



Australian Communications and Media Authority

Graduate Program Handbook

2022

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Welcome

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) would like to welcome you to our Graduate Program.

We're excited that you've chosen our agency to commence your career in the Australian Public Service (APS). We look forward to sharing with you the diverse knowledge, experiences and fresh ideas you bring to your work at the ACMA.

In this handbook you'll find information about the ACMA, the Graduate Program, as well as some general information for new starters. It's expected you become familiar with the content in this handbook prior

to your commencement. This handbook will serve as your first point of reference for any questions or queries you have as you get to know the ACMA.

We encourage you to use your initiative, get involved, soak in the information around you and make the most of the opportunities you're presented with.

Congratulations on your commencement with the agency and welcome to the ACMA. We wish you the best of luck and look forward to working with you throughout the year



About the ACMA

Our Purpose:

To maximise the economic and social benefits of communications and media for Australia.

Our Vision:

A connected, informed, entertained Australia.

Our culture and values support us in achieving our strategic priorities now, and in the future.

They shape how we work with each other and our stakeholders, and how we approach the opportunities and challenges in our environment. We are committed to the APS values of being impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical. We embrace diversity and celebrate inclusion. These values underpin our role as an independent decision-maker, responsible for balancing public interest objectives, informed by a deep knowledge of the sectors we regulate.

Complementing the APS values, our own ACMA-specific values are outlined below:

- we are purposeful
- we are curious and questioning
- we are collaborative.

We employ approximately 400 staff, most of whom are located in our offices in Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney.

The ACMA is governed by an Authority comprised of the Chair, Deputy Chair/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and three full-time members. Our day-to-day activities are managed by the agency's senior leadership team, comprising the Chair, the Deputy Chair/CEO, general managers and executive managers.

The ACMA Graduate Program

The ACMA Graduate Program is an entry-level program designed to give graduates the foundation to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding about the work of the ACMA and the wider APS.

Its key objectives are to:

- develop new graduates to effectively contribute to the work of the ACMA
- build and maintain the level of technical and management potential within the agency
- build skills and capabilities to contribute to the agency's workforce of the future
- assist in delivering business outcomes and support changing business priorities by securing a pipeline of skilled graduates in either generalist or more specialised roles.

Grow—Question—Thrive—Collaborate—Contribute

Grow—we prepare you for the future by investing in learning and development opportunities to help you grow and develop the right skills to work effectively at the ACMA.

Question—we value critical thinking and analysis, sourcing information and asking astute questions to ensure that we are positioned to innovate, develop better understandings and respond to new and ongoing challenges.

Thrive—we will support you to thrive as a graduate, guided by a strategic leadership that is committed to recognition and innovation, and our commitment to your health and wellbeing, to help achieve work- life balance.

Collaborate—we work productively together, encouraging collaboration and proactive engagement with each other, the industry and the community to achieve our outcomes.

Contribute—we contribute to the lives of all Australians, offering you the opportunity to make a difference as part of the ACMA and as part of the Australian Public Service.

Structure of the Program

The Graduate Program consists of several components:

- participation in the APS Graduate Development Program (APS GDP), managed and coordinated through the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC)
- two workplace rotations, designed to broaden your understanding of the organisation and develop capabilities
- completion of a major project, as coordinated through the APS GDP
- a buddy and mentor to support you through the program
- on-the-job learning and development, through peers, supervisors, mentors and executive leaders.

Australian Public Service

Graduate Development Program

You will learn through a range of activities, including the development and execution of a work-based major project which is an integral deliverable of the program. The major project aims to prepare you to navigate as the APS future leaders, work beyond agency boundaries and lead innovation.

You will attend APS GDP development workshops at intervals that feature self-directed learning and strategies so you can apply the knowledge on-the-job. The work-based major project and associated activities builds on resilience, teamwork, understanding of the challenges from working across agencies and other boundaries, how to structure work and stakeholder engagement.

The curriculum focused on the necessary skills to be successful in the whole of the APS and has a strong focus on understanding the processes of government, working within legislative frameworks and situational awareness. These skills are largely missing in graduate learners on commencement of the program and are developed through continual exposure to situations where these skills are required. The APS GDP offers simulated in real world situations to practice and develop these skills.

All training sessions will be held in Canberra at the APSC offices. For graduates located in Sydney and Melbourne you will be required to travel to attend this training. Any travel costs required for the APS GDP will be covered by the ACMA.

Work-based Project

A major deliverable of the APS GDP is the development and execution of the work-based project.

