

Australia

Market changes

Unsurprisingly, current economic conditions have taken their toll on the office support market. The resources and financial services industries downsized, vacancy activity reduced as a result of recruitment freezes and the redeployment of internal resources, and employers removed underperforming staff. Thus the volume of candidates increased, and employers became more selective. Yet despite this, opportunities remain for flexible and skilled candidates.

Job stability has become important to candidates, and interest in public sector roles has increased accordingly.

Changes to recruitment practices

Employers are aware of the increased volume of candidates, and so request a larger shortlist of interviewees, which increases the length of the recruitment process. They also now value commitment and longevity over drive and progression. Despite increased choice, employers need to move quickly once they identify a high calibre candidate, since the best candidates will still receive multiple job opportunities. It can however be a challenge to identify highly skilled candidates amongst the influx of applications now received.

Positions in demand

Personal and executive assistants capable and willing to support several personnel at director level are sought and the traditional one-on-one PA/EA role has diminished, while legal secretaries with experience in wills, probate and specialist areas are in high demand. Data entry clerks with a strong work ethic who will commit to a role are needed. Executive assistants and administrators are in demand for temporary assignments.

The requirement for corporate receptionists and specific sector administrators remains. Entry-level candidates for all-round administration or reception roles are also sought as a cost saver, and those at the entry to mid level find it easier to secure a role in the current climate.

Public sector trends

The change of government and associated internal redeployments and budget cuts reduced the number of roles

released and some departments reported recruitment freezes.

Candidates are keen to secure government roles for job stability and work/life balance and we expect application levels to continue to rise given the current economic climate. Many candidates gain entry to this sector via temporary assignments, and those with public sector experience can expect a competitive salary for their skills.

The length of the recruitment process remains an issue. The gap between public and private sector salaries continues to close, particularly in Canberra.

Salary movements

Salaries reached a stage of consolidation in early 2009 following the continual increases of recent years and in response to higher candidate volumes.

There are however a small number of notable exceptions, such as legal secretaries in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane/Gold Coast, regional Queensland and Adelaide. Other increases of note occurred for document controllers and project secretaries/administrators in Sydney, regional NSW, Melbourne and Brisbane/Gold Coast and data entry operators in Melbourne, regional Queensland, Adelaide and Perth. Typical salaries for entry-level administration assistants also rose in Melbourne, regional Queensland, Adelaide and Perth.

Candidates themselves have become more flexible in their salary expectations, focusing instead on job stability, and so it is unlikely salaries will substantially increase in the coming year. In fact, many are willing to accept a salary or hourly rate lower than the market value of 12 months prior.

Advice to candidates

Flexibility, adaptability and an open mind are critical. An entry-level role with a progressive company could become a career opportunity when the market improves. Likewise, temporary assignments can lead to permanent roles. Research the company and practice behavioural questions before interview, and present professionally.

New Zealand

Market changes

The office support market changed significantly, with the focus turning from finding suitable staff in a skills short market

to finding suitable jobs for the increasing number of skilled office support candidates.

Yet a shortage of specialist candidates remains, and these candidates are less likely to make quick decisions, often preferring the stability of their current role and only moving for the right opportunity with a sought after employer of choice.

Changes to recruitment practices

Many more candidates are now seeking employment than in recent years, however their quality and skill match is variable. The most impressive candidates remain in high demand and still receive multiple offers quickly, so employers need to make decisions quickly. As always, additional benefits such as flexible working hours, training or wellness perks help attract the best staff. The use of performance bonuses has increased.

Positions in demand

Candidates with a specialist skill base are in demand, particularly records officers, records managers, project administrators and support roles across the legal and medical sectors. It is highly recommended employers demonstrate the stability and long-term opportunities of their organisation to attract these candidates.

Salary movements

Salaries have increased only slightly and candidates, particularly those immediately available, are flexible in their salary expectations. The exceptions include administration assistants with 12 months or more experience, for which typical salaries increased 9% in Auckland and Christchurch/Wellington. Other notable increases occurred in Auckland and Christchurch/Wellington for project administration assistants with 3 years or more experience (4 and 11% respectively), receptionists with up to 12 months experience (3 and 6%), personal/team assistants (2 and 10%) and in the legal secretary arena.

Advice to candidates

Be prepared. Tailor your application to specific roles and state why you want to work for a particular organisation. Prior to interview, research the company, department structure and job specification. Prepare for behavioural-based interview questions. As always, the choice between closely skill-matched applicants will come down to presentation, communication and confidence at interview.

