-15% physical requirements, use your knowledge of the job and check the applicable box to indicate frequency

Band descriptors

These are defined in Council's Enterprise Agreement. Each band level has specific detailed descriptors that are used to decide and justify the Band level of the job.

For guidance, each template provides a summary of Bands 1-8 descriptors under each of these headings.

[Refer to The Source](#)

Descriptor	Notes
Accountability and Extent of Authority	Indicates what the position is directly held responsible and accountable for achieving. Consider: • The prime responsibility of the position • The limits of authority and what freedom to act the position has (is it controlled or limited?) • The type of documents the position can approve and officially sign for on behalf of Council (internal and external) • Who the position gives direction to • Under what level of supervision / management does the position operate • Does the position provide formal input into policy development? • What delegations apply?
Judgement and Decision-Making Skills	Covers the degree of discretion in procedures, processes, methods etc., the degree of guidance, the advice that is available and the extent/complexity of problem solving. Consider: • In what specific areas can the occupant make decisions independently without the guidance or approval of supervisors? • What types of decisions or formal recommendations can the occupant make? • What judgement is required on methods, procedures, and equipment? • How clearly procedures should be understood and documented • The degree of problem solving involved / problem solving techniques • The types of problems • What degree of guidance and advice is available?
Specialist Knowledge and Skills	Include the skills and attributes required to meet the requirements of the role. <i>Without these skills and attributes, the incumbent will not be able to meet the requirements of the role.</i> Consider: • Specific skill requirements not covered by other descriptors • Degree of skill required in each area • Operation of equipment • Required understanding of organisational context, goals or policies • Understanding of underlying principles • Budgeting and financial requirements • Ability to provide training in specialist areas • The application of a theoretical or scientific discipline

Descriptor	Notes
Interpersonal Skills	List only the essential interpersonal skills required. Consider: • Skills in oral communication and with whom • Skills in written communication – including the level of sophistication in correspondence and reports produced • Ability to gain co-operation and assistance from clients and other employees • Ability to discuss and resolve problems – internally and externally • Ability to persuade, convince or negotiate (*Note negotiation is only to be used at Band 8) • Ability to lead, motivate and develop staff
Management Skills	List only the essential management skills required. Consider: • Skills in managing time, setting priorities, planning and organising work • Degree of knowledge required in personnel practices • Staff supervisory or management skills • Understanding of, and ability to implement, personnel practices including equal opportunity, health and safety, training and development • Requirements for achieving objectives within available resources and timetable • Project management • Contribution to staffing strategies

Approval procedure

The PD process will be moving to an online form in the near future. In the meantime, we request you follow this process to ensure audit obligations are met.

Particularly, if the proposed change would likely result in a significant change to the person's role, such as key responsibilities, supervisory responsibilities or outcomes to be delivered, contact an OD team member for advice. It could be that what you propose will trigger 'Introduction of Change' process and obligations as per Council's Enterprise Agreement.

1. If reviewing an existing PD, all affected staff members working to that PD must be consulted about the proposed change.
2. Open the relevant template from [The Source](#) or [Objective](#) and save draft in the relevant directorate folder in [Objective > Position Descriptions \(draft\)](#) - qA308055.
3. After consultation with staff, send a link to the draft PD from Objective to the manager for review.
4. Once reviewed the manager to send a link to the draft PD from Objective to OD to review and / or approve.
5. During this process, you may request an external review of the banding level, which OD can arrange for you.
6. OD (usually Pierre Rosenkotter) will review the PD and liaise with the initiator if changes are required. Once changes are agreed, the initiator to send the PD to Manager and Director for their electronic signatures.
7. Once signed by Manager and Director, OD will initiate the Objective Approval workflow as final the approval step.
8. OD will send a copy of the approved PDF version to the initiator to arrange for each affected employee to sign and date.
 - a. If it is a **very minor change**, (such as a simple word change or names of compliance or stakeholder bodies) then the PD must be signed by every affected staff member. After manager, director and employee have signed, then a signed and dated copy must be filed into each staff member's personnel file. Use this naming convention: Surname, Name yyyy/mm/dd Change in Position Description
 - b. However, if it is a **change of title, team, or reporting relationship**, a copy of the signed PD (manager, director and employee) must be sent to zzOrgDevAdmin with an agreed effective date of change. Acknowledgement will be sent to the employee by OD.

- c. Further, if it is a **rebanding**, the Variation to Employment form must also be approved and signed by the CEO prior to sending to zzOrgDevAdmin. A letter confirming the rebanding will be sent by OD to the employee.



