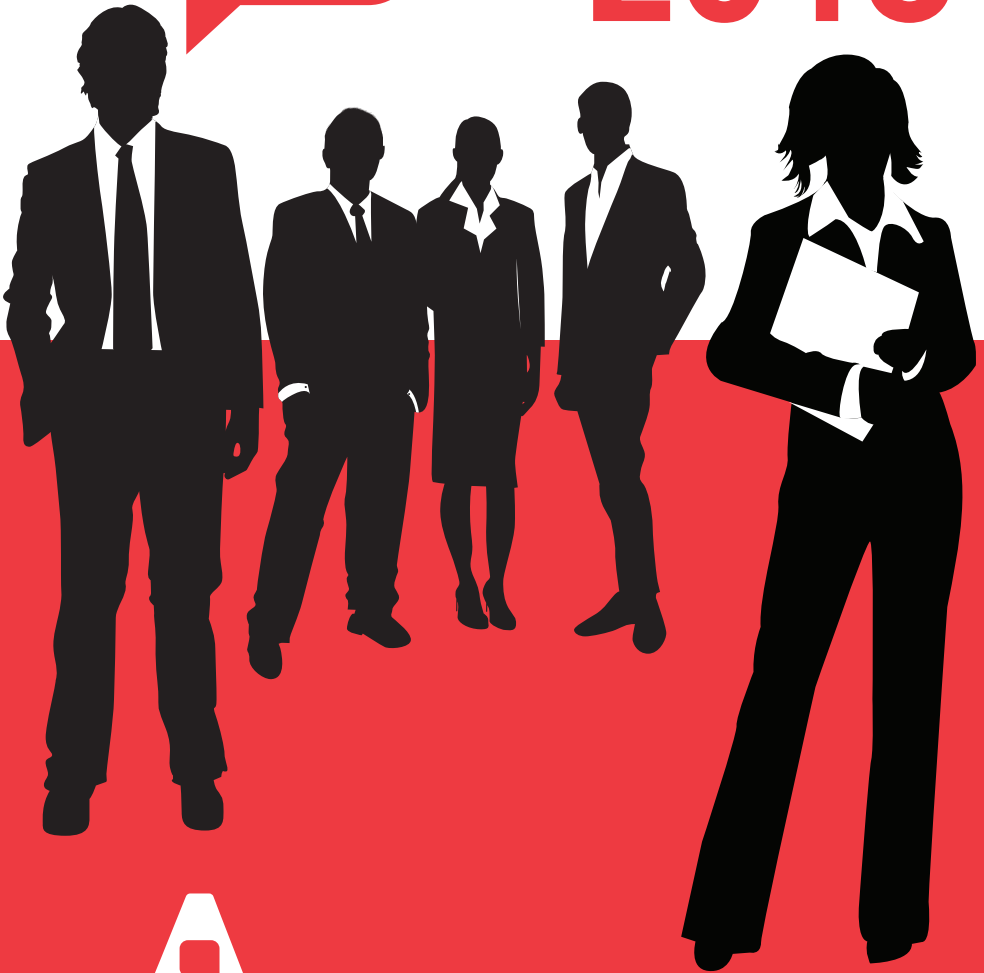


MARKET TRENDS REPORT 2016

now you're talking



AccountAbility



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ABOUT ACCOUNTABILITY

We are Australia's leading Accounting and Business Support recruitment specialists – and we are proud of it. From humble beginnings as a team of 2 in 2004, we have grown into an established presence in Sydney, Parramatta, Melbourne and Brisbane. Last year we placed more than 500 candidates into permanent roles and over 900 into contract placements. AccountAbility is part of the Ambition Group.

HOW WE WORK

Conversation is our passion. We listen and we respond. Being truly connected to our clients – understanding a company's structure and the culture of the team you are working hard to create – is key to our success, and yours. When talking to candidates we are an extension of your business. Speed is vital to us and it shows. We fill 80% of temporary roles on the first phone call and 90% of permanent roles within 6 to 8 working days. Working as a team enables us to achieve high quality results, fast.

WHAT WE DO

We recruit permanent, temporary and contract staff in Sydney, Parramatta, Melbourne and Brisbane in the following functions:

ACCOUNTING SUPPORT

- Accounts Payable*
- Accounts Receivable*
- Credit*
- Cash Collection*
- Payroll*
- Assistant Accountant
- Bookkeeping
- Accounts Clerk

*Up to and including management level

BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Executive Assistant
- Personal Assistant
- Receptionist
- Office Manager
- Customer Service
- Data Entry
- Administration Assistant
- Team Assistant

Specialists in our field, we know what drives candidates in Accounting and Business Support roles to change jobs and what companies need to do to get the people they want. Put simply, we will get you the best candidates, quickly and efficiently, whenever you need them.



