

Library officer Job Description

A free job description template for the Local government industry

Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Employment Type: _____

Reports To: _____

Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

This library officer job description template is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and local government practices at the time of publication. Confirm the applicable modern award or enterprise agreement for your council and ensure compliance with all relevant employment laws.

1. Position overview

A council library officer is the friendly face of a public library — helping members find and borrow resources, processing loans and returns, shelving and maintaining the collection, and running programs such as storytime, school-holiday activities and digital-literacy sessions. The role blends warm customer service with accurate record-keeping and community engagement.

In Australia, library officers are typically classified under the Local Government Industry Award 2020 (MA000112) on the shared Level 1–11 scale, usually around Level 2 to Level 4 depending on qualifications, responsibility and the range of duties performed. Note that many councils pay under an enterprise agreement instead of the award.

This template provides a foundation for creating clear, compliant job descriptions that attract capable, community-minded staff. Once hired, manage your library and branch rosters efficiently with rostering software.

2. Key responsibilities

Member and customer service

Welcoming library members, answering enquiries, issuing memberships and helping people locate books, resources and services at the front desk and by phone or email.

Loans and circulation

Processing loans, returns, renewals and reservations accurately in the library management system, and managing overdue notices and holds.

Collection maintenance

Shelving returned items, keeping the collection tidy and in order, checking items for damage and assisting with stocktakes and weeding.

Programs and events

Helping deliver library programs such as storytime, school-holiday activities, author talks and community events, including setup and pack-down.

Digital and information support

Supporting members with public computers, printing, Wi-Fi, e-book platforms and basic digital-literacy questions, and helping with reference enquiries.

Facilities and records

Keeping the branch presentable and safe, opening and closing the library, handling cash or fee payments where required, and maintaining accurate records.

3. Skills and attributes

- Customer service: Warm, patient and helpful interaction with members of all ages and backgrounds, plus clear written and verbal communication.
- Information skills: Comfort with catalogues, databases and reference enquiries, and a genuine interest in helping people find information and resources.
- Accuracy: Careful, precise record-keeping when processing loans, reservations and payments in the library management system.
- Digital literacy: Confidence with public computers, e-book platforms, printers and helping members use everyday technology.
- Community focus: Enthusiasm for programs, events and outreach that connect the library with the local community.
- Physical capability: Ability to shelve items, push loaded trolleys, and set up and pack down for programs and events.

4. Qualifications and requirements

The qualifications for library officer positions depend on the branch and level of responsibility. Some are mandatory, while others are preferred or desirable.

- Working with Children Check (required) — Required for library staff involved in children's programs and public-facing council roles
- Working rights (required) — Eligibility to work in Australia
- Customer service experience (required) — Experience in a customer-facing role, ideally in a library, retail or community setting
- Library or information qualification — A Certificate III/IV in Library and Information Services is advantageous but not always essential at officer level
- Digital confidence — Familiarity with library management systems, e-resources and public technology is desirable
- First aid certificate — Current first aid certification is desirable, particularly for lone or after-hours branch work

5. Working conditions

- Indoor branch work with regular standing, shelving and use of trolleys
- Rostered weekend, evening and public-holiday shifts to cover opening hours
- Frequent interaction with members of the public of all ages
- Use of a library management system and public technology
- Some lone or small-team work at smaller branches

- Compliance with council policies and workplace health and safety requirements

6. Award information

Local Government Industry Award 2020

Most council library officer positions in Australia are covered by the Local Government Industry Award 2020 (MA000112). This modern award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for council employees across operational, administrative, technical and professional roles. View current Local Government Award pay rates.

The award uses a shared Level 1–11 classification ladder. A library officer is typically classified around Level 2 to Level 4 depending on qualifications and responsibility — for FY2026/27, Level 1 is \$27.11/hr and Level 5 is \$31.30/hr (full-time/part-time). Casual employees receive a 25% loading. Many councils pay above the award under an enterprise agreement — always check which instrument applies. Use award interpretation software to calculate pay accurately.

Penalty rates and allowances

Under MA000112, weekend and public-holiday penalties apply because libraries open outside standard hours: for full-time and part-time staff, Saturday is paid at 150%, Sunday at 175% and public holidays at 250%. Casual rates are higher again because the 25% loading is added to the penalty.

Allowances such as first aid (about \$0.54/hr, max \$20.62/week) may apply depending on duties. Overtime and on-call rates apply where relevant. Confirm the current rates and allowances that apply to your council, and check whether an enterprise agreement applies in place of the award.

7. Frequently asked questions

About the role

Q: What does a council library officer do?

