



Information for applicants

Assistant Parliamentary Counsel (Grade 1)

The Office of Parliamentary Counsel (OPC) is seeking highly motivated lawyers who are looking for a career as a legislative drafter.

As a legislative drafter, you will work in a vital role at the centre of government, drafting Bills for introduction into Parliament and/or legislative instruments.

Our drafters work on diverse subjects and much of the drafting work is high profile.

You will work very closely with a highly experienced legislative drafter providing legislative drafting services. You will contribute to the drafting of Bills and instruments, but primarily be expected to acquire the skills required to provide legislative drafting services.

Important skills needed for a career as a legislative drafter are:

- (a) analytical, problem-solving and legal skills; and
- (b) oral and written communication skills; and
- (c) interpersonal and team participation skills; and
- (d) judgement; and
- (e) learning skills and development potential.

This document contains information about the position, applying for the position and working in OPC.

For basic information about how to apply for the position, see the boxed text on the next page.

For details of other matters, including the duty statement, remuneration and the selection process, see the Appendix.

The closing date for applications is: 5:00 pm on Monday 29 May 2017.

How to apply

Content of applications

Your application should consist of the following:

- (a) a covering letter of no more than 2 pages showing that you have the important skills mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (e) on the previous page (you do not need to address the duties set out in the duty statement);
- (b) job application coversheet located at the end of this information pack;
- (c) employment history/cv;
- (d) details of your full academic results (tertiary only, for both legal and non-legal studies);
- (e) names and contact details of two referees who are prepared to provide a reference for you;
- (f) documents evidencing your qualifications (and admission to practice if applicable), and if you were not an Australian citizen at birth, evidence of your Australian citizenship. If you are selected for interview, you should bring the originals of those documents to interview.

Where to send applications

You may send your application to the Recruitment Officer at OPC by email, post or fax. Please ensure that you have attached the Job Application Coversheet which is available at the back of this information pack and is also located on OPC's website.

Email	jobs@opc.gov.au (Your application, including any supporting documents, must be an attachment in Microsoft Word, RTF or PDF format.)
Postal address	Office of Parliamentary Counsel Locked Bag 30 Kingston, ACT 2604
Fax no.	(02) 6120 1403

Closing date for applications

The closing date for applications is: 5:00 pm on Monday 29 May 2017.

Extension of closing date for applications

The selection committee has a discretion to accept late applications. If you cannot forward your application by the closing date, you should ask the contact officer, preferably in writing, before the closing date, whether a late application would be accepted by the selection committee.

Accessing information

Information about OPC and advertised positions is available on OPC's website at **www.opc.gov.au**. If you require further information after obtaining the selection documentation, you can contact Meredith Leigh on (02) 6120 1421, or send in a request to **jobs@opc.gov.au**.

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1. Duty Statement

Summary

Work as part of a team of drafters at the Office of Parliamentary Counsel (OPC) providing legislative drafting services (partly to contribute to project outputs but primarily to acquire the skills required to provide legislative drafting services).

Legislative drafting services are services by which a drafter:

- (a) assists in identifying, analysing and considering legal, logical, policy and implementation issues connected with legislative proposals; and
- (b) plans and manages legislative projects; and
- (c) maintains effective working relationships with members of the drafting team, clients, other OPC staff and other relevant parts of the government, parliament and the public service; and
- (d) expresses legislative proposals in draft legislation that:
 - (i) gives effect to the client's requirements; and
 - (ii) is well structured and organised; and
 - (iii) is clearly expressed; and
 - (iv) is likely to be understood by its target audience.

Important skills needed to provide legislative drafting services are:

- (a) analytical, problem-solving and legal skills; and
- (b) oral and written communication skills; and
- (c) interpersonal and team participation skills; and
- (d) judgement; and
- (e) learning skills and development potential.

A drafter must either:

- (a) be admitted as a legal practitioner of the High Court or the Supreme Court of an Australian State or Territory; or
- (b) have a degree in laws of an Australian tertiary institution (or a comparable overseas qualification which, in the opinion of First Parliamentary Counsel, is appropriate to the duties of the position).