The ACMA identifies a 'real life' project through the Executive Management Committee. It is intended as a formal application of graduates' learning in the program and to further their understanding of priority issues and working methods in the ACMA and in the wider APS.

The graduates work as a team to research, collate information and deliver a project report and present their findings to the Executive Management Committee in October.

The three assessable components of the project include the project plan, report and a short media clip. [Click here to see the 2020 Graduates media clip.](#)

The graduates will receive a project sponsor at the executive manager level and a project advisor for support.

Articulation

The assessment of activities against the GDP curriculum can be used for articulation to Master of Public Administration and Master of Public Policy at ANU (up to 48 credit points), University of Canberra (12 credit points) and CPA Australia (reduction of one year for the practical CPA).

Learning and Development

We are committed to welcoming new employees and helping them settle into their new role, work team and workplace.

As a graduate you will attend an induction day and complete a self-paced induction program, which is designed to facilitate a sound understanding of your responsibilities and legislative obligations as employees in the APS and the ACMA.

Aside from the APS GDP, most of your learning and development will be on-the-job and relevant to the work being done in your rotation. You will also have access to a range of e-Learning resources, through the online learning and development system, Learnhub.

Workplace Rotations

You will be allocated to a home division for the first rotation, based on the agency's business needs.

Rotation supervisors will provide you with challenging and meaningful work throughout the rotation, including stretch projects, daily tasks and development opportunities. They are required to engage with you and provide constructive and meaningful feedback throughout the program.

Your final/ongoing placement is usually your first placement.



Graduate Roles and Responsibilities

While you are participating in the Graduate Program and during your continued employment with the ACMA, it is expected that you will:

- adhere to all agency agendas, policies, people management instructions and guidelines
- comply with the [APS Values and Code of Conduct](#)
- demonstrate a commitment to the ACMA's culture and objectives
- engage in the performance management process, actively seeking and acting upon feedback provided to you
- demonstrate a willingness to learn and complete work activities to maximise the development opportunities provided to you throughout the Graduate Program.

Graduate Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisors of graduates have a range of responsibilities related specifically to the Graduate Program.

Supervisors will:

- provide challenging and meaningful work—identifying potential projects, tasks or other work in advance of the graduate's commencement
- provide effective coaching and support—allowing you sufficient time to meet set tasks and undertake all Graduate Program activities, including attending the required learning and development activities throughout the program
- deliver effective performance discussions—establish performance and behavioural expectations with you at the commencement of your rotation and develop a Graduate Performance and Development Plan within the first two weeks of your rotation
- engage closely through meetings and provide you with meaningful and constructive feedback
- understand the process, purpose and duration of the probationary period and the implications of you not attaining a satisfactory standard of conduct and work performance
- work with the People Strategy team if there are any concerns.

Buddy and Mentor

At the commencement of the Graduate Program, you will be assigned a buddy and an executive mentor.

The role of a buddy is to provide moral support to you during the Graduate Program. The buddy may introduce you to other colleagues and show you around the workplace, including where to find the best coffee. Your buddy should be able to share tips, knowledge and skills they have learned during their time at the ACMA.

The role of an executive mentor is to coach, counsel and encourage, as well as offer knowledge, insight, perspective or wisdom to help you grow and succeed with your overall career and professional development. For the mentoring relationship to be successful, mentors and mentees must be active and committed to the relationship.

Both relationships are not monitored by the graduate team, it's an individual arrangement. However, if the relationships don't work out, we can assist with finding someone else for you to connect with.

Performance Management

Effective performance management through regular, ongoing and meaningful conversation helps identify key deliverables and performance expectations, which supports your work and achievement of business objectives.

The aim of performance management is to:

- ensure graduates are clear about what is expected in terms of their business deliverables and observable workplace behaviours
- develop the performance of graduates and support them to use their strengths to achieve workplace goals.

Together with your supervisor, you'll develop a Graduate Performance and Development Plan which will outline your key responsibilities, work goals and learning and development opportunities (this will occur within the first two weeks of you starting in your rotation). This will occur with your supervisor in both Rotation 1 and then again in Rotation 2. Once you complete the Graduate Program, you will complete a Performance Development Plan with your new supervisor in your final placement.

You are expected to engage in regular performance discussions throughout your rotation. Closer to the end of each rotation, your supervisor will give you an overall appraisal and finalise your Graduate Performance Development Plan. It is expected that you will achieve a rating of 'Satisfactory' at the completion of each rotation. Each appraisal will be incorporated into your overall probation report which is completed at the end of the program (see more information on probation below).