A LOOK BACK AT 2015

2015 was a year of change for a large number of Australian businesses. From as early as January, typically a quiet month in the recruitment calendar, it became clear that the rate of permanent recruitment was on the increase and that this was to be a year of both movement and growth. In addition to a steady stream of contract and temporary roles created to support system implementations or to drive process improvements, we saw a marked rise in permanent roles being recruited. Whilst a large number of these were driven by employee movement due to confidence in what was an increasingly buoyant market, a good percentage were down to business growth. Teams that had been under-resourced suddenly reached tipping point and extra headcount was required. With this increase in vacancies came a noticeable shortage of high quality job seekers, meaning the competition to secure talent was becoming harder than ever in recent years. This had a knock-on effect on salaries and 2015 saw the most upward movement since 2011.

Those businesses with a fast, efficient recruitment process that could move quickly from first interview to offer stage were securing the top tier talent. This was also true of those companies with attractive employee value propositions. Flexible working arrangements and employee benefits programmes being two of the tools used by those companies keen to position themselves to attract the cream of the crop.

WHAT YOU TELL US ABOUT THE MARKET

Our Market Trends report offers an overview of last year's Accounting and Business Support trends in addition to some insights into what 2016 has in store. This year we surveyed over 3400 employers and employees across Australia and this, combined with a detailed analysis of the roles we have recruited in 2015, has provided us with the following results.

OUR KEY FINDINGS

HIGHS AND LOWS IN 2015



2015 Findings v 2016 Expectations

2015 – saw an increase in performance across the board

39% performed better than expected (up 8% on 2014)

46% performed as expected (down 5% on 2014)

15% performed worse than expected (down 3% on 2014)



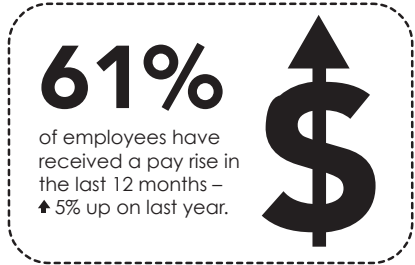
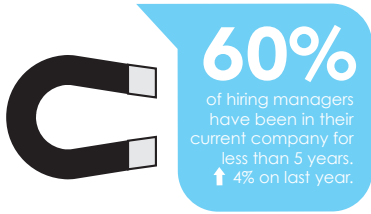
2016 Expectations of further improvement

60% expect further growth this year

30% expect to maintain levels of 2015

10% expect contraction

THE CURRENT CLIMATE



63% of employers are offering
flexible work arrangements.



60% offer the chance
to work from home
on occasion.



87% offer flexible
start/finish times.



76% offer ability to
attend appointments
during working hours.

65% offering all three.

56% of employers
anticipate hiring
in 2016.



45% growth
in the team.

55% will be
replacement
hires.



88%
of clients have a formal induction process for new employees.



44% state they have a way of measuring staff engagement during the first 3 months.

69%
of candidates indicate they plan to look for a new role in the next 12 months.
↑ 1% on last year.



61% of employees state they receive benefits and perks from their current employer.

The top 4 are flexible working conditions, discounted goods or services, salary packaging and study allowance.



OFFSHORING

5% of companies surveyed indicated they were considering off-shoring some or all of their support functions in the next 1-3 years.



Of the 22% of respondents that have already off-shored support functions 81% believe they have seen no improvement in quality of service and indeed 39% believe the service quality has decreased since this happened.

33% of clients saw the need for the creation of new Australian based roles as a direct result of the off-shoring process.

A LOOK AHEAD TO 2016

The positive sentiment of 2015 in the Australian employment market seems set to continue into 2016. From what our candidates and clients are telling us current levels of movement within the Accounting and Business Support sectors should maintain, if not grow. The 'career contractor' still remains a feature of the support space with a number of high calibre employees choosing contract or temporary roles to expand their skillsets, be it gaining exposure to new systems or industries, or simply trying their hand at a different aspect of their core function. Within both Business Support and Accounting Support we are increasingly seeing a requirement for 'all-rounders' who embrace the challenge of being cross-trained to provide support as business needs shift.

