



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Education,  
Skills and Employment**

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# CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

Assistant Secretary  
Department of Education, Skills and Employment  
(Senior Executive Service Band 1)  
Several Positions  
Canberra, ACT

**Reference No: 21/1110**

**Applications Close: 24 October 2021**

## The Opportunity

We are seeking inspiring, highly motivated and experienced individuals from the public, private and/or community sectors to join the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the department), at the Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1 level.

As an Assistant Secretary in the department, you will contribute to the overall strategic direction of the department, including driving policy and program change and service delivery improvement. You will support the Secretary and Executive team in the provision of high quality and timely advice to government and in leadership and strategic direction setting for the department.

This selection process will also be used to establish a merit pool that may be used to fill roles as they become available within the following 12-month period.

Successful candidates will have demonstrated their ability and commitment to shape the culture and capability of the department. Current and expected vacancies include roles in policy development, program implementation (including Senior Responsible Officer roles, requiring project management experience) and program delivery across all areas of the department.

One currently identified vacancy is in our International Division. Experience in engaging with foreign governments to advance portfolio objectives and drive international education is highly desirable.

## About the Department

The department contributes to Australia's economic prosperity and social wellbeing by creating opportunities and driving better outcomes for people, through education, skills and employment pathways. We provide advice to our Ministers and effectively implement government policies and programs. In doing this, we draw on the best available research, evidence and data. We work collaboratively with industry, stakeholders and state and territory governments.

Our strategic priorities are:

- Improving learning outcomes by enabling quality, affordable and accessible early education and care for families
- Improving schooling outcomes for our children
- Equipping the workforce of the future through globally competitive tertiary education, training and research sectors
- Helping people find and keep a job, change jobs, reskill and enjoy fulfilling careers
- Developing a strong evidence base for effective policy that reflects and understands the varied needs of the Australian population, business and industry.

We are committed to providing easy and informative access to our services and support programs and work directly with our clients and stakeholders to ensure expectations are met.

We recognise that our people are our greatest strength – as part of our commitment to creating a flexible, diverse and inclusive workplace, we invite and encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people of all ages, people who identify as LGBTI+, and people with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The department promotes a culture where Indigenous business is everyone's business—across its work practices, values and business. All employees are supported through the provision of a number of learning opportunities to build their cultural capability.

The department prides itself on being an agile organisation, promoting the APS philosophy of one Australian Public Service (APS) career, thousands of opportunities.

### **Our Executive**

The Executive Team includes the Secretary of the department, Dr Michele Bruniges AM, and seven Deputy Secretaries:

Mr Brenton Philp, Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood and Child Care  
Dr Ros Baxter PSM, Deputy Secretary, Schools and Youth  
Mr Tony Cook PSM, Higher Education, Research and International  
Ms Nadine Williams, Deputy Secretary, Skills and Training  
Ms Alex Gordon, Deputy Secretary, Employment Programs  
Mr Nathan Smyth, Deputy Secretary, Employment and National Workforce  
Mr Marcus Markovic, Deputy Secretary, Corporate and Enabling Services

Profiles of the Executive are available on the [department's website](#).

### **Our Portfolio Agencies**

The department also works collaboratively with portfolio entities that each have a specific responsibility under the Education and Employment Portfolios.

[Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority](#)

[Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership](#)

[Australian Research Council](#)

[Australian Skills Quality Authority](#)

[Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency](#)

[Australian National University<sup>1</sup>](#)

Further information about the department is available at: <https://www.dese.gov.au/>

## **Working in the Senior Executive Service**

All SES employees are expected to model and promote the [APS Values and Code of Conduct](#) and leadership behaviours outlined in the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) [Integrated Leadership System](#). In addition, the department has identified the following behaviours to which all its leaders should aspire and model in their own actions:

### **Set direction**

- Provide a clear and coherent vision and regularly communicate it
- Work as a team across internal boundaries
- Commit to continual improvement, take tough decisions and see them through
- Lead and manage change effectively.

### **Motivate people**

- Create and sustain a unifying culture that promotes energy, enthusiasm and pride
- Be outward looking and inspire respect, trust and loyalty
- Drive ambitious results, celebrate achievements and challenge us to improve
- Seek feedback from staff and respond to it.

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<sup>1</sup> The Australian National University is not part of the general government sector or included in the Commonwealth general government sector fiscal estimates and does not have a chapter in the PBS or PAES.