Administration	Administration Assistant (6-12 mths exp)	Administration Assistant (12 mths + exp)	Project Administration Assistant (3 yrs + exp)	Office Manager	Project Co-ordinator
	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary
NSW - Sydney	32,000 30,000 - 35,000	38,000 32,000 - 42,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	65,000 50,000 - 70,000	55,000 48,000 - 60,000
NSW - Regional	30,000 28,000 - 33,000	35,000 32,000 - 38,000	45,000 42,000 - 48,000	50,000 48,000 - 53,000	48,000 46,000 - 50,000
VIC - Melbourne	34,000 28,000 - 36,000	40,000 34,000 - 44,000	45,000 43,000 - 55,000	60,000 50,000 - 70,000	55,000 50,000 - 60,000
QLD - Brisbane and Gold Coast	32,000 30,000 - 35,000	40,000 40,000 - 45,000	48,000 45,000 - 55,000	55,000 50,000 - 60,000	50,000 45,000 - 60,000
QLD - Regional	30,000 25,000 - 32,000	35,000 30,000 - 45,000	37,000 35,000 - 48,000	50,000 40,000 - 60,000	45,000 35,000 - 50,000
SA - Adelaide	34,000 32,000 - 35,000	38,000 35,000 - 42,000	48,000 45,000 - 52,000	60,000 55,000 - 65,000	48,000 45,000 - 52,000
WA - Perth	35,000 33,000 - 38,000	40,000 35,000 - 50,000	45,000 40,000 - 50,000	70,000 60,000 - 80,000	60,000 55,000 - 75,000
ACT - Canberra	37,000 35,000 - 39,000	45,000 42,000 - 47,000	55,000 52,000 - 60,000	58,000 55,000 - 65,000	60,000 55,000 - 65,000
TAS - Hobart	30,000 29,000 - 32,000	32,000 30,000 - 34,000	36,000 34,000 - 42,000	42,000 38,000 - 50,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000
NT - Darwin	32,000 28,000 - 34,000	34,000 32,000 - 37,000	45,000 42,000 - 47,000	50,000 48,000 - 55,000	57,000 55,000 - 60,000
NZ - Auckland	34,000 30,000 - 36,000	38,000 32,000 - 45,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	65,000 55,000 - 75,000	55,000 45,000 - 65,000
NZ - Christchurch / Wellington	34,000 30,000 - 38,000	38,000 35,000 - 43,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	60,000 50,000 - 65,000	65,000 60,000 - 70,000

Administration / Specialists	Data Entry Operator	Sales Coordinator	Records Officer	Medical Secretary
	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary
NSW - Sydney	38,000 30,000 - 40,000	45,000 40,000 - 50,000	45,000 40,000 - 55,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000
NSW - Regional	38,000 36,000 - 40,000	40,000 38,000 - 43,000	40,000 38,000 - 43,000	45,000 43,000 - 48,000
VIC - Melbourne	38,000 32,000 - 40,000	42,000 40,000 - 49,000	42,000 32,000 - 50,000	48,000 43,000 - 52,000
QLD - Brisbane and Gold Coast	35,000 30,000 - 40,000	45,000 45,000 - 55,000	40,000 38,000 - 40,000	48,000 40,000 - 53,000
QLD - Regional	33,000 25,000 - 35,000	33,000 30,000 - 35,000	33,000 30,000 - 36,000	38,000 35,000 - 42,000
SA - Adelaide	35,000 33,000 - 36,000	40,000 36,000 - 42,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	45,000 42,000 - 50,000
WA - Perth	35,000 30,000 - 36,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	50,000 45,000 - 65,000	48,000 40,000 - 52,000
ACT - Canberra	36,000 33,000 - 39,000	35,000 32,000 - 38,000	42,000 40,000 - 44,000	45,000 43,000 - 47,000
TAS - Hobart	32,000 30,000 - 35,000	35,000 32,000 - 38,000	34,000 30,000 - 36,000	40,000 37,000 - 42,000
NT - Darwin	35,000 30,000 - 35,000	40,000 35,000 - 40,000	45,000 42,000 - 50,000	38,000 35,000 - 40,000
NZ - Auckland	38,000 35,000 - 45,000	48,000 42,000 - 58,000	44,000 38,000 - 48,000	50,000 43,000 - 58,000
NZ - Christchurch / Wellington	34,000 30,000 - 40,000	43,000 38,000 - 48,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	45,000 38,000 - 50,000

