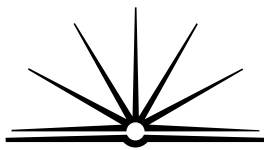


OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF STUDIES  
NEW SOUTH WALES



Job  
Applicant's  
Kit

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**OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF STUDIES**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

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# INTRODUCTION

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Thank you for your inquiry concerning an advertised position in the Office of the Board of Studies.

The purpose of this kit is to outline the open merit selection process employed by the Office of the Board of Studies in recruiting staff and to provide applicants with the necessary information to respond to advertised vacancies. The kit is a consolidated source of reference material about the Office's role, its commitment to service and adherence to principles governing Equal Employment Opportunity and Cultural Diversity. Guidelines have been included on developing your application and responding at interview. Also included is information directly related to the advertised position including:

- ✧ a copy of the advertisement;
- ✧ a role statement for the position;
- ✧ an organisation chart for the branch in which the advertised vacancy exists; and
- ✧ an application form for employment/transfer/promotion in the NSW Public Sector.

The Office of the Board of Studies is an equal opportunity employer. Open merit selection processes are a fundamental aspect of the Office's recruitment programs. In upholding the merit principle the Office routinely:

- ✧ advertises vacancies in the general press, the *Public Service Notices* and, where appropriate, the *Department of Education and Trainings' Personnel Bulletin* and the *Board Bulletin*;
- ✧ forms selection panels with a minimum of three members comprising at least one independent member and a relevant EEO target group balance;
- ✧ advises members of selection panels of their responsibilities;
- ✧ requires all selection committee members to participate in the initial cull;
- ✧ undertakes checks with two referees on potentially suitable applicants prior to finalising the selection committee report; and
- ✧ selects applicants with the greatest merit based solely on the advertised essential criteria.

If applicants have concerns about the process they should immediately and formally contact the convenor or the Office's Director, Finance and Administration. Concerns will be dealt with as a matter of priority. Applicants should recognise the tight timetable normally associated with the recruitment process. Any action arising will be subject to the timing of the notification and the merits of the concerns.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity, Occupational Health and Safety and Cultural Diversity/Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) program and ethical behaviour.**

All applicants will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of and a commitment to implementing the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity, Occupational Health and Safety and Cultural Diversity/Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) program and ethical behaviour in their written application, and if called, at interview.

To assist applicants, this kit contains information on:

- ∞ EEO Rights and Responsibilities; and
- ∞ the Principles of Cultural Diversity/Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement (EAPS).  
Please refer to pages 14 to 18 of this information kit.

## **Confidentiality Agreement**

The Office is entrusted with a significant level of sensitive and confidential information, particularly relating to student examination results. The Office attaches fundamental importance to the responsibilities of all staff employed by the Office to ensure this information is not improperly used. For this reason, new employees are required to sign a confidentiality agreement as a condition of employment with the Office of the Board of Studies. A copy of the confidentiality agreement is included on page 13 for information purposes only.

# APPLYING FOR JOBS AT THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF STUDIES

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Appointment to positions in the NSW Public Service is on the basis of merit.

## Advertisements

Information in advertisements is necessarily brief, but important features to note are:

- ∞ the **ESSENTIAL** requirements of the position. These are the skills and qualifications that you must possess to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position effectively. If you cannot demonstrate how you meet each essential requirement, your application may be culled. **If the job you are applying for has outstanding recent teaching experience as a requirement, please read the information provided on page 12 of this kit;**
- ∞ the **DESIRABLE** qualities. These are the skills and qualifications that will further assist you in the position, but the absence of such skills will not render you incapable of performing the duties. Demonstrated ability or experience in some or all of these areas will improve your application.

## Contact Officer

The contact officer listed in the advertisement is available to discuss the position. The convenor of the selection committee will also be able to answer any questions you may have in relation to the position.

## The Application

An Application for Employment/Transfer/Promotion in the NSW Public Service should be completed. This form should be signed, dated and attached to the rest of your application.

The key to getting an interview for a position is your job application. The most important feature of this application is to demonstrate clearly to the selection committee how your qualifications and abilities meet each of the essential requirements of the position. Ideally, you should list each requirement stated in the advertisement and show how your skills and experience meet those requirements.

The application should provide selection committee members with a summary of your educational qualifications, work experience and other skills acquired through attending courses, doing voluntary work, ability to speak another language and through your general interests etc.