### **Develop people**

- Manage performance proactively, transparently and consistently, reward good performance and tackle poor performance
- Expose staff to new opportunities and new ways of thinking and support them to reach their own career aspirations
- Identify and nurture leadership, identify opportunities to delegate and follow through, expect staff to take on responsibilities and support them to do so.

We proudly uphold the [APS Values and Employment Principles](#). We are impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical. We support these values by creating a culture where:

- we are consultative and responsive
- we value learning, research, discovery and opportunity
- we innovate to achieve our business outcomes more efficiently
- we collaborate internally and externally to reach our goals
- we lead by example at all levels and pride ourselves on being professional, high performing and innovative
- we care for and support each other and value the skills, difference and diversity of our people
- we celebrate our successes and learn from our experiences.

More broadly, SES employees in the department are expected to advise and support the Government of the day on the full range of portfolio issues and do this through the development of considered policies and the delivery of effective programs. The SES must also ensure that the department is meeting its legislative and governance obligations, is working collaboratively to deliver outcomes, and responds flexibly to current and emerging issues. The SES has a broader role in providing leadership across the APS in the delivery of whole-of-government policies and services, managing in a changing and devolved environment.

The APSC is a central agency within the APS with a critical leadership role in contributing to the future capability and sustainability of the SES. Further information about working in the SES is available on the APSC website at [SES Information](#).

**If you are new to the APS there are some eligibility and other legal requirements that you should be aware of when applying.**

### **Citizenship**

Under Section 22(8) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, all people joining the APS are required to be Australian citizens. In exceptional circumstances, the Secretary may allow the engagement of a permanent resident, pending the granting of citizenship to them within a two-year period or alternatively, the Secretary may waive the citizenship requirement for a role in the Department of Education, Skills and Employment. If you think that citizenship could be a problem for you, please discuss it with the contact officer before applying for this position. You will need to supply evidence of your Australian citizenship prior to your commencement date.

### **Health Assessment**

Your employment is subject to a medical assessment to show that you are fit to perform the duties of your position. This will assist the department in becoming aware of any issues you may have in complying with Work Health and Safety legislation and to provide a duty of care to you and existing employees. It will also enable the identification of any reasonable adjustments that are needed in the workplace to accommodate you, should you have a health-related disability.

### **Character Checks**

You will be required to complete a 'Consent to Obtain Personal Information' form (Police Records Check) to enable the Australian Federal Police to match your details with their records and prepare a report for the department.

It is important that you demonstrate your honesty and integrity by disclosing any previous or pending infringements. A police record check is also part of the security clearance process and the information collected for the character check may also be used for this purpose.

Some positions also require successful completion of a working with children clearance. If this is the case, the requirement will be identified in the job description / advertisement.

### **Security**

This position will require you to be cleared to the level of Negative Vetting 1 as outlined in the protective security arrangements for the APS. Wherever possible the department will seek to have the clearance process finalised prior to your commencement.

### **Privacy**

The department understands and respects your right to privacy and has safeguards in place in line with the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988*. The information provided in your job application will only be used for the selection process and related procedures. Should you be the successful candidate, your personal details will be used in departmental systems necessary for the management and engagement of staff and your name will appear in APSJobs.

Please note: failure to satisfy one of the eligibility requirements specified above, or to produce relevant documents, could result in your offer of employment being withdrawn, your employment being terminated or disciplinary action commenced.

### **Redundancy Benefit**

If you have received a redundancy benefit from an APS agency recently there may be limitations on the department being able to offer you employment without prior approval from the Australian Public Service Commissioner.

These arrangements do not apply to persons who have received a redundancy benefit from a non-APS Commonwealth employer, from a state/territory Government employer, or from the private sector. There are no restrictions on such persons competing on merit for APS employment.

### **Annual Declaration of Interest and Share Ownership**

To avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest, if you are successful, you will be required to submit a statement of any private interests, including any share ownership held by yourself or any immediate family members that are relevant to the Portfolio. You may be required to divest yourself of any interest where it may give rise to a real or apparent conflict of interest. This is very important, and you should talk to the contact officer about this if you are unsure.

## The Position Statement

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the department) is responsible for national policies and programs that help Australians access early childhood care and education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training (VET), international education and research, and employment programs.

We are seeking inspiring, highly motivated and experienced individuals from the public, private and/or community sectors to join the department, at the Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1 level.

