# Role Description

# Senior Associate, Foresight

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| **Role Description Fields** | **Details** |
| **Cluster** | **Premier and Cabinet** |
| **Department/Agency** | **The Cabinet Office** |
| **Division/Branch/Unit** | **Economic and Environment Policy Group / Shaping Futures and Data Insights Branch / Foresight Team** |
| **Role number** | **49455** |
| **Classification/Grade/Band** | **Clerk Grade 9/10** |
| **Senior executive work level standards** | **Not Applicable** |
| **ANZSCO Code** | **224412** |
| **PCAT Code** | **2119192** |
| **Date of Approval** | **August 2024** |
| **Agency Website** | [**https://www.nsw.gov.au/the-cabinet-office**](https://www.nsw.gov.au/the-cabinet-office) |

## Agency overview

The Cabinet Office and Premier’s Department commenced operations on 1 July 2023 as separate but complementary agencies at the centre of government, replacing the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

**Leading policy, strategy and integrity from the heart of government.**

The Cabinet Office:

* leads and coordinates strategy and policy across government, including driving action on the Government’s key priorities
* provides expert independent policy, legal and governance advice to the Premier and Cabinet, including on National Cabinet matters
* upholds Cabinet conventions and provides stewardship of the NSW Cabinet system to support good decision-making.

For more information go to <https://www.nsw.gov.au/the-cabinet-office>

## Primary purpose of the role

Contributes to and shapes cross-sector strategic projects by undertaking complex research, data analysis, networked engagement and design thinking that helps government anticipate emerging opportunities and challenges. The role operates at the intersection of foresight, systems thinking, data analytics and strategic policy development. The high impact role enables individuals with a diverse breadth of knowledge and experience to work on projects, programs and stakeholder engagements that have high levels of complexity but have transformative impact over longer time horizons.

## Key accountabilities

* Produce research, insights products, evidence scans and strategy/advisory documents using diverse qualitative and quantitative methods from multiple disciplines and practices, including strategic foresight, policy development, social research and data analytics.
* Conduct on-going intelligence collection and horizon scanning processes to continuously spot signals of change and synthesise diverse, high-volume material for senior decision makers to quickly make sense of the external operating environment.
* Contribute content and knowledge to a growing portfolio of foresight platforms such as NSW Trend Atlas, NSW2060 Scenarios and Signal in the Noise newsletter and help the team leverage these assets for sector capability building.
* Develop and apply digital, analytical and other tools and practices to build capability to understand the future and its implications for the people and government of NSW, particularly future service provision.
* Contribute to the design and development of compelling communication products that help key stakeholders appreciate strategic opportunities and challenges over multiple time horizons and better plan for future uncertainty.
* Support effective and fit for purpose research design and delivery planning including the use of strategic foresight and human centred design methods.
* Effectively navigate sector governance, processes and procedures to create opportunities for managing uncertainty in decision making and risk management and build positive internal and external relationships with key stakeholders.

## Key challenges

* Communicating complex and challenging concepts to audiences that may have a mandated focus on the immediate term and creating space to explore divergent perspectives and plausible futures.
* Building awareness and capability to effectively use strategic foresight in government decision-making processes including helping decision makers grapple with uncertainty.
* Effectively prioritising and managing demand for team partnerships and engagements while maintaining strong relationships.
* Managing the potential for commissioning on a diverse spectrum of portfolio or topics and the need to rapidly acquire knowledge and insights into these domains in time sensitive environments.

## Key relationships

**Internal**

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| Who | Why |
| Director/ Executive Director | * Report on and provide recommendations on the soundness and feasibility of proposals or initiatives in respect to the Government’s public policy program, delivery on state significant projects or service delivery reform. |
| Project/Work team | * Maintain effective working relationships to ensure collaboration and communication to facilitate a consolidated view. |

**External**

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| Who | Why |
| NSW public sector staff | * Liaise and consult with agency/department representatives to foster productive business relationships. |
| Private entities, Community organisations, Academic and Research partners | * Maintain effective relationships to enable liaison, consultation, engagement and exchange of information. |

## Role dimensions

### Decision making

The Senior Associate, Foresight:

* receives advice and support from the Associate Directors, while independently managing the day-to-day workload within agreed work and project plans. The Senior Associate takes active ownership of their own work, collaborates with project teams on format, content and tone of reports, briefs and other work.
* escalates decisions or recommendations to managers that require or result in significant changes to project outcomes or timeframes and/or a need for higher administrative or financial delegation/approval.
* submits reports, analyses, briefings and other forms of written advice in final form with input required from the Associate Directors.