Please contact any member of the OD team for support

Verbs for defining responsibilities (with thanks to Meerkin & Apel, Lawyers)

The action verbs on the following pages should be used in defining the duties for the position description. These verbs establish skill levels and so assist with developing selection criteria.

Account	To give a report on; to furnish a justifying analysis or explanation.
Achieve	To bring to a successful conclusion.
Act	To perform a specified function.
Adapt	To suit or fit any modification.
Advise	To recommend a course of action; to counsel; to give advice to (not to tell or inform).
Analyse	To study the factors of a situation or problem in detail in order to determine the solution or outcome.
Anticipate	To foresee events, trends, consequence or problems.
Approve	To sanction officially; to accept as satisfactory; to ratify (thereby assuming responsibility).
Arrange	To make preparation for an event; to put in proper order.
Assemble	To collect or gather together in a predetermined order; to fit together the parts of.
Assign	To fix, specify or designate; to prescribe in assigning responsibility.
Arbitrate	To make a judgement; to decide in a dispute.
Assist	To lend aid; to help; to give support to.
Attend	To be present.
Audit	To examine officially with intent to verify.
Authorise	To approve; to empower through vested authority.
Budget	To plan expenditures.
Build	To construct.
Calculate	To make a mathematical computation.
Check	To verify; to compare with a source.
Code	To put into words or symbols used to represent words.
Collaborate	To work with and act jointly with others.
Collect	To gather or assemble into one body or place, usually for further study or examination.
Communicate	To impart a verbal or written message; to transmit information.
Compare	To examine for the purpose of discovering resemblances or differences.
Compile	To collect (information); to compose out materials from other documents.
Complete	To finish; to fully carry out.
Compute	To determine or calculate mathematically.
Conduct	To carry on; to have the direction of; to direct the executive of
Confer	To compare views; to consult.
Confirm	To give approval to; to assure the validity of.
Consolidate	To bring together.
Consult	To confer; to seek the advice of others.
Contact	To communicate with.
Control	To exercise directing, guiding or restraining power over; to check or regulate; to keep within limits.
Co-ordinate	To bring into common action; to harmonise; to integrate.
Correct	To make or set right; to alter or adjust to confirm to a standard.
Correlate	To connect systematically; to establish a mutual or reciprocal relation.
Correspond	To communicate with.
Counsel	To advise; to consult with.
Create	To bring into existence; to produce through imaginative skill.
Delegate	To commission another to perform tasks or duties which may carry specific degrees of accountability and authority.
Demonstrate	To illustrate and explain, especially with examples.
Design	To conceive, create and execute according to plan.
Determine	To fix conclusively or authoritatively; to decide; to order; to come to a decision concerning, as a result of investigation, reaction etc; to settle; to give a definite direction or impetus to.

Develop	To evolve, promote or make active a plan, program or course of action, usually without benefit of prior conclusion or determination.
Devise	To form in the mind by new combinations or applications of ideas or principles; to invent.
Direct	To give an order or instruction to; to cause the following of a course of action.
Discuss	To exchange views for the purpose of arriving at a conclusion.
Disseminate	To spread information or ideas (usually in the sense of a diffuse or widespread audience).
Distribute	To apportion or deal out as in distributing literature or mail.
Draft	To write or compose papers or documents in rough, preliminary or final form, usually for clearance and approval by others.
Encourage	To inspire with spirit, hope, to give help or patronage to.
Endorse	To support or recommend.
Ensure	To make certain of.
Establish	To set up; to institute; to place on a firm basis.
Estimate	To forecast future requirements.
Evaluate	To appraise; to consider the value of.
Examine	To investigate; to scrutinise; to subject to enquiry or inspection; to test by an appropriate method.
Exchange	To give or take one thing in return for another.
Execute	To give effect to; to follow out or through to the end, as a purpose.
Exercise	To bring to bear or employ actively (as in exercising authority or influence).
Expedite	To accelerate the process or progress of.
Facilitate	To make easy or less difficult (usually by doing something to advance the accomplishment of an act).
File	To arrange in a methodical manner.
Follow up	To pursue closely in order to check progress.
Formulate	To develop or devise a statement of policy or procedures; to put in a systematised statement as in a statement of procedure.
Forward	To send or transmit onward (usually in the sense of forwarding from one point of activity to another).
Foster	To promote the growth or development of.
Furnish	To provide what is necessary for; to supply; to give.
Gather	To collect; to harvest; to accumulate and place in order.
Generate	To bring into existence; to originate by a vital or chemical process.
Govern	To exercise continuous sovereign authority over, to control and direct the making and administration of authority over; to hold in check; to have decisive influence.
Identify	To establish the identity of; to associate with some interest.
Implement	To carry out; to perform acts essential to the execution of a plan or program; to give effect to.
Improve	To make something better.
Inform	To tell or make known; to communicate knowledge to; to acquaint.
Initiate	To originate to introduce in the first instance; to cause or bring to pass by original act as in originating a plan, policy or procedure.
Innovate	To exercise creativity in introducing something new or in making changes.
Inspect	To examine or determine; to critically analyse for suitability.
Install	To place in office; to establish in an indicated place, condition, or status; to set up for use in service.
Institute	To establish in a position or office; to originate
Instruct	To teach; to direct on the basis of law or technology.
Interpret	To clarify or explain.
Interview	To obtain facts or opinions through inquiry or examination of various sources.
Invent	To think up or imagine; to create.
Investigate	To observe or study by close examination and systematic inquiry.
Issue	To release or send out; to publish.
Lead	To lead or direct on a course or in the direction of; to channel; to direct the operations of.