Note that a person cannot progress beyond the second salary point on the Assistant Parliamentary Counsel Grade 1 salary scale until admitted.

Specific duties

Duties	Indicative weighting %
1. Acquire the skills required to provide legislative drafting services by completing on the job training and participating in formal training courses.	65
2. Assist the Senior Executive Service team leader to provide legislative drafting services and, under the team leader's close oversight, assume progressively higher levels of independent responsibility for providing legislative drafting services.	30
3. Carry out or participate in such product development (e.g. plain English) or operations support (e.g. IT development, participation in office committees and reviews, Legislation Process Course presentations) as may be assigned, or such other duties relevant to the service provided by the OPC as may be assigned.	5

Immediate supervisor: An SES Band 1 or 2 team leader or a Second Parliamentary Counsel

2. Remuneration and other conditions

Salary

Annual Salary: \$62,116 to \$115,881.

Superannuation

OPC offers eligible new employees superannuation choice, in line with the requirements of the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992*.

If you have a preserved benefit in either the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme or the Public Sector Superannuation defined benefit Scheme, you should declare it to OPC, and seek guidance from Comsuper, before accepting an offer of employment. The telephone number for Comsuper is 13 23 66.

Terms and conditions of employment

OPC staff are covered by the Office of Parliamentary Counsel Enterprise Agreement 2016-2019. The agreement is available on OPC's website (www.opc.gov.au).

3. About OPC

OPC is a Commonwealth government agency established under the *Parliamentary Counsel Act 1970*. OPC is headed by First Parliamentary Counsel (FPC) and two Second Parliamentary Counsel.

OPC is the Commonwealth's principal provider of professional legislative drafting and publishing services. OPC delivers timely, high quality drafting and advisory services for Bills, subordinate legislation, prepares compilations of laws as amended and publishes laws and instruments on behalf of more than 70 agencies. OPC also provides comprehensive, free access to Commonwealth legislation and related material through the Federal Register of Legislation website.

OPC has about 100 staff. This consists of 3 statutory officers and other staff employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*. These other staff include approximately 40 drafters, 40 publications staff, and 17 corporate services staff.

Location

OPC is located at Level 4, PWC Building, 28 Sydney Avenue, Forrest, Canberra ACT.

A participative work environment

OPC has in place a Workplace Consultative Committee.

The Workplace Consultative Committee is an official forum for communication between management and staff representatives about operational and other matters.

OPC staff also participate in decision-making through a number of other less formal meetings and consultation processes.

4. Some general Australian Public Service (APS) matters

Eligibility for employment in the APS

General

Your employment is subject to you meeting the required standards relating to character and background checking. The relevant checks will be done within the first three months of employment.

Australian citizenship

An Agency Head may only engage a person who is not an Australian citizen as an APS employee if the Agency Head considers it appropriate to do so. If you are selected for interview and you are not an Australian citizen, you must let the selection committee know.

OPC's policy is that jobs in OPC will be filled by people who are Australian citizens, or certain non-citizens who intend to become Australian citizens.

FPC may consider it appropriate to employ a non-citizen, as an ongoing or non-ongoing employee, if the non-citizen is a permanent resident and the non-citizen:

- (a) is an outstanding applicant for the position; or
- (b) is the only person found suitable for the position; or
- (c) if several positions are being filled—is suitable for one of the positions and the number of positions exceeds the number of citizens who have been found suitable.

If OPC engages a non-citizen who is a permanent resident, the person's engagement is conditional upon becoming an Australian citizen within a specified time after commencing employment in OPC. Normally the specified time is 6 months, however, FPC will consider the circumstances of the non-citizen, and the person's eligibility for Australian citizenship, when determining the specified time in which the person is to become an Australian citizen.

A person who, while not a permanent resident, has a right to live and work indefinitely in Australia, may also be engaged in the circumstances set out above. If OPC engages such a person, the person's engagement is conditional upon becoming a permanent resident within a specified time after commencing employment in OPC and becoming an Australian citizen within a specified time after becoming a permanent resident. FPC will consider the circumstances of the non-citizen, and the person's eligibility for permanent residency and Australian citizenship, when determining the specified time in which the person is to become a permanent resident and an Australian citizen.