As well as addressing the essential and desirable qualities of a position, you need to include:

**Educational Qualifications** – Photocopies of secondary, tertiary or other qualifications and results may be included, although this is not essential if you clearly state the details of your qualifications in your application.

**Note:** If your degree/diploma was achieved overseas, indicate whether or not its standing has been recognised in Australia.

**Employment History** – List all relevant employment history in chronological order, starting with the most recent, highlighting those features that match the requirements of the position, or that you think would be useful to the position. Indicate job gradings and dates so that the committee can see the period over which you have gained your experience.

*Do not assume* that merely stating ‘Clerk Grade 3’ or ‘Clerical Officer Grade 1/2’, automatically informs the committee about your work experience. The same gradings frequently require a totally different work emphasis, depending on the area or section in which you work.

*Do not include* ‘Statements of Duties’. While these describe the areas in which you may be required to work, they may not indicate the main emphasis of the work.

Unless directly relevant to the essential requirements set down in the position advertisement, it is not necessary to include with your application samples of work or lengthy descriptions of projects you have undertaken. These may, however, be taken to the interview if you consider they would enhance your claim for the position.

**Interests** – This provides an opportunity to list non-work activities and interests that have some relevance to the position.

**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) and Cultural Diversity/Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) program and ethical behaviour** – Knowledge of these principles is listed as an essential requirement for all positions. You must include information on how you meet this requirement, eg attendance at courses or the role you have played to ensure that these principles are followed in the workplace.

**Referees** – Include the names and phone numbers of at least two referees who can comment on your work performance or provide personal references.

**Contact Numbers** – Indicate where and when you may be contacted if you are selected for an interview. If you will be unavailable for any period immediately after the closing date of the position, provide an alternative contact phone number.

## **Late Application**

If your application will not reach the appropriate address by the closing date, the committee may accept late applications if you have previously notified the contact officer named in the advertisement that you are applying for the position and have given the reasons for being late.

## **Selection Committee Panel**

The Selection Committee Panel is composed of a minimum of three people that allows the inclusion of:

- ✎ an Office of the Board of Studies representative who is familiar with the requirements of the position;
- ✎ an officer from another organisation;
- ✎ representation of both male and female officers; and
- ✎ a member of a target group where the nature of the position requires awareness of such groups, eg Aboriginal, language background other than English, people with a physical disability.

The committee assesses each application in relation to the essential and desirable criteria and successful applicants are called for an interview. Applicants are given at least two days notice of the interview.

## **The Interview**

When preparing for the interview, analyse the advertisement and role statement and consider the types of questions you may be asked, and how your skills and qualifications are relevant to the position. The committee will base its decision on the material presented by the applicants both in writing and at the interview. You may be required to complete a practical exercise to demonstrate the skills required for the position, eg a writing task.

## **Post-selection Discussion**

If you are unsuccessful in your application for a position, you can request a post-selection discussion. This discussion provides an opportunity for gaining constructive comment on your experience and performance at the interview. You should develop specific questions to put to the convenor during this discussion.

## **Points to Remember**

- ✎ In your application, don't simply state a position title and assume the committee will understand what duties you undertook.
- ✎ Never assume that because people 'know' you, a hastily filled in application will do: it will not! It merely indicates to the selection committee a lack of enthusiasm for the position and/or a slovenly work attitude.
- ✎ At the interview it is your responsibility to ensure the committee is fully aware of your qualifications and experience and to convince them you are the best applicant for the position.
- ✎ If you do not understand a question at the interview, ask for it to be re-stated or re-phrased.

## Checklist

### Have you:

- ↘ completed the Application for Employment/Transfer/Promotion, including signing and dating the form?
- ↘ stated your claim for the position and how you meet the essential and desirable requirements?
- ↘ supplied documentation of your educational qualifications and employment history?
- ↘ given the names and telephone numbers of two referees?

# COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

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The Board of Studies New South Wales was established in 1990 under the *Education Act* to serve government and non-government schools. The Board has 23 members from a wide cross-section of educational, business and community groups. Members of the Board are appointed for a three-year term and include 19 appointed members, a full-time President and three ex-officio members.

## **The Board's objectives are to:**

- ∞ develop the curriculum for students from Kindergarten to Year 12;
- ∞ assess and examine student achievements for the award of the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate;
- ∞ conduct a program for registration and accreditation of non-government schools in New South Wales. In addition, the Board recognises those overseas schools that seek to use its curriculum and examinations. It also registers home schoolers.