Liaise	To maintain contact with; to act as intermediary between parties.
Maintain	To keep possession of; to hold or keep in any condition; to keep up to date or current; as to maintain records.
Manage	To handle, control; to alter by manipulation; to succeed in accomplishing.
Market	To expose for sale; to sell.
Mediate	To interpose with parties to reconcile them; to reconcile differences.
Monitor	To watch, check or keep track of.
Negotiate	To confer with others with a view to reaching agreement.
Notify	To give notice to; to inform or make known.
Observe	To inspect or take note of; to pay attention to; to perceive or notice.
Obtain	To get hold of (by effort); to gain possession of; to acquire; to get; to secure.
Operate	To conduct or perform an activity.
Originate	To begin, to initiate.
Oversee	To take charge of.
Participate	To take part in.
Perform	To carry out or execute some action; to carry out to the finish; to accomplish.
Persuade	To move by argument or entreaty to a belief, position, or course of action.
Predict	To declare in advance; to foretell on the basis of observation, experience or scientific reason.
Prepare	To make ready for a particular purpose.
Process	To subject to some special treatment; to handle in accordance with a prescribed procedure, as in processing work or requisition.
Procure	To obtain possession of; to bring about.
Produce	To grow; to make, bear or yield something; to offer to view of notice; to exhibit.
Program	To arrange or work out a sequence of operations to be performed.
Promote	To advance to a higher level or position.
Propose	To offer for consideration or adoption; to form or declare a plan.
Provide	To supply for use; to furnish; to take precautionary measures in view of a possible need.
Purchase	To buy or procure by committing organisational funds.
Qualify	To moderate; to alter the strength or flavour of; to limit or modify the meaning.
Quantify	To make explicit the logical amount of; to determine or express the amount.
Receive	To accept, get or take what is delivered from another source.
Recommend	To advise or counsel a course of action; to offer or suggest for adoption a course of action.
Reconcile	To adjust; to restore to harmony; to make congruous.
Record	To register; to set down in writing.
Refer	To send or direct to a person or place for action, approval etc.
Refine	To improve or perfect; to free from impurities.
Reinforce	To strengthen with additional forces or additions.
Represent	To act in the place of or for.
Report	To give an account of; to furnish information or data.
Research	To inquire specifically, using involved and critical investigations.
Respond	To make an answer; to show favourable reaction.
Review	To go over or examine deliberately or critically (usually with a view to approval or dissent).
Revise	To rework in order to correct or improve; to make a new, improved or up to date version
Secure	To get possession of; to obtain.
Serve	To assist; to be of use; to hold office.
Sign	To formally approve a document by affixing a signature.
Solve	To find a solution for.
Specify	To state precisely in detail or to name explicitly.
Study	To ponder or fix the mind closely upon a subject; to endeavour with thought and planning; to consider attentively; to devise with deliberation.
Submit	Present for consideration; leave to the discretion or judgement of another.

Supervise	To oversee for direction; to inspect with authority; to guide and instruct with immediate responsibility for purpose of performance; to superintend, to lead.
Survey	To determine and delineate the form, extent, position etc., of a situation (usually in connection with gathering of information).
Tabulate	To put in table form; to set up in columns, rows.
Tend	To act as an attendant.
Tender	To present for acceptance.
Train	To teach, demonstrate or guide others in order to bring up to a predetermined standard.
Transcribe	To transfer data from one form of record to another or from one method of preparation to another, without changing the nature of data.
Translate	To turn into one's own or another language.
Verify	To provide to be true or accurate; to confirm or substantiate; to check exactness.
Write	To set down letters, words, sentences or figures on paper or other suitable material; to author; to draft.