How to write a job ad

Job ads are a selling tool - providing applicants with information about the nature and context of the role, as well as letting applicants know what the employer is looking for. Job Ads are generally comprised of two parts: the initial **search results** and the **job details**. The platform used will dictate the number of available characters (letters) and layout.

This tip sheet provides information/ suggestions for writing job ads for public sector roles using the SmartJobs platform and an Online Jobs Board (such as Seek or Career One). Examples are also attached.

General considerations

➢ *Clause 9.4 of [Directive 15/13](#) sets out the information that must be included when a vacancy is advertised. The agency decides whether it is in the job ad or an attachment, such as the role description.*

➢ *Be honest in describing a job opportunity. Provide applicants with realistic information about what the job involves; the work to be undertaken, the job environment, the benefits and the challenges.*
  - *Accurate information can assist applicants in appropriate self-selection (in or out).*
  - *Inconsistency between the marketed opportunity and the reality of the job can lead to employee dissatisfaction and, particularly with high calibre employees, early exit.*

➢ *Be clear and concise, avoiding the use of jargon and 'public sector speak'. Consider whether the terms you're using will be equally understood by internal and external candidates.*

➢ *References to location should be the city / town / regional*

➢ *Have a look at what else is out there – what works and what doesn't?*

Search results

This is the start of the sale of the role to potential applicants. It's from this information that applicants decide whether to 'click on' and find out more about the job. It should be a short, sharp sentence and/or a couple of dot points, highlighting key features of the role. The advertising platform will also mandate certain information.

Smart Jobs Template (short description)

Role Title, Organisation	
Duration	**Location**
Your text goes here. Although Smart Jobs allows 900 characters, a shorter, sharper introduction can often be more attractive and should be used.	
Classification - $salary	Closes DATE

Online Job Board Template

Role Title		**Ad Date**
Organisation		Annual Salary
		Location
You text goes here. The number of characters depends on the platform – assume around 150 characters.		

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Job details

The 'Job details' should build on the information presented in the search results/short description, providing more detail about the purpose and functions of the role and work unit. It should provide potential applicants with a realistic picture of what to expect (work and environment) and what's expected from them.

- In a few sentences provide an overview of the organisation and the work unit. Why do they exist and what outcomes are they responsible for achieving?
- Let the prospective employee know what they'll be doing and the skills involved in doing it – this should not be an extensive list of 'key tasks / duties' but a rolled up narrative about the range and scope of functions.
- Provide information about expectations, challenges and opportunities:
    - this is not limited to the role itself, but can also highlight external factors, such as the work location
    - talk to your existing team about how they'd describe the working environment and incorporate this in the Job Details
    - focus on a few key points.
- Identify any mandatory requirements / qualifications, along with any 'minimum' experience. Be realistic about what you're asking for (e.g. don't ask for 'extensive' experience for an entry – mid level role). Don't limit experience to public sector experience – think about equivalencies in the non-government / private sector.

Job Board Template

[Agency / Qld Govt Banner]

Role Title

Agency / Location *[this should be the town / city / region – NOT a street address]*

3 x 80 character dot points – use this to highlight key aspects / conditions of the role e.g.
- *$ salary*
- *Role Duration*
- *Mandatory requirement*

[The number of available characters depends on the platform – assume around 1750]

About us

Provide a brief introduction about the organisation and the work unit.

About you

*Use this to describe what the role involves and what capabilities you're looking for. Specify any mandatory requirements or required experience. This should **not** be 'selection criteria' but a narrative about what experience and capabilities / attributes are being sought from the applicant.*

Key deliverables / responsibilities include:

- *This should not be an extensive list; instead highlight key aspects.*
- *Pick the right term, 'deliverables' or 'responsibilities' based on the role classification and context. E.g. using 'responsibilities' may be more appropriate for an administration role, while 'deliverables' clearly aligns with project and program roles.*

Further Information
Provide information on how to apply or refer to the role description for this information.

For further information about this position and details on how to apply, please visit the Queensland Government Smart Jobs and Careers website www.smartjobs.qld.gov.au. *[this information may automatically be included on whole-of-government templates]*

Smart Jobs Template

Role Title

Organisation (Organisation Site)
Location

The text from your search results / short description will be replicated here.

Job Details

> **Job Type**
> **Occupational Group**
> **Classification**
> **Workplace Location**
> **Job Ad Reference**
> **Closing Date**
> **Yearly Salary**
> **Fortnightly Salary**
> **Job Duration**
> **Contact Person**
> **Contact Details**

Smart Jobs allows 4000 characters for the job detail however using all of these is not recommended. Potential applicants are likely to skim for key information so use headings (such as those below).

About us

Provide a brief description about the organisation and work unit.

About you

*Use this to describe what the role involves and what capabilities you're looking for. Specify any mandatory requirements or required experience. This should **not** be 'selection criteria' but a narrative about what experience and capabilities / attributes are being sought from the applicant.*

Key deliverables/responsibilities *include:*

- *This should not be an extensive list; instead highlight key aspects.*
- *Pick the right term, 'deliverables' or 'responsibilities' based on the role classification and context. E.g. using 'responsibilities' may be more appropriate for an administration role, while 'deliverables' clearly aligns with project and program roles.*

Further Information
Provide information on how to apply or refer to the role description for this information.

Documents
Before applying for this vacancy please ensure you read the documents below.

- *Attach any relevant documents include the role description.*

[Apply online] [Email a friend] Return to jobs