



Department of
Water and Environmental
Regulation

Position Description

Position Title: Principal Scientific Officer

Classification Level: Specified Calling Level 4

Position Number: Pool

Reports to: Manager – Aquatic Science

Portfolio: Climate and Sustainability

Supervises: 5-11 FTE

Our Purpose

As Western Australia’s primary water resource manager and environmental regulator, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has a responsibility to be an influential and future-focused organisation.

Our Vision

Our vision is for a low-carbon Western Australia with a healthy environment and secure water resources for future generations.

Our Missions

Waste: We act to reduce the harmful impact of waste and create a low waste circular economy.

Climate: We act to reduce emissions, mitigate climate change impacts, and build greater environmental and community resilience.

Water: We act to ensure our water resources meet the needs of the community, ecosystems, and economic development.

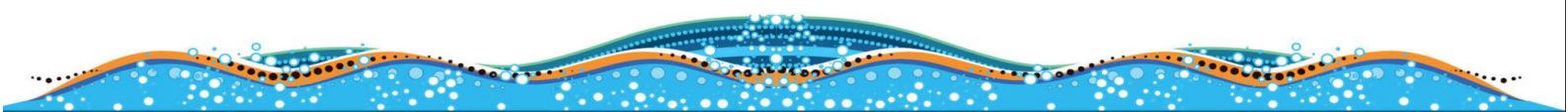
Environment: We act to make sure that environmental values are protected, and that development is sustainable.

Our values



We serve to make a difference | We build trust | We care | Open minds | Better together

Our values underpin everything we do, they guide the way we conduct our work, how we engage with each other and deliver services to our customers. The ability to demonstrate how you will apply our values is important to us.



Role Summary

The Principal Scientific Officer is responsible for strategic leadership, supervision and administration of water investigations and advice, directly managing projects, and overseeing staff managing projects. The role also contributes to the branch's strategic direction, business planning, priority setting and resource allocation process.

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The Aquatic Science Branch applies scientific understanding to the process of developing effective management strategies and policies related to water resource use and its effect on natural water systems, including rivers, groundwater, estuaries and wetlands, in the knowledge that good management is based on good science.

Aquatic Science Branch staff work in one of a number of specific areas including:

- River and Estuary Science including water quality, data analysis and reporting using statistical techniques.
- Phytoplankton Taxonomy to identify phytoplankton using microscopy techniques as part of surveillance programs and understanding estuarine ecology
- Water quality monitoring in rivers and estuaries
- Aquatic ecology surveys of rivers, analyse biological and chemical data, develop understandings of flow effects on ecology and report on river health using indicators.
- Estuary condition assessments combining water quality, biotic, and sediment indicators, data analysis and reporting.
- Numerical modelling for catchments and estuaries with a focus on nutrients and estuarine response in the context of a changing climate.
- Developing and implementing remedial technologies to improve water quality including nutrient reduction at source and reducing nutrients available for algal growth in receiving waters.
- Implement whole of catchment management plans to improve water quality.
- Provide science support across the Department and across Government.

Leadership Context

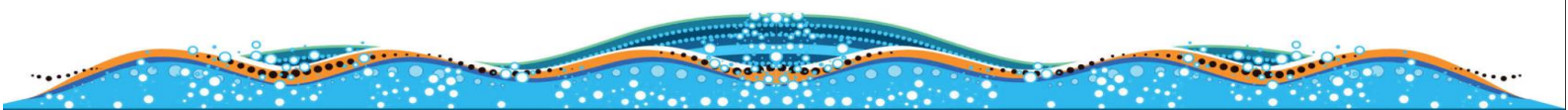
We believe all our employees are leaders irrespective of their role. We consider this as critical to our success and, to support this, we have adopted [Leadership Expectations](#) which sets out the expected behaviours and associated mindsets for every leadership context to support staff to be successful and agency to be high performing.

The leadership contexts which outline how and where we add value through our work include *Personal Leadership, Leading Others, Leading Leaders, Multiple Area Leader, Executive Leader, Agency Leader, and Statewide Leader*.

The Leadership Context for this role is **Leading Others**.

Your Responsibilities

- Manage and coordinate a team of scientists and engineers.
 - Undertake scientific and technical investigations in area of expertise.
 - Provide technical oversight and quality assurance in the preparation of reports.
 - Lead, plan, manage, and deliver project/program outcomes, including budgets and contributing to the strategic outcomes of the Department.
 - Plan, manage and evaluate program outcomes and resources within a specific specialty or operational area.
 - Contribute to the development, integration, implementation and review of policies, procedures and processes.
 - Coordinate and lead professional and support staff as a major program leader.
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- Represent the Department at a senior level, negotiate with stakeholders and provide high-level professional advice on policy and significant scientific matters.
 - Manage and set work programs for a team, ensuring that operational and strategic needs of the Department are met.
 - Support staff through leadership, mentoring and training to improve knowledge and build capability.
 - Compile, write and edit reports/papers suitable for publication in national journals or for use at a corporate and ministerial level.
 - Applying the guidelines and principles of the Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics and the Department's Code of Conduct within a framework of high ethical standards and behaviour.
 - Performing duties in accordance with departmental policies, procedures, and relevant public sector legislation.
 - Applying relevant safety procedures/guidelines and equal opportunity principles to work performance.
 - Additional duties as required within the skill and scope of position capabilities and departmental needs.
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Work related requirements

The following is to be read in the context of the preceding sections of this document.

Essential

1. A Bachelor of Science Degree or approved equivalent qualification in a discipline appropriate for the role and responsibilities.
2. Significant experience in one or more scientific areas of: hydrology, hydrogeology, numerical modelling (*including surface water and flood, catchment and nutrient, groundwater resources, surface and groundwater interactions, estuary hydrodynamics*), soil science, river and estuary water quality sampling and data analysis, surface and groundwater quality sampling and analysis, river or estuary ecology studies, hydrology or hydrodynamics as it relates to ecology.
3. Substantial experience and knowledge of the principles and practices in water resources investigation and assessment, and demonstrated success in translating this into planning and management outcomes.
4. Proven ability to lead, plan, and manage strategic program resources effectively in a complex organisational environment.
5. Significant experience in leading, mentoring and coaching staff, managing performance, and cultivating a conducive work environment that facilitates knowledge transfer, skill development and steers through change.
6. High level communication skills with proven ability to articulate and present complex and ambiguous information in a clear, concise, and compelling manner in both written and verbal formats to effectively engage stakeholders, gain consensus, and resolve issues.
7. Highly developed interpersonal skills, including ability to work collaboratively within a team and build and maintain effective internal and external stakeholder relationships.

Desirable

Nil

Special Requirements

8. Current "C" class motor vehicle driver's licence.
 9. Ability for independent travel
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Position Certification

The details contained in this document are an accurate statement of the position's responsibilities and requirements as of 29/04/2024.

