

Make-up artist Job Description

A free job description template for the Hair and Beauty industry

Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Employment Type: _____

Reports To: _____

Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

This make-up artist job description template is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and beauty industry practices at the time of publication. Confirm the applicable modern award for your business and ensure compliance with all relevant employment laws.

1. Position overview

A make-up artist applies cosmetics to enhance a client's appearance for weddings, formals, special events and everyday looks. The role blends creative artistry with strong client care — matching colours to skin tone, preparing the skin, applying lashes, and helping each client feel confident.

In Australia, make-up artists working in a salon or beauty setting are typically covered by the Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2020 (MA000005). A qualified make-up artist holding a Certificate II in Make-up Services generally sits at Level 2, with scope to progress by gaining further beauty qualifications. Note that the theatrical and entertainment industry is excluded from MA000005 — a make-up artist working in film or theatre may fall under a different award.

This template provides a foundation for creating clear, compliant job descriptions that attract skilled candidates while setting appropriate expectations for the role. Once hired, manage your team efficiently with salon rostering software.

2. Key responsibilities

Make-up application

Applying bridal, formal, event and everyday make-up to suit each client's features, occasion and preferences.

Skin prep and colour matching

Cleansing and priming the skin, then selecting and blending foundation and colours to match skin tone accurately.

Lash application

Applying strip, cluster or individual lashes safely and hygienically to complete each look.

Consultations and lessons

Running consultations, offering personalised advice and delivering one-on-one make-up lessons for clients.

Hygiene and sanitation

Cleaning and sanitising brushes and tools between clients and maintaining a hygienic, well-presented workstation.

Product retail and bookings

Recommending and selling retail products, managing appointment bookings and processing payments.

3. Skills and attributes

- Artistic ability: A strong eye for colour, symmetry and detail, with the creativity to tailor looks to each client and occasion.

- Communication: Clear consultation skills, active listening and the ability to explain product choices and aftercare.
- Client focus: Genuine interest in helping clients feel confident, patience with diverse needs and a warm, professional manner.
- Hygiene standards: Diligent brush and tool sanitation, awareness of skin sensitivities and strict infection-control practices.
- Time management: Ability to keep appointments on schedule, especially during busy bridal and event bookings.
- Retail and sales: Confidence recommending products, upselling appropriately and supporting the salon's retail targets.

4. Qualifications and requirements

The qualifications for make-up artist positions vary depending on the salon type and service range. Some are mandatory, while others are preferred or desirable.

- Certificate II in Make-up Services (required) — The core qualification for make-up artistry (Level 2 under the award)
- Working rights (required) — Eligibility to work in Australia
- Further beauty qualifications — Certificate III or IV in Beauty Services supports progression to higher levels
- Previous experience — Experience in bridal, event or counter make-up is advantageous but not essential
- First aid certificate — Current first aid certification is desirable for mobile and event work

5. Working conditions

- Work across salon, beauty counter and mobile settings
- Early starts for bridal and event bookings
- Regular weekend and public holiday trade
- Standing for extended periods and close client contact
- Use of PPE and strict hygiene and sanitation practices
- Compliance with uniform and grooming standards

6. Award information

Hair and beauty industry award 2020

Most make-up artist positions in a salon or beauty setting are covered by the Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2020 (MA000005). This modern award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for employees in hairdressing and beauty businesses. View current Hair and Beauty Award pay rates.

A qualified make-up artist holding a Certificate II in Make-up Services typically sits at Level 2, with scope to progress to higher levels by gaining further beauty qualifications and responsibilities. Pay rates in FY2026/27 range from \$27.81 per hour at Level 1 up to \$32.00 per hour at Level 6. Use award interpretation software to calculate pay accurately.

Note: the theatrical and entertainment industry is excluded from MA000005. A make-up artist working in film or theatre may fall under a different award — always confirm the correct coverage for your business.

Penalty rates and casual loading

Casual employees receive a 25% casual loading on top of the ordinary hourly rate instead of paid leave entitlements.

Under MA000005, penalty rates apply for weekend and public holiday work: Saturdays are paid at 133% for permanent staff (158% for casuals), Sundays at 200% (225% for casuals), and public holidays at 250%. Overtime is paid at 150% for the first hours and 200% thereafter. Use our overtime and penalty rate calculator to check the rates that apply.

7. Frequently asked questions

About the role

Q: What does a make-up artist do?

A make-up artist applies cosmetics to enhance a client's appearance for weddings, formals, special events and everyday looks. Core duties include skin preparation and colour matching, make-up and lash application, client consultations and lessons, brush and tool sanitation, and recommending retail products. Many also manage their own bookings and process payments.