If you have recently received a redundancy payment

There is a prohibition (exceptional circumstances can apply) on the engagement as an ongoing APS employee of a person who has received a redundancy benefit from the APS or the Parliamentary Service Department and whose redundancy benefit period has not elapsed.

If you have received a redundancy benefit that may fit the criteria above, include the information in your application.

Security clearances

OPC staff have access to material that is classified in the interests of national security or is otherwise sensitive. Your employment is subject to you obtaining a security clearance to the Baseline level within the first 6 months of employment. The contact officer can give you information about how this is done.

Probation

Engagement of an APS employee is usually made on probation. Employment on probation enables your conduct and work to be assessed to determine your suitability for continued employment.

APS Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct

The APS Values and APS Employment Principles, contained in sections 10 and 10A of the *Public Service Act 1999*, are important to the way in which all staff perform their work in OPC. The APS Values, APS Employment Principles and the Code of Conduct (contained in section 13 of the *Public Service Act 1999*) are not simply aspirational statements of intent. All APS employees are required to uphold the APS Values and APS Employment Principles and comply with the Code of Conduct. A copy of the APS Values, APS Employment Principles and the Code of Conduct is attached to this document.

The APS Values are designed to:

- (a) provide the philosophical underpinning for the APS; and
- (b) reflect public expectations of the relationship between public servants and the Government, the Parliament and the Australian community; and
- (c) articulate the culture and operating ethos of the APS.

An equal opportunity employer

The Australian Public Service values and promotes equal employment opportunity, and the filling of a vacant position within OPC will be determined solely on the basis of merit.

Diversity in the workplace

The Australian Public Service values and promotes Workplace Diversity.

Workplace Diversity requires that people from diverse backgrounds are not disadvantaged in competing for Australian Public Service careers. It also recognises the positive contribution that a diverse workforce can make to organisational effectiveness.

Smoke-free workplace

OPC promotes a smoke-free workplace.

5. What happens after you apply

The selection committee

The selection process will be conducted by a committee made up of two or three members. The committee is responsible for advertising the position, conducting the selection process and making a report to the First Parliamentary Counsel.

Interviews

If you are selected for an interview, you will be given a couple of days' notice before you are required to attend the interview. If you are unable to attend the interview at the scheduled time, it may be possible to organise another time.

Before the interview, you should familiarise yourself with OPC's work. You can do this by obtaining a copy of our Annual Report and *OPC's drafting services: A guide for clients*. Both are available on our website and can be sent to you on request.

At the interview, you will be asked questions relating to the functions of the job and your skills, knowledge and experience. You can prepare for the interview by thinking about questions that may be asked by the selection committee and how you could answer them. In addition you may be asked to do a practical test.

It is important that you are able to talk about the skills, knowledge and experience on which you have based your application. The selection committee makes its decision on referee reports and on material presented by you in your written application and at the interview. It is up to you to convince the selection committee that you are the best person for the job.

At the interview, you will be given the chance to ask questions about the job. Questions about general conditions of employment (salary, leave, etc.) can also be asked at the interview. You can find a summary of the conditions of employment on our website, and a copy can be sent to you on request.

The selection committee may contact persons you have named as referees, and other persons whom it thinks are appropriate, to assist it in making a decision, to confirm its impressions of you or to confirm information provided by you.

The committee's recommendation

After all the applicants who were selected for interview have been interviewed, the selection committee will make a recommendation to First Parliamentary Counsel about the applicant the committee considers is the best person for the job. If First Parliamentary Counsel approves the committee's recommendation, an offer of employment or promotion will be made to the recommended applicant. If the offer is accepted, all other applicants will be advised that they were unsuccessful in applying for the job. If the recommended applicant does not accept the job, other applicants who were ranked as suitable may be offered the job in order of ranking.

6. Other information

Website

Our website is www.opc.gov.au.

24-hour answering machine

You may ring (02) 6120 1470 to leave a message.