## **The Office of the Board of Studies**

The Office was established in April 1995. Its mission is to meet the Board's objectives and expectations.

## **Clients of the Office of the Board of Studies**

### **The Minister for Education and Training**

The Minister for Education and Training can expect the Board to respond to Government priorities for education and to maximise its efficient use of government funds.

### **The Board and its sub-committees**

The Board and its sub-committees can expect the Office of the Board to provide appropriate resources to support the activities of the Board and its sub-committees.

### **Schools and systems**

Schools and systems can expect that the Office of the Board will have a full appreciation and understanding of schools' needs, that officers will meet these needs equitably and continue to consult with schools and systems in the development of Board resources and programs.

### **Teachers in primary and secondary schools**

Teachers are entitled to expect that Board material is of the highest quality, that it will be effective in the classroom and that it can be taught within available school and school-system resources.

## **Parents**

Parents can expect the curriculum to provide their children with challenge and stimulation across all areas of learning.

## **Students**

Students are entitled to expect that the curriculum will be relevant to their needs. They are also entitled to credentials that adequately and accurately reflect their achievements.

## **Employers**

Employers are entitled to expect that students will receive a range of secondary education credentials that accurately and comprehensively report achievement. They may also expect that the curriculum will provide students with skills and knowledge relevant to the workplace.

## **Tertiary education sector**

Tertiary education bodies such as TAFE or universities can expect the Board to develop curricula and credentials that will provide students graduating from school with skills and knowledge that readily prepare them for further study.

## **Standards of Service**

While the specific expectations of the Board's clients may vary, all clients can expect the Board to respond to their needs in ways that are:

- ∞ quality driven
- ∞ reflective of client needs
- ∞ timely
- ∞ resource efficient.

## **Implementing Standards of Service**

The Office of the Board of Studies meets community expectations for high standards of client service by:

- ∞ providing a full-time liaison officer in 10 regions to address the specific needs of local communities and schools;
- ∞ encouraging and addressing feedback from teachers and the wider community on Board policies and decisions;
- ∞ researching community opinion on particular initiatives and policies;
- ∞ providing all public contact staff with formal training in client service;
- ∞ responding to correspondence within two weeks;
- ∞ responding to all requests for publications within five working days;

- ∞ ensuring that all publications for the general public are in plain English and that they are appropriate for their intended audience;
- ∞ providing a range of publications in community languages;
- ∞ providing accurate and timely responses to public and media enquiries;
- ∞ providing a comprehensive range of value-for-money commercial services and products.

## **Client Feedback**

Any suggestions on ways in which the Office of the Board of Studies can improve its services, policies and procedures are welcomed. All suggestions will be responded to promptly, by telephone or in writing.

## **Complaints Management**

Our policy of devolving accountability to line managers and staff is designed to solve client problems at the source. However, if clients are dissatisfied with the quality of service received, they are invited to contact the General Manager, Office of the Board of Studies.

Office of the Board of Studies NSW  
GPO Box 5300  
Sydney NSW 2001

Ph: (02) 9367 8111

Fax: (02) 9367 8484

## **Business Hours**

The Office of the Board of Studies is open to the public from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday at:

117 Clarence Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

## Outstanding Recent Teaching Experience

The Office of the Board of Studies is responsible for the development and delivery of professional and administrative services to the Minister and the Board of Studies and its committees to enable the Minister and the Board to fulfil their respective legislated functions under the *Education Act 1990*. These functions include responsibility for NSW curriculum development, monitoring and support; registration and accreditation of non-government schools and home schooling, and the assessment and examination of student achievements for the awarding of the NSW School Certificate and Higher School Certificate.

A feature of this work is that it is very often best accomplished by staff drawn directly from schools. For these jobs the Office attaches fundamental importance to the value that the recent teaching experience of successful applicants will bring to the Office's work.

If the job you are applying for has outstanding recent teaching experience as a requirement, the Office views recency in this context as being within the last three years. This experience must have been for a period in which the full range of duties of a school executive or classroom teacher can be demonstrated to have been undertaken by the applicant. This period will be whatever the applicant cites in which the applicant can demonstrate that he/she has undertaken the full range of duties. This is unlikely, however, to be less than one school term.

