

Role Description

Senior Investigations Officer



Agency	Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC)
Division/Branch/Unit	Complaints Operations/ Investigations
Location	Sydney CBD
Classification/Grade/Band	Clerk Grade 9/10
ANZSCO Code	224900
PCAT Code	1119192
Date of Approval	December 2019

Agency overview

The Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC) is an independent statutory body set up under the Health Care Complaints Act 1993. The Commission has a unique role and plays a central part in maintaining the integrity of the NSW health system, with the overarching consideration of protecting the health and safety of individuals and the community.

The work of the Commission is a key element of the NSW Government's priority to improve health service delivery in NSW. The Commission's focus is broader than public hospitals- it deals with the full spectrum of health services, including private hospitals, imaging and radiation services, medical centres, general practitioners and all registered and non-registered providers and allied health services.

The Commission is guided by the need for a system of complaints handling which is primarily customer focused independent, accessible, responsive, transparent and accountable.

Primary purpose of the role

Senior Investigators have carriage of investigations that are very complex, multi-faceted, high risk and typically of significant public interest. The role is expected to conduct thorough and timely investigations in accordance with relevant legislation and Commission policies and procedures.

Key accountabilities

- Manage a very complex and varied case load in a high volume work setting within set time frames ensuring a high quality of service is provided at all times. This will include but not be limited to:
 - Preparing and presenting investigation strategies and proposed lines of inquiry
 - Generating all relevant notifications and correspondence to parties as required under the legislation
 - Maintaining communication with complainants and providers throughout investigations
 - Liaising with legal representatives of providers
 - Securing information, responses, statements and other evidence on all relevant lines of investigation
 - Conducting face-to-face interviews with parties to a complaint and prepare witness statements.

- Collaborating with other regulatory bodies
- Recommending use of coercive powers as appropriate and authorize these where delegations allow.
- Scoping of matters requiring expert advice
- Sourcing and managing appropriate health experts to produce high quality, focused expert reports that accurately apply the tests for considering possible outcomes of the complaint.
- Provide regular reports and advice to the Investigation Manager and Executive Director, Complaints Operations on the status of investigations, changes in risk profiles and the need to reassess complaints in accordance with statutory obligations.
- Prepare and present Investigation Reports
- At the end of an investigation critically examine information and make recommendations to the Executive Director and Commissioner on the outcomes of investigations into registered health care practitioners, in the form of a soundly structured Investigation report that will support effective statutory decision making.
- Develop robust recommendations to public and private health organisations at the conclusion of investigations that improve patient safety and strengthen the wider health service in NSW.
- Conduct audits at Public Hospitals with other Commission staff to ensure ongoing compliance with Commission recommendations.
- Prepare good quality Briefs of Evidence for the Director of Proceedings when recommending the prosecution of health care practitioners before disciplinary bodies.
- Deliver external presentations and represent the Commission during consultation meetings with health professional councils.
- Mentor and support junior members of Commission staff across both the Investigations and Assessments Division to ensure matters are investigated effectively.
- Support the Manager and Executive Director in delivery of their operational functions, with the ability to deputise for the Manager as required.

Key challenges

- With the increasing volume and complexity of investigation matters, Senior Investigation Officers are responsible for undertaking the most complex and challenging investigations. The complexities could relate to the multiplicity of providers (which may be registered or unregistered), multiple subjects, many different types of issues (ranging from clinical concerns to conduct issues) and a multiplicity of different service provision situations.
- These complaints will also increasingly involve emerging areas of health service delivery, where treatments and protocols are still evolving and being tested. Examples could be novel treatments, new applications of stem cell therapy, and the use of medicinal cannabis.
- There may also be jurisdictional questions to be settled, such as whether a provider is delivering a services as a registered or unregistered practitioner. This is a particularly important question as the actions that can be taken throughout the complaints handling process, the powers of the Commission and the possible outcomes vary between these two categories.
- Increasingly, there are interdependencies between the Commissions own processes and the processes and priorities of other entities.
- Within the Commissions own processes, challenges may relate to factors such as ownership and access to records, conducting face-to-face interviews with parties to a complaint, some of whom are at times deeply traumatised, in a professional manner and prepare witness statements; sourcing appropriately skilled, respected and non-conflicted experts.

- Externally, and particularly in more serious matters, it is not uncommon for other investigations to be running in parallel. These may be at state level such as those by NSW Police, the NSW Coroner’s Court, the Pharmaceutical Regulation Unit, Public Health Units. Or they may be at national level, for example through Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Agency, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, the Therapeutic Goods Administration or ASADA. These complaints can only be satisfactorily progressed through co-ordinated processes across regulatory agencies.
- Timeliness and quality are important considerations across the entire pool of investigations, but will be particularly for investigations that are subject to multiple complaints and highly sensitive complaints.
- With a continuous and most likely increasing inflow of investigations, which raise inherently sensitive and at times emotionally charged dynamics, a high level of personal resilience and the ability to build resilient teams is essential.
- Communicating sensitively and professionally with complainants who have experienced extremely difficult situations such as the death of a close family member, a significant loss of their own health, or who suffer from mental illness will be essential.
- The Commission is a co-regulator with the 14 health profession councils and where an investigation of a registered practitioner is completed, the Senior Investigation Officer will be expected to ensure that the investigation Report is a clear and sound tool to support joint decision making.
- For sensitive matters there inevitably high visibility and media interest, being able to provide rapid and measured advice on the status of investigations to the Executive Officer to support media responses is essential.
- The exercise of independent judgement and initiative is required as an investigation process evolves.