A council library officer helps members find and borrow resources, processes loans, returns and reservations, shelves and maintains the collection, and helps deliver programs such as storytime and school-holiday activities. They also support members with public computers, printing and e-resources, and keep the branch tidy and safe. It is a public-facing role combining customer service with accurate record-keeping.

Q: What award covers library officers in Australia?

Most council library officer positions are covered by the Local Government Industry Award 2020 (MA000112), which sets minimum pay, penalty rates and conditions across a shared Level 1–11 scale. Many councils instead pay under an enterprise agreement. Always confirm which instrument applies to your council.

Q: What classification level should I use for a library officer?

Under the Local Government Award, library officers are typically classified around Level 2 to Level 4 depending on qualifications, responsibility and the range of duties. For FY2026/27, Level 1 is \$27.11/hr and Level 5 is \$31.30/hr (full-time/part-time). See our Local Government Award pay guide for current rates, and check any enterprise agreement that applies.

Q: Do I need to include pay rates in a job description?

It's not legally required, but including indicative pay rates can attract more applicants and set clear expectations. You can reference the applicable award or enterprise-agreement rate, or use phrases like 'Award rates plus penalties' or 'Competitive hourly rate based on experience.' Check the current Local Government Award rates for guidance.

Qualifications

Q: Do library officers need a formal qualification?

Not always. Many library officer roles are open to candidates with strong customer service skills, and a Certificate III/IV in Library and Information Services is advantageous rather than essential at officer level. A Working with Children Check is typically required for public-facing council roles involving children's programs. Higher-level librarian roles usually require a formal library qualification.

Q: Is a Working with Children Check required for library officers?

Yes, in most cases. Because library officers interact with children through programs and at the front desk, a valid Working with Children Check is typically required. Requirements vary by state, so confirm the check that applies in your jurisdiction and verify it before the employee starts.

Q: What qualifications should I require vs prefer for a library officer?

Mandatory requirements usually include a Working with Children Check, working rights in Australia and customer service experience. Preferred qualifications include a library or information services certificate, digital confidence and a current first aid certificate. Avoid over-qualifying the role, as it narrows your candidate pool unnecessarily.

Q: Can I hire library officers without library experience?

Yes. Many councils hire library officers from retail, community or customer-service backgrounds and train them on the library management system and procedures. Focus on customer service, accuracy, digital confidence and community focus. Clear job descriptions help candidates understand the front-desk and program work and self-select appropriately.

Employment

Q: Should I hire casual or permanent library officers?

This depends on your opening hours and workload. Casual library officers offer flexibility for weekend, evening and relief cover but attract a 25% casual loading under the Local Government Award. Permanent part-time or full-time staff provide continuity and stronger retention. Many councils use a mix — permanent staff for core hours and casuals for weekends and peak programs.

Q: What penalty rates apply to library officers?

Under the Local Government Award (MA000112), for full-time and part-time staff Saturday is paid at 150%, Sunday at 175% and public holidays at 250%. Casual rates are higher again because the 25% loading is added to the penalty. Overtime and on-call rates apply where relevant. Use award interpretation software to calculate rates accurately, and check any enterprise agreement.

Q: Does an enterprise agreement affect library officer pay?

Often, yes. Many councils have an enterprise agreement that pays above the award and may provide additional entitlements such as a 35-hour week or rostered days off. Where an agreement applies, its terms prevail (it must leave employees better off overall than the award). Always confirm whether an agreement applies before setting pay.

Q: What should I include in a library officer employment contract?

Key elements include: position title and classification level, employment type (casual, part-time or full-time), hourly rate, applicable award or enterprise agreement, reporting structure, main duties, branch location and required checks such as a Working with Children Check. For casuals, include the 25% casual loading. Use our digital employment contracts to simplify this process.

Rostering

Q: How far in advance should I provide rosters to library officers?

Award and agreement rostering rules vary, so confirm the notice period that applies to your council. As a general practice, providing rosters at least 7 days in advance gives staff visibility of their shifts across branches. Using rostering software helps ensure compliance and reduces last-minute changes.

Q: How do I roster library officers across multiple branches?

Assign staff based on branch opening hours, program schedules and each officer's availability and skills. Use rostering tools to cover weekends and evenings, balance hours fairly and fill gaps when staff are absent. This keeps every branch staffed without over-relying on individual officers.

Q: What breaks are library officers entitled to?

Break entitlements are set by the applicable award or enterprise agreement and generally include a meal break for shifts beyond a set length. Because branches must stay staffed, plan breaks around opening hours and ensure staff record their time accurately. Use time and attendance tools to support compliance.

Q: How do I manage library officer availability for rostering?

Collect availability preferences during onboarding and update them regularly. Use HR software and rostering tools to track when each officer can work and any branch or program constraints. Set clear policies about minimum availability and how to request changes, which simplifies weekend and evening coverage.