In the world of permanent recruitment, opportunities should continue to remain on the rise within the support space. If 2015 was the year of positive change, then 2016 will carry on this trend. We have seen a marked increase in candidates looking to make a move and indeed in companies looking at adding headcount. Competition for talent will increase further and the best candidates will in all likelihood have multiple offers during a job search. Companies who work hard to understand the push-pull factors of their target talent market will come out on top. Those who don't and instead just keep doing what has worked in the past run the risk of missing out.

DIVERSITY

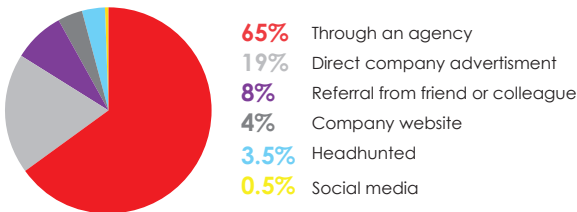

The conversation around this hot topic has continued to evolve and whilst it is still largely focused on addressing gender equality in the workplace, it has broadened somewhat to include a wider focus on other areas of diversity. A good example is the increase in Australian employers who are actively creating programs to attract and retain mature-aged employees, which is of particular importance given the ageing workforce. A number of businesses are pro-actively targeting under-represented groups within their workforce and are partnering with recruitment agencies to assist with this.

In addition to diversity being a conversation about, amongst other things, gender, age group, ethnicity and sexuality, we are increasingly helping our clients when it comes to considering candidates with different working or industry experience. As diversity of thought has been proven to produce better results, it can often pay to think outside of the box.

WHERE TO FIND CANDIDATES

Whilst social media has certainly played an increased role in Australian recruitment over the last few years, it has yet to really scratch the surface in terms of Accounting Support and Business Support recruitment. Of all the people surveyed, 65% indicated they found their most recent role through an agency, 19% through a direct advertisement placed by the company, 8% through referral from a friend or colleague, 4% through a company website, 3.5% were headhunted and 0.5% secured their last role through social media.

When it comes to current drivers or 'push factors' for support level employees to leave a role, these are cited as being a lack of career progression, dissatisfaction with salary and a lack of training and development. In addition to this, 55% of those candidates that leave within 6 months of starting a new role blame a poor induction process and a lack of formal and informal 'check points' with management during the first few months. On the other side of things, the 'pull factors' that our candidates tell us will persuade them to accept their next support role are listed in order as salary, location and relationship with manager. Getting the 'fit' right between hiring manager and potential employee has never been more important for Accounting Support and Business Support level candidates. Partnering with an agency like AccountAbility that takes the time to understand the subtleties of that 'fit' could really be the factor that sets you apart from your competitors when it comes to securing and retaining the best talent in the market.

8% of candidates found their last role through a referral from an ex-colleague. Of that group of referred candidates **85%** had been referred via an agency and **15%** directly to the company.

WITH CANDIDATES IN SHORT SUPPLY – SPEED IS THE KEY

As the market continues to improve and the best candidates remain in high demand, it is vital to the success of your business that you remain ahead of your competitors by moving quickly. In 2015, 70% of employees surveyed cited that a prolonged interview process was the main reason they rejected a job offer and went with an alternative that moved more quickly. There is an expectation amongst support level candidates that a permanent recruitment process should take no longer than 1-2 weeks, whilst for more senior, management level roles the expectation was more in the 2-3 week range.

Whilst companies understandably want to conduct a thorough process when selecting their most valuable asset – a potential new employee - they should avoid a prolonged timeframe between each round of interviews or they risk losing their preferred candidates. We have also noticed a rise in the number of counter-offers from current employers over the last 12 months. Whilst we work hard to avoid these situations, if you would like any feedback on your current salary levels or assistance with benchmarking prior to commencing a recruitment process, our consultants will be happy to assist with this.

Amongst the main frustrations with the recruitment process is the lack of detailed feedback after a candidate interview. At AccountAbility, we commit to all of our candidates that we will get back to them with feedback whether successful or unsuccessful within an agreed timeframe – preferably within 24 hours of the client interview taking place. In partnering with our clients to ensure this happens, we not only guarantee that their business is represented in the best way possible but we also ensure that our candidate experience is second to none.



70%

of employees surveyed cited a prolonged interview process as the main reason for rejecting a job offer.

ABOUT AMBITION

AccountAbility is part of the Ambition Group. Ambition is a leading global boutique recruitment business. They access hard to find, high calibre professionals within Banking & Financial Services, Finance & Accounting and Technology. Ambition operate in Australia, the UK and key financial cities in Asia.

