

Position Description Fit-for-Purpose Check

A practical 5-minute check for role clarity, accountability, capability, performance and Australian HR practice.

Use this check when recruiting, replacing or materially changing a role, or when responsibilities, authority or performance expectations have become unclear. **Assess the role, not the person.** Rate the position description against the role the organisation needs today, not the capability or performance of the current role holder.

HOW TO SCORE Yes = 2 | Partly = 1 | No = 0 | Add the nine scores, then check your result on page 2.

1. Role currency

Does the position description describe the role the organisation needs today?

Consider changes in strategy, structure, technology, stakeholder expectations, workload and the organisation's operating model.

YES 2
PARTLY 1
NO 0
SCORE ____

2. Role purpose

Does the position description clearly explain why the role exists and the contribution it is expected to make?

A good role purpose should describe an enduring organisational contribution in one or two sentences, rather than list activities.

YES 2
PARTLY 1
NO 0
SCORE ____

3. Success outcomes

Does the position description describe the key outcomes that should be visible when the role is working well?

Look for four to six durable outcomes rather than annual targets or a long list of activities.

YES 2
PARTLY 1
NO 0
SCORE ____

4. Accountability

Is it clear what the role owns and where its responsibilities start and stop?

Accountabilities should describe areas of ownership and expected outcomes, with minimal duplication or ambiguity between roles.

YES 2
PARTLY 1
NO 0
SCORE ____

5. Authority and decision rights

Is it clear what the role can decide, what requires escalation or approval, and how it interfaces with other roles?

Accountability without appropriate authority can create role confusion, delay decisions and make performance difficult to assess.

YES 2
PARTLY 1
NO 0
SCORE ____

6. Capability, mindset and behaviours

Does the position description define the capability, mindset and behaviours needed to succeed in the role, and the level at which they need to be applied?

Consider the knowledge, judgement, mindset, behaviours, autonomy, complexity and organisational influence required, not simply technical expertise or years of experience.

YES 2
PARTLY 1
NO 0
SCORE ____

7. Performance connection

Could a manager use this position description as a meaningful foundation for onboarding, objective setting, development and performance conversations?

The position description should establish the enduring role expectations. Annual priorities and specific targets can then sit in a separate performance plan.

YES 2
PARTLY 1
NO 0
SCORE ____

8. Selection requirements Are the requirements for appointment appropriate to the role? Essential experience, qualifications, registrations and other requirements should be genuinely necessary for successful appointment. Distinguish these from desirable criteria and avoid unnecessary barriers.	YES 2 PARTLY 1 NO 0 SCORE ____
9. Document governance Is the position description appropriately owned, approved and reviewed? The document should have an accountable owner, appropriate approval and a clear review trigger when the role, structure or operating context materially changes.	YES 2 PARTLY 1 NO 0 SCORE ____

TOTAL SCORE ____ / 18

What does your score suggest?

15-18	FIT FOR PURPOSE A sound foundation, provided there are no No responses. Review any Partly responses and confirm the role still reflects current organisational needs.
9-14	WORTH STRENGTHENING Some elements may be limiting the document's usefulness. Start with the areas you rated Partly or No.
0-8	REVIEW RECOMMENDED The document may no longer provide a reliable description of the role. Start with role design rather than a wording edit.

Important: A Fit for Purpose result requires both a score of 15-18 and no No responses. A No on Role currency, Authority and decision rights, or Capability, mindset and behaviours may indicate a role-design issue rather than simply a documentation issue.

Australian HR practice and compliance prompts

A position description is one part of sound employment practice. Where relevant, the following should also be considered.

- ☐ **Applicable industrial instrument and classification** The relevant modern award, enterprise agreement or award-free status has been considered, and the classification reflects the actual work performed.
- ☐ **Role clarity and psychosocial safety** Responsibilities, reporting relationships, priorities and expectations are sufficiently clear to reduce avoidable role ambiguity.
- ☐ **Inherent requirements and fair selection** Essential criteria are genuinely necessary for the role, unnecessary barriers have been avoided, and reasonable adjustments can be considered where relevant.
- ☐ **Mandatory requirements** Required licences, professional registrations, qualifications, working-with-children checks, travel requirements or other genuine role requirements are accurately identified.

Important: A position description can support sound employment practice but does not by itself establish legal compliance. Award coverage, classification, employment terms, workplace policies, delegations and role-specific statutory requirements should be checked separately where required.

Why use a standardised approach?

Position descriptions are often created at different times, by different managers and using different templates. A standardised role-design approach applies the same logic across roles and helps reduce inconsistent expectations about role scope, authority, capability and performance.

Consistent role design Clear role purpose, success outcomes, accountabilities, authority and performance expectations.
Alignment with Australian workplace practice Consideration of role clarity, classification, inherent requirements, employment practice and psychosocial safety.
PACS alignment Capability requirements can be expressed consistently using the Professional Associations Capability Standard and its proficiency levels.

A standardised approach provides a more reliable way of defining the work the organisation needs and the capability required to deliver it. It also makes position descriptions more consistent, defensible and repeatable across the organisation.

Australian practice references: [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) | [Safe Work Australia](#) | [Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

DOES THE ROLE NEED MORE THAN A TIDY-UP?

If this check identifies several gaps, Capvera can help review or redesign the role using a structured, PACS-aligned method. capvera.com.au

About this tool. Derived from the Capvera PACS Role Profile Architecture System. It is a practical diagnostic, not legal advice or a substitute for checking applicable awards, agreements, contracts, WHS duties or role-specific statutory requirements.