As an Assistant Secretary in the department, you will contribute to the overall strategic direction of the department, including driving policy and program change and service delivery improvement. You will support the Secretary and Executive team in the provision of high quality and timely advice to government and in leadership and strategic direction setting for the department.

Successful candidates will have demonstrated their ability and commitment to shape the culture and capability of the department. Current and expected vacancies include roles in policy development, program implementation (including Senior Responsible Officer roles, requiring project management experience) and program delivery across all areas of the department.

One currently identified vacancy is in our International Division. Experience in engaging with foreign governments to advance portfolio objectives and drive international education is highly desirable.

### Early Childhood and Child Care Group

The Early Childhood and Child Care (ECCC) Group is focused on making high quality, affordable and accessible early childhood education and care available to Australian children and families. The Group is responsible for the effective implementation of the Government's Child Care package, including the administration of the Child Care Subsidy and Child Care Safety Net.

### Schools and Youth Group

The Schools and Youth Group drives the Government's contribution to achieving the goals of the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration—shaping a school education system that promotes excellence and equity and supporting young Australians. In support of these goals, the Group oversees and leverages the Government's investment in recurrent funding for schooling to underpin collaboration with state and territory governments on a set of national policy initiatives through the National School Reform Agreement and with the non-government school sector.

### Higher Education, Research and International Group

The Higher Education, Research and International (HERI) Group supports the Government's reform agenda to enhance competition, improve quality and accessibility and ensure sustainability of the higher education sector. The Group promotes high quality research and innovation that boosts Australia's productivity, and works with domestic and international stakeholders to support the sustainable expansion of Australia's trade in education services. The Group has an overarching data role, working across the department to ensure our data holdings are appropriately managed and utilised.

### Skills and Training Group

The Skills and Training Group provides access to quality skills and training to support people develop the skills they need to gain employment and build their careers. The Group helps Australians to skill for the jobs of today, tomorrow and beyond to drive productivity and economic prosperity. The Group also works with stakeholders to build a strong sustainable skills and training system to allow Australians to skill and reskill in response to changing technology and workforce needs.

### Employment Programs Group

The Employment Programs Group delivers and supports national policies and programs to help Australians find and maintain employment, change jobs or create their own job through self-employment. The Group works to foster a productive and competitive labour market by helping people into sustainable employment and increasing workforce participation.

### Employment and National Workforce Group

The Employment and National Workforce Group develops policies and delivers programs to address national workforce issues. The Group works closely with state and territory governments and industry stakeholders on workforce matters, delivering a range of programs to address workforce shortages. The Group is also developing a new employment services model, working with service providers in co-designing and trialling ahead of its delivery.

The successful applicant will have:

- High level analytical skills including the capacity to provide evidence-based policy and/or program advice to support decision making.
- An outstanding track record in leading and delivering high quality advice in a complex and sensitive environment, including adopting innovative approaches to difficult issues as appropriate
- High level management and leadership skills (including intellectual leadership) and superior people-management skills, including supporting staff learning and capability development.
- A proven ability to achieve organisational outcomes, build organisational capability and manage risk to ensure government objectives are achieved.
- Excellent stakeholder management, communication, negotiation and influencing skills, including the ability to represent and negotiate on behalf of the department.

This selection process will also be used to establish a merit pool that may be used to fill other roles as they become available within the following 12-months.

Applicants may be required to participate in psychometric testing as part of the assessment process for these positions.

### **Qualifications/Special Requirements**

Successful applicants will require an academic and/or skill level that is consistent with the key deliverables and responsibilities set out above and in conjunction with the [SES Band 1 - Work Level Standards](#).

Relevant tertiary qualifications and/or knowledge and experience will be favourably regarded.

## How to Apply

Using the information provided about the role, your application should include a Curriculum Vitae and a statement of claims. This is a 'short pitch' of two pages or less, which details why you are interested in this role, what you will offer the agency, your skill set, relevant career history and achievements, and your leadership attributes.

Please click [here](#) to commence your application.

If, after reading the selection documentation, you require further information please contact:

**Contact:** Tricia Searson or Karina Duffey

**Company:** Executive Intelligence Group

**Phone:** (02) 6232 2200

**Email:** [admin@execintell.com.au](mailto:admin@execintell.com.au)

Applications close at 11.30 pm (ACT local time) on **Sunday, 24 October 2021**.