SPECIALIST TEAMS

Banking & Financial Services



- Finance & Accounting
- Funds Management
- Treasury
- Operations & Settlements
- Risk, Audit & Compliance
- Insurance
- Broking
- Superannuation
- Credit & Lending
- Client Services

Finance & Accounting



- Controllership & CFO
- Treasury
- Tax
- Audit & Risk
- Group Accounting
- Financial & Management Reporting
- Strategy & Planning
- Commercial Finance
- Corporate Finance

Technology



- Infrastructure
- Software Development
- IT Support
- Project Services
- Business Process & Data Analysis
- ERP
- Architecture & Strategy
- Testing & Quality Assurance
- Mobile Application Development
- Change & Transformation
- Digital & Web Design
- Business Analysis

GIVING BACK

We are passionate about building better futures for our community and run a number of charity initiatives. We work with Beacon Foundation and offer training to secondary school students preparing them for interview. On our staff birthdays we make a donation to the charity of their choice. We sponsor a number of charitable causes throughout the year.

THE ACADEMY

We are passionate about talent and are committed to investing in our future.



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

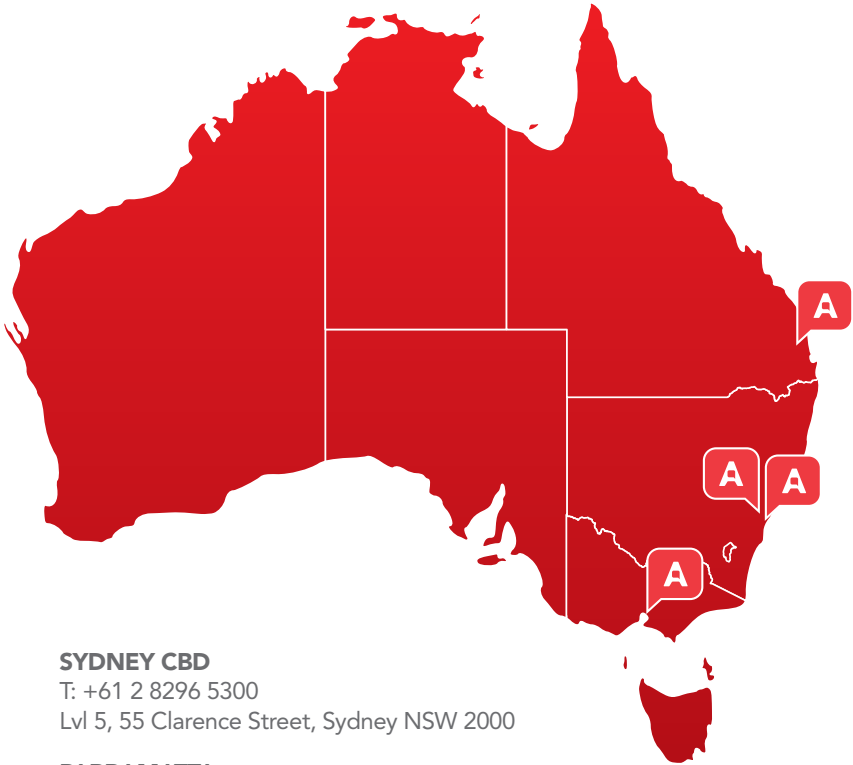
The Academy is our global program for introducing potential consultants to the world of recruitment. We are looking for talent that we can develop into the next generation of high performing sales professionals. The Academy is an in-depth 8 week program aimed at giving people the skills to be successful in recruitment and talent management. Academy participants are employed full-time by us and graduate into consultant roles in the business.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A SUCCESSFUL RECRUITER?

- Passion, drive and determination.
- Experience dealing with people, perhaps in difficult situations but always with professionalism.
- At least one year post educational work experience in a full-time role.
- A questioning mind with a natural flair for problem solving.
- An interest in building networks, reputation and social connections.