Consistent with the entitlements of public sector applicants, the Office is prepared to negotiate bilateral agreements with current employers of successful non-government school applicants to facilitate their right of return and recognition of service while seconded or temporarily employed by the Office.

# CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

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1. This confidentiality agreement is between the General Manager of the Office of the Board of Studies (the Office) and the undersigned employee of the Office.
2. The purpose of this Agreement is to outline the mutual obligations between the Office and the employee concerning the use of confidential material provided by the Office to the employee for the purpose of the proper discharge of the employee's duties.
3. The General Manager and the employee agree that 'confidential information':
  - 3.1 means information in whatever form which is by its nature confidential; designated by the Office as restricted or confidential; information which is not publicly available; information which is otherwise the subject of the Office's Code of Conduct; information which the employee otherwise knows or ought to know is confidential; and
  - 3.2 includes but is not limited to: statistical information of the Office; financial information of the Office; commercial information of the Office being information that has any actual or potential commercial value to the Office or to any third party; organisational information of the Office being information relating to the internal management, personnel, policies and strategies of the Office.
4. The General Manager and the employee further agree that the obligations under this Agreement continue after the employee ceases employment with the Office.
5. The employee acknowledges that, unless the General Manager otherwise consents in writing, such confidential information:
  - 5.1 shall be used by the employee only for purposes directly related to the employee's duties;
  - 5.2 subject to 5.1, shall not be removed/transmitted by the employee from the Office's premises;
  - 5.3 subject to 5.1, shall not be appropriated, copied, memorised or in any manner reproduced by the employee.
6. The General Manager acknowledges that:
  - 6.1 in informing the employee of any decision concerning the release of confidential information, the written advice will either expressly grant or withhold consent or will impose condition on any consent given;
  - 6.2 the obligations of the employee under this Agreement shall not be taken to have been breached where the employee is legally required to disclose the confidential information.
7. This Agreement shall be governed and construed in all respects in accordance with the laws and the jurisdiction of the Courts of the State of New South Wales.

Signed by: .....

Name: .....

# THE PRINCIPLES OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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Ethnic affairs policies and programs in the NSW public sector are based on four principles of cultural diversity.

According to Section 3 of the *Ethnic Affairs Commission Act 1979* as amended, the four principles are:

1. (a) All individuals in New South Wales should have the greatest possible opportunity to contribute to, and participate in, all aspects of public life.
- (b) All individuals and public institutions should respect and accommodate the culture, language and religion of others within an Australian legal and institutional framework where English is the primary language.
- (c) All individuals should have the greatest possible opportunity to make use of, and participate in, relevant activities and programs provided or administered by the Government of New South Wales.
- (d) All public institutions of New South Wales should recognise the linguistic and cultural assets in the population of New South Wales.

The Act also states that:

2. The principles of cultural diversity are the policy of the State.
3. Accordingly, each public authority must observe the principles of cultural diversity in conducting its affairs.
4. It is the duty of the chief executive officer of each public authority to implement the provisions of this section within the area of his or her administration.
5. The cultural diversity of the people of New South Wales reflects the whole population of New South Wales, which comprises people from a range of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds. The expression 'cultural diversity' is to be construed accordingly.

## **Implementing the Principles of Cultural Diversity in NSW Public Agencies**

The Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statements (EAPS) program in NSW public agencies began in 1997. It builds on, and replaces, the former Charter of Principles and Ethnic Affairs Policy Statement programs.

From the 1996–97 financial year onwards, all NSW Government agencies are required to develop an Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) and report on their EAPS progress and future strategies in their annual report.

Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statements will document the agency's strategies to achieve outcomes in three key result areas, together with performance measures and plans for future action. The three key result areas are social justice, community harmony and economic and cultural opportunities.

Key issues to be addressed in agency EAPS are:

- ∞ mechanisms to ensure that boards, committees and other advisory structures in the agency reflect the cultural diversity of the community;
- ∞ flexible, inclusive consultation processes;
- ∞ programs and services which reflect the needs of the entire community;
- ∞ training for staff on cultural diversity issues and how it applies in their jobs;
- ∞ the development and application of rules and regulations which are sensitive to the needs of all staff and clients;
- ∞ the provision of information in ways that will reach all staff and clients;
- ∞ the provision of language services for all clients.