Other documents you may want to look at

Below is a list of other documents that you may wish to have a look at in deciding whether to apply and how to frame your application (especially if you are unfamiliar with legislative drafting work and the nature of the work done by OPC). These documents are available on our website or can be sent to you on request.

1. OPC Annual Report
2. OPC's drafting services: A guide for clients
3. Office of Parliamentary Counsel Enterprise Agreement 2016-2019
4. Performance Management Program for Assistant Drafters
5. the Federal Register of Legislation website (www.legislation.gov.au)

APS Values

The APS Values are as follows:

- (a) ***Committed to service***—The APS is professional, objective, innovative and efficient, and works collaboratively to achieve the best results for the Australian community and the Government.
- (b) ***Ethical***—The APS demonstrates leadership, is trustworthy, and acts with integrity, in all that it does.
- (c) ***Respectful***—The APS respects all people, including their rights and their heritage.
- (d) ***Accountable***—The APS is open and accountable to the Australian community under the law and within the framework of Ministerial responsibility.
- (e) ***Impartial***—The APS is apolitical and provides the Government with advice that is frank, honest, timely and based on the best available evidence.

APS Employment Principles

The APS is a career-based public service that:

- (a) makes fair employment decisions with a fair system of review; and
- (b) recognises that the usual basis for engagement is as an ongoing APS employee; and
- (c) makes decisions relating to engagement and promotion that are based on merit; and
- (d) requires effective performance from each employee; and
- (e) provides flexible, safe and rewarding workplaces where communication, consultation, cooperation and input from employees on matters that affect their workplaces are valued; and
- (f) provides workplaces that are free from discrimination, patronage and favouritism; and
- (g) recognises the diversity of the Australian community and fosters diversity in the workplace.

The APS Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct requires that an APS employee must:

- (1) behave honestly and with integrity in connection with APS employment.
- (2) act with care and diligence in connection with APS employment.

- (3) when acting in connection with APS employment, treat everyone with respect and courtesy, and without harassment.
- (4) when acting in connection with APS employment, comply with all applicable Australian laws.
- (5) comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone in the employee's Agency who has authority to give the direction.
- (6) maintain appropriate confidentiality about dealings that the employee has with any Minister or Minister's member of staff.
- (7) disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with APS employment.
- (8) use Commonwealth resources in a proper manner.
- (9) not provide false or misleading information in response to a request for information that is made for official purposes in connection with the employee's APS employment.
- (10) not make improper use of:
 - (a) inside information; or
 - (b) the employee's duties, status, power or authority; in order to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or advantage for the employee or for any other person.
- (11) at all times behave in a way that upholds the APS Values and Employment Principles, and the integrity and good reputation of the employee's Agency and the APS.
- (12) while on duty overseas, at all times behave in a way that upholds the good reputation of Australia.
- (13) comply with any other conduct requirement that is prescribed by the regulations.

Note: Regulation 2.1 of the Public Service Regulations provides that an APS employee must not, except in the course of his or her duties as an APS employee or with the Agency Head's express authority, give or disclose, directly or indirectly, to any person any information about government business or anything of which the employee has official knowledge.



Position applied for:

Job title/classification: _____

How did you learn about this position? PS Gazette / APSjobs website OPC website
 seek.com Other

Personal Details:

Title: Mr Mrs Ms Miss Dr Other

Given name/s: _____ Last Name: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____ Mobile: _____

Email (optional): _____

Postal address: _____

Are you a member of any of the following equity groups—please indicate which ones(s):

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Non-English speaking background Person with a disability

Nationality:

Are you an Australian Citizen? Yes No

If no: do you have permanent resident status? Yes No

have you applied for Australian citizenship? Yes No

Current employment details:

Employer: _____

Job title/position held: _____

Employee of the APS? Yes No Ongoing Non-ongoing

APS Classification: _____ AGS No: _____

Do you hold a current security clearance? Yes No Level: _____

Have you received a redundancy benefit from an APS agency, the Parliamentary Service Department or the Murray-Darling Basin Commission and your redundancy benefit period has not yet elapsed? Yes No

Qualifications:

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____