Key relationships

Who	Why
Internal	
Investigation Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Senior Investigation Officer supports and mentors activities of the Investigation Officers in the team. • The Senior Investigation Officer will work alongside the Investigation Officers to assist in developing and explaining effective investigation technique and strategies for good caseload management practices across the Investigation teams.
Investigations Manager and Executive Director, Complaints Operations, Legal Officer, Complaints Assessment team, Medical and Nursing Advisors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Senior Investigation officer has regular contact with their manager, Executive Director and other relevant staff within the Division over the planning, management and conduct of investigations. • The Senior Investigation Officer may deputise for the Managers from time to time. • Senior Investigators have contact with employees in the Assessment Team and the Legal Officers in the exchange of information and the provision of advice relating to investigations and the preparation of briefs for prosecution purposes. • The Senior Investigation Officer will need to collaborate with assessment colleagues to discuss matters that are of a serious nature to ensure timely referral for investigation.

Who	Why
External	
Professional Councils, Local Health Districts, registered and unregistered health providers and other government departments, Australian Health Practitioner of Regulation Agency (AHPRA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Senior Investigation Officer liaises with practitioners, health providers, Professional Councils and complainants to provide advice and seek information. • To facilitate inter-agency cooperation and the necessary exchange of information to meet the Commission's legislative requirements.
Complainants, respondents and members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing complainants, respondents, members of the general public and a broad range of employees/officers of health organisations to obtain information for investigations. • Ensure complainants and respondents are kept apprised of the investigative process.

Role dimensions

Decision making

Senior Investigation Officers identify the most appropriate evidence sources and strategies to obtain evidence during investigations. Senior Investigation Officers establish their work and caseload priorities and decide what course of action to undertake when proceeding with an investigation. Senior Investigators formulate appropriate recommendations and exercise sound judgement and decision making when making recommendations in consultation with Investigation Managers and the Executive Director, Complaint Operations. Senior Investigation officers continue to exercise independent and sound judgement when assessing the evidence as it is obtained ensuring all complaint stakeholders are kept up to date regarding risk.

Reporting line

This role reports directly to the Manager Investigations and for specific investigations the Executive Director, Complaint Operations.

Direct reports

While this role does not have direct reports, collaboration with Investigation Officers and mentoring of those officers in their day to day work is part of this role.

Essential requirements

The HCCC has a unique and critical part to play in maintaining the integrity of the NSW health system. As such, it is an essential requirement that all prospective employees are able to carry out their duties in an honest and consistent way, with uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values.





Capabilities for the role

The NSW Public Sector Capability Framework applies to all NSW public sector employees. The Capability Framework is available at www.psc.nsw.gov.au/capabilityframework

Capability summary

Below is the full list of capabilities and the level required for this role. The capabilities in bold are the focus capabilities for this role. Refer to the next section for further information about the focus capabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Capability Group	Capability Name	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage	Advanced
	Act with Integrity	Adept
	Manage Self	Advanced
	Value Diversity	Intermediate
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively	Adept
	Commit to Customer Service	Intermediate
	Work Collaboratively	Advanced
	Influence and Negotiate	Adept
 Results	Deliver Results	Adept
	Plan and Prioritise	Intermediate
	Think and Solve Problems	Adept
	Demonstrate Accountability	Adept
 Business Enablers	Finance	Intermediate
	Technology	Intermediate
	Procurement and Contract Management	Intermediate
	Project Management	Intermediate

Focus capabilities

The focus capabilities for the role are the capabilities in which occupants must demonstrate immediate competence. The behavioural indicators provide examples of the types of behaviours that would be expected at that level and should be reviewed in conjunction with the role's key accountabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
Personal Attributes Display Resilience and Courage	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay calm and act constructively in highly pressured and unpredictable environments Give frank, honest advice in the face of strong, contrary views Accept criticism of own ideas and respond in a thoughtful and considered way Welcome new challenges and persist in raising and working through novel and difficult issues Develop effective strategies and show decisiveness in dealing with emotionally charged situations, difficult and controversial issues

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
Personal Attributes Manage Self	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as a professional role model for colleagues, set high personal goals and take pride in their achievement Actively seek, reflect and act on feedback on own performance Translate negative feedback into an opportunity to improve Maintain a high level of personal motivation Take the initiative and act in a decisive way
Relationships Communicate Effectively	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailor communication to the audience Clearly explain complex concepts and arguments to individuals and groups Monitor own and others' non-verbal cues and adapt where necessary Create opportunities for others to be heard Actively listen to others and clarify own understanding Write fluently in a range of styles and formats
Relationships Work Collaboratively	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a culture of respect and understanding across the organisation Recognise outcomes which resulted from effective collaboration between teams Build co-operation and overcome barriers to information sharing, communication and collaboration across the organisation and cross-government Facilitate opportunities to engage and collaborate with external stakeholders to develop joint solutions
Results Deliver Results	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take responsibility for delivering on intended outcomes Make sure team/unit staff understand expected goals and acknowledge success Identify resource needs and ensure goals are achieved within budget and deadlines Identify changed priorities and ensure allocation of resources meets new business needs Ensure financial implications of changed priorities are explicit and budgeted for Use own expertise and seek others' expertise to achieve work outcomes
Results Demonstrate Accountability	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess work outcomes and identify and share learnings to inform future actions Ensure that actions of self and others are focused on achieving organisational outcomes Exercise delegations responsibly Understand and apply high standards of financial probity with public monies and other resources Identify and implement safe work practices, taking a systematic risk management approach to ensure health and safety of self and others Conduct and report on quality control audits

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
Business Enablers Project Management	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify risks to successful achievement of goals, and take appropriate steps to mitigate those risks• Perform basic research and analysis which others will use to inform project directions• Understand project goals, steps to be undertaken and expected outcomes• Prepare accurate documentation to support cost or resource estimates• Participate and contribute to reviews of progress, outcomes and future improvements• Identify and escalate any possible variance from project plans