Tips for your performance management

Show willingness to undertake all work-related tasks given to you and use your initiative to seek opportunities to assist other members of the team rather than wait for work to be assigned to you.

Probation and Advancement

Your employment is subject to an 11-month probation period.

It is an essential formal opportunity to assess demonstrated on-the-job suitability in the ACMA and the APS. Throughout the Graduate Program, your performance, attendance, attitude and adherence to the [APS Values and Code of Conduct](#) will be observed and recorded. Appraisals of your overall performance will be recorded at the mid-way point and at the end of each workplace rotation.

Subject to successful completion of the Graduate Program you may be advanced from an APS 4 Graduate to an APS 5. To satisfactorily complete the Graduate Program, you must:

- actively participate in two workplace rotations
- satisfactorily complete a probation period
- successfully complete the APS GDP as outlined in the guidelines for the program
- attend all learning and development requirements: ACMA e-Learning and APS GDP activities
- achieve a 'Satisfactory' performance rating in each workplace rotation.

Where you do not meet the requirements of the Graduate Program, your employment may be terminated in line with section 29 of the Public Service Act 1999.

Stakeholder Management

Supporting productive working relationships is critical to a successful career in the ACMA and wider APS. Throughout your employment at the ACMA you will interact with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. Your overall attitude and level of respect to stakeholders will influence the quality of the relationships you develop, as well as your reputation as an effective public servant.

Professional Conduct

You are expected to demonstrate professional conduct and appropriate behaviours throughout the Graduate Program. Your behaviour reflects upon you but also upon the ACMA. A few courtesies you are expected to show include:

- attentiveness—it's expected you demonstrate a positive attitude to those around you, in meetings and training activities. Be engaged, alert and ask questions
- punctuality—ensure you're on-time to meetings, training and other work-related activities
- preparation—be ready for anything. Become familiar with current topics relating to the ACMA and APS generally
- mobile phones—limit the amount of time you're on your mobile in the office. Keep the ringing volume down with a subtle ring tone.

Security

Understanding your responsibilities about security is an important part of your employment. Your employment conditions with the ACMA require you to obtain and maintain a baseline security clearance. Your security clearance will be requested through the [Australian Government Security Vetting Agency](#) (AGSVA). You're required to comply with all instructions and timeframes provided to you by AGSVA.

The clearance process can take some time, so be prepared and provide all required information as soon as possible. You will commence the security clearance process once you start work with the ACMA.

On your first day you will be issued a security pass that will give you access to enter and exit the building. You must always wear your pass when you're in the office and. You'll receive a security briefing that will go over all your security responsibilities and answer any questions during your induction.



Key Contacts and Resources

The [People Strategy](#) team will be your main point of contact for assistance with Graduate Program matters. However, it's expected you'll become familiar with the content in this handbook, as well as the [ACMA Enterprise Agreement 2020–2023](#) and the People Management Instructions.

Generally, all the information you need to know can be found on the ACMA intranet. The intranet is your first point of reference for any questions you have about your employment or processes.

Graduate Coordinator's (Canberra Office)

peoplestrategy@acma.gov.au

HR Matters

For enquiries including payroll, leave and timesheets peopleoperations@acma.gov.au

The ACMA

Customer Service Centre – 1300 850 115 or info@acma.gov.au

Corporate Service Desk (IT) CorporateServiceDesk@acma.gov.au 02 6219 5111

Office Locations

Office Location	Address	Contact Phone Number
Sydney Office	Level 5 The Bay Centre, 65 Pirrama Road, Pyrmont NSW 2009	02 6219 5555
Canberra Office	Red Building, Benjamin Offices, Chan Street, Belconnen ACT 2617	02 6219 5555
Melbourne Office	Level 32 Melbourne Central Tower, 360 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne VIC 3000	03 9963 6800

Intranet pages

[Your employment](#)—ACMA Enterprise Agreement, pay and conditions, Employee Self Service (ESS), leave, working hours and conduct and behaviour.

[Property and facilities](#)—Building management, security, office supplies, meeting rooms and mail.

[Communications and engagement](#)—Editorial style guide, content tips, accessibility and getting your message out.

[Policies and guidelines](#)—ACMA guides, people management instructions, delegations and all forms.

[Information and technology](#)—Corporate service desk and client services, software applications, information management and ICT frequently asked questions.

Note: The above links are for ACMA intranet pages only. For more information about the ACMA prior to your commencement visit acma.gov.au or contact [People Strategy](#).