People who are looking for an exciting journey, one that will teach them the skills to be successful not just in recruitment but in life should contact academymanager@ambition.com.au

OFFICE LOCATIONS

**SYDNEY CBD**

T: +61 2 8296 5300

Lvl 5, 55 Clarence Street, Sydney NSW 2000

PARRAMATTA

T: +61 2 9633 7300

Lvl 4, 3 Horwood Place, Parramatta NSW 2150

BRISBANE

T: +61 7 3009 6100

Lvl 7, 410 Queen Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

MELBOURNE

T: +61 3 8629 1300

Lvl 36, 140 William Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

SECTOR OVERVIEW

ACCOUNTING SUPPORT

PAYROLL

There has been a rise in the number of Payroll management roles, with a strong focus on managing change as businesses look to streamline processes and implement new systems. Strong candidates with tier one Payroll system experience are in much higher demand and salaries have risen accordingly as supply is very low. A number of businesses are now looking at hiring more junior Payroll staff to train up in a response to this. There remains a continued focus on candidates with strong customer service skills as a way of addressing the internal perception of the Payroll function. Candidates with solid Australian and New Zealand payroll experience are also in high demand, with the knowledge of local taxes, awards and superannuation being much sought-after.

CREDIT/COLLECTIONS/ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

The high demand for permanent commercial collections officers remains constant and salaries have certainly increased. Confidence in the permanent job market has led to this area in particular becoming increasingly candidate short, with employers competing for the top talent. Full function Accounts Receivable roles are also in demand across the SME sector, with employers seeking candidates who are proficient in all aspects of receivables including invoicing, collections, banking and allocations. As ever the seasonal demand for short-term Credit contractors across year end and half-year end continues to be strong, particularly for those with experience with large ERP systems such as SAP or Oracle.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

There is particularly strong demand for experienced, high volume Accounts Payable candidates currently, with those with SAP experience being at the top of the list, especially in businesses within the FMCG sector. The creation of Shared Services divisions by large corporates in the major Australian cities has continued to be a trend. Despite the initial set-up costs, which of course include recruitment, this is still seen by many businesses as a long term investment which will provide long term cost savings and efficiencies.

ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANTS/BOOKKEEPERS

Permanent recruitment into Assistant Accountant roles has been a real feature of 2015 and will continue into 2016. Businesses are increasingly keen to secure accounting graduates on the cusp of their accounting careers in order to groom them into more senior roles as they proceed towards CPA or CA qualification. While these roles vary in scope from business to business, there is much competition for talent and salaries for these roles have also risen in the last year. Within the SME sector, bookkeepers and accounts all-rounders are in high demand, particularly where they are in a standalone position with responsibility for the entire accounting function. As a result of this reliance on people in these positions, there is often demand for highly experienced contractors to bridge the gap when someone resigns.

BUSINESS SUPPORT

RECEPTION

Corporate receptionists remain in high demand, particularly those with a solid working history working for blue-chip organisations. As a result of this, salaries have increased in the last year and the cream of the crop often have more than one opportunity on the table when they decide to change roles. With reception being a role that tends to have a fairly short life span with candidates often seeing the role as a stepping stone to a broader career, it is not unreasonable to expect to see movement from about the 18 month mark onwards. Businesses that are able to offer opportunities to move internally stand a stronger chance of retaining talent for longer. At the other end of the scale, career corporate receptionists are worth their weight in gold. Expect to pay a premium for this level of candidate in the current market.

EA/PA

There has been a significant increase in salaries across the EA and PA sector in the last twelve months, with businesses competing to secure the best talent. Counter-offers are frequent and are to be expected. The role of an EA or PA has continued to evolve to include much more business partnering. Fast-paced, highly organised and multi-skilled candidates who can demonstrate the ability to balance multiple priorities are in high demand. With top level talent becoming harder to source and engage, AccountAbility has designed a series of networking events specifically geared towards EAs and PAs to create a community of candidates and to ensure demand can be met.

ADMIN/TEAM ASSISTANT

With the new generation of school leavers and graduates being increasingly tech-savvy, more experienced candidates are having to work harder to upskill themselves in order to compete. Whilst experience is still desired by businesses it is not necessarily measured in terms of years but more in terms of what skills the candidates can demonstrate. Administrators who have expanded their skillset by taking on additional responsibilities in, for example, event management, marketing, HR or accounting support are also in demand. As a general rule, those with a broader range of skills can command a higher salary than those whose focus has remained limited.

OFFICE MANAGER

Office Management is becoming a more varied role than ever before, with roles in this sector varying significantly from business to business. Candidates with experience across a range of areas such as facilities management, reception, administration, people management and EA/PA duties are in high demand. As a direct result of this demand, we have seen a rise in salaries that looks set to continue into 2016. Permanent opportunities are readily available and this has prompted significant movement in this sector.