Q: What award covers make-up artists in Australia?

Make-up artists working in a salon or beauty setting are covered by the Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2020 (MA000005). Note that the theatrical and entertainment industry is excluded from this award — a make-up artist working in film or theatre may fall under a different award, so always confirm the correct coverage for your business.

Q: What classification level should I use for a make-up artist?

A qualified make-up artist holding a Certificate II in Make-up Services generally sits at Level 2 under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award. Employees can progress to higher levels by gaining further beauty qualifications and taking on additional responsibilities. See our Hair and Beauty Award pay rates guide for current rates at each level.

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 rate or use phrases like 'Award rates plus penalties' or 'Competitive hourly rate based on experience.' Check the current Hair and Beauty Award rates for guidance.

Qualifications

Q: What qualification does a make-up artist need in Australia?

The core qualification is a Certificate II in Make-up Services, which places the employee at Level 2 under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award. Candidates also need working rights in Australia. Further beauty qualifications, such as a Certificate III or IV in Beauty Services, support progression to higher levels.

Q: What qualifications should I require vs prefer for a make-up artist?

Mandatory requirements should include a Certificate II in Make-up Services and working rights in Australia. Preferred qualifications typically include further beauty qualifications, previous bridal or event experience, and a current first aid certificate for mobile and event work. Match the requirements to your service range so you don't over-qualify the role and limit your candidate pool.

Q: Can I hire a make-up artist without salon experience?

Yes. Many salons hire recently qualified make-up artists and build their experience on the job. Focus on the Certificate II in Make-up Services, a strong portfolio, hygiene awareness and client-care attitude. Clear job descriptions help candidates understand expectations and self-select appropriately.

Q: How can a make-up artist progress to a higher level?

Make-up artists can progress beyond Level 2 by gaining further beauty qualifications, such as a Certificate III or IV in Beauty Services, and by taking on broader responsibilities. Each step up the classification levels attracts higher award pay — see the Hair and Beauty Award pay rates guide for the current bands.

Employment

Q: Should I hire casual or permanent make-up artists?

This depends on your business needs. Casual make-up artists offer flexibility for variable and seasonal demand but attract a 25% casual loading. Permanent part-time staff provide consistency for regular bookings and may have higher retention. Many salons use a mix — permanent staff for core hours and casuals for busy bridal and event periods.

Q: What penalty rates apply to make-up artists?

Under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award (MA000005), Saturdays are paid at 133% for permanent staff (158% for casuals), Sundays at 200% (225% for casuals), and public holidays at 250%. Overtime is paid at 150% for the first hours and 200% thereafter. Use award interpretation software to calculate rates accurately.

Q: What is the casual loading for a make-up artist?

Casual employees under MA000005 receive a 25% casual loading on top of the ordinary hourly rate in place of paid leave entitlements. This loading also affects weekend penalty rates — for example, casual Saturday work is paid at 158% and casual Sunday work at 225%. Use our shift cost calculator to estimate costs.

Q: What should I include in a make-up artist employment contract?

Key elements include position title and classification level, employment type (casual, part-time or full-time), hourly rate, applicable award (MA000005), reporting structure, main duties, work location and required qualifications. For casuals, include the casual loading percentage. Use our digital employment contracts to simplify this process.

Rostering

Q: How far in advance must I provide rosters to make-up artists?

Under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award, rosters should be provided in advance and changes generally require reasonable notice or employee agreement. Using rostering software helps ensure compliance and gives staff visibility of their upcoming shifts, including early-start bridal and event bookings.

Q: How do I roster make-up artists for weekend and event work?

Weekend and event work attracts penalty rates, so plan bridal and formal bookings carefully to balance client demand against labour cost. Our guide on how to roster hairdressing staff covers scheduling for beauty businesses, and rostering software makes it easy to apply the correct penalty rates automatically.

Q: What breaks are make-up artists entitled to?

Under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award, employees are entitled to meal and rest breaks based on hours worked, with an unpaid meal break for longer shifts. Given the standing and close client contact involved, scheduling adequate breaks matters for wellbeing. Use rostering tools to ensure breaks are planned and compliant.

Q: How do I manage make-up artist availability for rostering?

Collect availability preferences during onboarding and update them regularly, especially around peak wedding and event seasons. Use staff availability management tools to track when each artist can work. Set clear policies about minimum availability and how to request changes to simplify roster creation and reduce last-minute gaps.