### Reporting line

The Senior Associate reports to an Associate Director in the team. The team regularly employ matrix-based structures for project management and delivery and the Senior Associate will have opportunity to work with different Associate Directors across the branch.

### Direct reports

Nil

### Budget/Expenditure

Nil

## **Key knowledge and experience**

* Exposure, awareness and practical experience with applying strategic foresight practices and frameworks in government, civil society or private sector contexts.
* Strong experience in policy development and analysis or high level of data and digital capability with maturity in data analytics.

## Essential requirements

* Appropriate tertiary qualifications or equivalent, relevant professional experience and training

## Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/capability-framework/the-capability-framework) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into focus capabilities and complementary capabilities.

## Focus capabilities

*Focus capabilities* are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

## Focus capabilities

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| **Capability group/sets** | **Capability name** | **Behavioural indicators** | **Level** |
| personal-attributes | **Act with Integrity**  Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values | Represent the organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way and encourage others to do so  Act professionally and support a culture of integrity  Identify and explain ethical issues and set an example for others to follow  Ensure that others are aware of and understand the legislation and policy framework within which they operate  Act to prevent and report misconduct and illegal and inappropriate behaviour | Adept |
| relationships | **Communicate Effectively**  Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect | Tailor communication to diverse audiences  Clearly explain complex concepts and arguments to individuals and groups  Create opportunities for others to be heard, listen attentively and encourage them to express their views  Share information across teams and units to enable informed decision making  Write fluently in plain English and in a range of styles and formats  Use contemporary communication channels to share information, engage and interact with diverse audiences | Adept |
| relationships | **Work Collaboratively**  Collaborate with others and value their contribution | Encourage a culture that recognises the value of collaboration  Build cooperation and overcome barriers to information sharing and communication across teams and units  Share lessons learned across teams and units  Identify opportunities to leverage the strengths of others to solve issues and develop better processes and approaches to work  Actively use collaboration tools, including digital technologies, to engage diverse audiences in solving problems and improving services | Adept |
| relationships | **Influence and Negotiate**  Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts | Negotiate from an informed and credible position  Lead and facilitate productive discussions with staff and stakeholders  Encourage others to talk, share and debate ideas to achieve a consensus  Recognise diverse perspectives and the need for compromise in negotiating mutually agreed outcomes  Influence others with a fair and considered approach and sound arguments  Show sensitivity and understanding in resolving conflicts and differences  Manage challenging relationships with internal and external stakeholders  Anticipate and minimise conflict | Adept |
| results | **Think and Solve Problems**  Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions | Undertake objective, critical analysis to draw accurate conclusions that recognise and manage contextual issues  Work through issues, weigh up alternatives and identify the most effective solutions in collaboration with others  Take account of the wider business context when considering options to resolve issues  Explore a range of possibilities and creative alternatives to contribute to system, process and business improvements  Implement systems and processes that are underpinned by high-quality research and analysis  Look for opportunities to design innovative solutions to meet user needs and service demands  Evaluate the performance and effectiveness of services, policies and programs against clear criteria | Advanced |
| business-enablers | **Project Management**  Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods | Understand all components of the project management process, including the need to consider change management to realise business benefits  Prepare clear project proposals and accurate estimates of required costs and resources  Establish performance outcomes and measures for key project goals, and define monitoring, reporting and communication requirements  Identify and evaluate risks associated with the project and develop mitigation strategies  Identify and consult stakeholders to inform the project strategy  Communicate the project’s objectives and its expected benefits  Monitor the completion of project milestones against goals and take necessary action  Evaluate progress and identify improvements to inform future projects | Adept |

## Complementary capabilities

*Complementary capabilities* are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identifying performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as ‘not essential’ for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes however may be relevant for future career development.

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| **Capability group/sets** | **Capability name** | **Description** | **Level** |
| personal-attributes | Display Resilience and Courage | Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change | Adept |
| personal-attributes | Manage Self | Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning | Advanced |
| personal-attributes | Value Diversity and Inclusion | Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives | Adept |
| relationships | Commit to Customer Service | Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives | Adept |
| results | Deliver Results | Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes | Intermediate |
| results | Plan and Prioritise | Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances | Intermediate |
| results | Demonstrate Accountability | Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines | Intermediate |
| business-enablers | Finance | Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk | Intermediate |
| business-enablers | Technology | Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness | Adept |
| business-enablers | Procurement and Contract Management | Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance | Intermediate |