ACCOUNTING SUPPORT SALARY GUIDE

State	NSW		VIC	
Size of company	SME	Multinational/ ASX listed	SME	Multinational/ ASX listed
Salary	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
National Credit Manager	80 - 100	100 - 140	80 - 100	100 - 140
Credit / AR Manager	75 - 90	80 - 100	70 - 80	80 - 100
Credit / AR Supervisor	65 - 80	70 - 90	65 - 75	70 - 85
Credit / AR Officer	55 - 65	55 - 70	50 - 60	55 - 65
Collections	55 - 70	55 - 70	50 - 55	55 - 60
National Accounts Payable Manager	80 - 90	90 - 120	80 - 90	90 - 120
Accounts Payable Manager	70 - 80	80 - 110	65 - 80	80 - 110
Accounts Payable Supervisor	60 - 75	75 - 85	60 - 75	75 - 85
Accounts Payable Officer	55 - 65	55 - 65	50 - 60	50 - 65
National Payroll Manager	90 - 120	120 - 200	90 - 120	100 - 160
Payroll Manager	80 - 100	90 - 120	80 - 100	85 - 110
Payroll Supervisor	70 - 80	80 - 100	70 - 80	70 - 90
Payroll Officer	55 - 70	60 - 80	55 - 65	60 - 75
Accounts Officer	50 - 60	55 - 65	45 - 55	50 - 60
PQ Assistant Accountant	55 - 65	65 - 70	55 - 65	60 - 70
Bookkeepers	65 - 80		60 - 70	

State	QLD	
National Credit Manager	80 - 100	100 - 140
Credit / AR Manager	70 - 85	80 - 95
Credit / AR Supervisor	65 - 80	70 - 85
Credit / AR Officer	50 - 60	60 - 63
Collections	50 - 55	50 - 60
National Accounts Payable Manager	75 - 85	90 - 120
Accounts Payable Manager	65 - 75	70 - 90
Accounts Payable Supervisor	60 - 70	65 - 80
Accounts Payable Officer	50 - 55	50 - 60
National Payroll Manager	85 - 105	105 - 145
Payroll Manager	80 - 90	85 - 105
Payroll Supervisor	65 - 75	70 - 85
Payroll Officer	55 - 65	60 - 70
Accounts Officer	45 - 55	50 - 60
PQ Assistant Accountant	60 - 70	65 - 75
Bookkeepers	60 - 70	

*All salaries are exclusive of superannuation.

BUSINESS SUPPORT SALARY GUIDE

State	NSW		VIC	
Size of company	SME	Multinational/ ASX listed	SME	Multinational/ ASX listed
Salary	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Data Entry Officer	40 - 50	45 - 55	40 - 50	45 - 55
Receptionist	40 - 55	50 - 60	40 - 55	50 - 60
Administration Assistant	43 - 55	45 - 60	43 - 55	45 - 60
Office Manager	45 - 75	65 - 90	45 - 75	65 - 90
Executive Assistant (Manager level)	60 - 80	65 - 90	60 - 80	65 - 90
Executive Assistant (C-Suite)	70 - 90	80 - 120	70 - 90	80 - 120
Personal Assistant	60 - 70	60 - 80	60 - 70	60 - 80
Junior Admin	35 - 45	38 - 50	35 - 45	38 - 50
Team Assistant	45 - 60	55 - 70	45 - 60	55 - 70
Customer Service	38 - 55	40 - 65	38 - 55	40 - 65
Mailroom Clerk	35 - 40	40 - 50	35 - 40	40 - 50
Claims Administrator	40 - 50	45 - 60	40 - 50	45 - 60
Project Administrator	50 - 70	55 - 80	50 - 70	55 - 80
Legal Secretary	55 - 70	65 - 80	55 - 70	65 - 80
Sales Coordinator	45 - 55	50 - 65	45 - 55	50 - 65

State	QLD	
Data Entry Officer	37 - 49	44 - 59
Receptionist	39 - 53	49 - 59
Administration Assistant	37 - 49	44 - 59
Office Manager	53 - 78	74 - 88
Executive Assistant (Manager level)	58 - 68	69 - 83
Executive Assistant (C-Suite)	68 - 87	88 - 118
Personal Assistant	58 - 68	69 - 83
Junior Admin	35 - 40	35 - 40
Team Assistant	45 - 53	53 - 65
Customer Service	35 - 40	40 - 50
Mailroom Clerk	35 - 40	40 - 48
Claims Administrator	40 - 50	45 - 56
Project Administrator	50 - 65	55 - 70
Legal Secretary	50 - 60	55 - 75
Sales Coordinator	40 - 50	45 - 60

*All salaries are exclusive of superannuation.



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