### **What to do next**

For further information on implementation of the EAPS program in the agency where you are applying for a job, you should first check with the contact person nominated in the advertisement.

You may also wish to ask for a copy of the agency's summary of its EAPS, as well as details of EAPS implementation in the section of the agency where the job is located.

Source: *Ethnic Affairs Commission NSW – 164 Liverpool Road, Ashfield, NSW, 2131.*

# EEO RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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## What Does Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Mean?

EEO means equality of access to jobs and benefits in the workplace for every employee or potential employee. It means fair employment. It means that appointment to positions is based on merit — skills, knowledge, aptitude — and not sex, pregnancy, age, race or ethno-religious background, marital status, disability, homosexuality, or transgender.

To be effective, EEO requires the active participation of all staff members.

*As a staff member, you have the right to:*

- ✎ a workplace free from harassment and discrimination;
- ✎ fair practices and behaviour in your workplace;
- ✎ competitive merit-based selection processes for recruitment or promotion;
- ✎ training and development that enables you to be productive in your work and to pursue a career path;
- ✎ equal access to benefits and conditions, including flexible working conditions;
- ✎ fair processes to deal with work-related complaints and grievances.

*As a staff member, you have the responsibility to:*

- ✎ work to the best of your ability;
- ✎ recognise the skills and talents of other staff members;
- ✎ act to prevent harassment and discrimination against others in your workplace;
- ✎ respect cultural and social diversity among your colleagues and customers;
- ✎ ensure you have access to and use relevant training;
- ✎ treat people fairly.

*As a supervisor, you have the same rights and responsibilities as staff members, and you also have the responsibility to:*

- ✎ ensure that all work practices and behaviours are fair in your workplace;
- ✎ ensure the work environment is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment;
- ✎ provide employees with information and resources to carry out their work;
- ✎ consult employees about decisions that affect them;
- ✎ provide all employees with equal opportunity to apply for available jobs, higher duties, job rotation schemes, overtime and flexible working arrangements;
- ✎ ensure selection processes are clear and used consistently;
- ✎ provide all employees with equal access to fair grievance procedures;
- ✎ identify special training and development needs of EEO group members in your team and help them gain access to opportunities;
- ✎ seek training and feedback to help you manage staff effectively.

## Harassment

In general, harassment is any form of behaviour:

- ✎ that is not wanted, not asked for, and not returned;
- ✎ that is likely to cause a hostile or uncomfortable workplace by humiliating someone (putting them down), or seriously embarrassing, offending or intimidating them;
- ✎ that happens because of someone's (or any one of their relatives', friends' or colleagues') sex, pregnancy, race, disability, homosexuality, transgender, age and so on.

Harassing behaviour can involve verbal abuse, commentary or material that is racist, sexist, homophobic, etc; sexual behaviour of any sort; stereotyping jokes; 'over the top' initiation rites.

Harassment can happen between employees at the same level, or upwards or downwards within the hierarchy, although it is usually done by those with more power against those with less power in any particular work area.

Harassment is often, but not always, intentional. Sometimes people don't mean to harass, and don't realise how their behaviour affects the other person. This means that harassment is an area that is open to misinterpretation and dispute. However, the 'rule of thumb' is that if the person on the other end of the behaviour finds a particular type of behaviour harassing, then it probably is.

### What can you do about harassment?

Talk to your supervisor, grievance officers, personnel officers, Anti-Discrimination Board or the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

## Discrimination

Discrimination in NSW is against the law, and it involves treating employees/job applicants unfairly because of their:

- ✎ sex
- ✎ pregnancy
- ✎ race or ethno-religious background
- ✎ marital status
- ✎ disability
- ✎ homosexuality
- ✎ transgender
- ✎ age.

It is also against the law to discriminate against people:

- ✎ because of their presumed status, eg harassing a person because someone thinks they might be homosexual, disabled, of a certain age, or transgendered.

- ∞ because of a relative, friend or colleague, eg refusing to employ/promote someone because their partner is Aboriginal, or because they have young children.

Discrimination occurs directly, indirectly, and as harassment (see separate sheet on harassment).

Direct discrimination is treating people differently because of their sex, race and so on, and often is the result of stereotypes, eg assuming older workers are less flexible and thus not worth hiring.

Indirect discrimination is treating everyone the same, but in a way that ends up being unfair to people of one race, sex, and so on, eg deciding that everyone in a team must speak/understand English fluently.