Reception	Switchboard Operator	Receptionist (Up to 12 mths exp)	Receptionist (12 mths + exp)	Receptionist / Administration Assistant (12 mths + exp)
	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary
NSW - Sydney	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	35,000 30,000 - 40,000	40,000 38,000 - 48,000	45,000 42,000 - 48,000
NSW - Regional	40,000 37,000 - 42,000	38,000 36,000 - 40,000	40,000 38,000 - 42,000	45,000 43,000 - 47,000
VIC - Melbourne	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	38,000 30,000 - 40,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	42,000 38,000 - 45,000
QLD - Brisbane and Gold Coast	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	35,000 30,000 - 40,000	40,000 38,000 - 45,000	45,000 40,000 - 50,000
QLD - Regional	28,000 25,000 - 30,000	30,000 25,000 - 32,000	32,000 32,000 - 35,000	35,000 32,000 - 37,000
SA - Adelaide	40,000 38,000 - 44,000	35,000 32,000 - 38,000	40,000 38,000 - 42,000	42,000 38,000 - 45,000
WA - Perth	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	35,000 30,000 - 38,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	40,000 38,000 - 50,000
ACT - Canberra	38,000 36,000 - 40,000	36,000 35,000 - 38,000	40,000 38,000 - 42,000	43,000 38,000 - 45,000
TAS - Hobart	32,000 30,000 - 36,000	30,000 28,000 - 35,000	32,000 30,000 - 35,000	35,000 31,000 - 40,000
NT - Darwin	37,000 34,000 - 38,000	35,000 30,000 - 37,000	40,000 38,000 - 42,000	42,000 38,000 - 45,000
NZ - Auckland	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	35,000 28,000 - 38,000	40,000 38,000 - 48,000	43,000 38,000 - 48,000
NZ - Christchurch / Wellington	35,000 32,000 - 40,000	34,000 30,000 - 40,000	38,000 35,000 - 43,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000

Secretarial	Secretary (Up to 12 mths exp)	Secretary (12 mths + exp)	Team Secretary (3 yrs + exp)	Personal / Team Assistant (Assisting a number of executives)	Executive Assistant (Working for one person)
	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary
NSW - Sydney	38,000 30,000 - 40,000	42,000 35,000 - 45,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	55,000 45,000 - 60,000	60,000 50,000 - 70,000
NSW - Regional	37,000 34,000 - 40,000	40,000 38,000 - 43,000	50,000 47,000 - 53,000	55,000 53,000 - 57,000	55,000 52,000 - 57,000
VIC - Melbourne	35,000 30,000 - 40,000	46,000 40,000 - 52,000	53,000 45,000 - 60,000	52,000 48,000 - 55,000	55,000 53,000 - 70,000
QLD - Brisbane and Gold Coast	35,000 35,000 - 40,000	40,000 40,000 - 45,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	55,000 50,000 - 65,000	60,000 50,000 - 65,000
QLD - Regional	32,000 30,000 - 38,000	40,000 33,000 - 45,000	40,000 33,000 - 43,000	45,000 42,000 - 50,000	50,000 45,000 - 60,000
SA - Adelaide	35,000 33,000 - 38,000	40,000 38,000 - 45,000	50,000 48,000 - 52,000	55,000 48,000 - 60,000	60,000 55,000 - 70,000
WA - Perth	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	55,000 50,000 - 60,000	60,000 50,000 - 70,000	65,000 60,000 - 80,000
ACT - Canberra	38,000 35,000 - 40,000	43,000 40,000 - 45,000	52,000 50,000 - 55,000	55,000 52,000 - 57,000	60,000 58,000 - 65,000
TAS - Hobart	33,000 30,000 - 35,000	37,000 34,000 - 38,000	40,000 38,000 - 50,000	45,000 40,000 - 55,000	50,000 40,000 - 60,000
NT - Darwin	35,000 33,000 - 37,000	39,000 37,000 - 42,000	50,000 46,000 - 52,000	55,000 48,000 - 57,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000
NZ - Auckland	42,000 35,000 - 45,000	46,000 40,000 - 48,000	52,000 48,000 - 56,000	56,000 48,000 - 62,000	62,000 55,000 - 70,000
NZ - Christchurch / Wellington	35,000 30,000 - 40,000	41,000 38,000 - 45,000	45,000 40,000 - 48,000	55,000 45,000 - 60,000	60,000 50,000 - 70,000

Legal Support	Legal Secretary (Up to 2 yrs exp)	Legal Secretary (2 - 4 yrs exp)	Legal Secretary (4 yrs + exp)	Legal Personal Assistant
	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary
NSW - Sydney	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	55,000 50,000 - 60,000	60,000 55,000 - 65,000	65,000 60,000 - 70,000
NSW - Regional	32,000 28,000 - 35,000	34,000 30,000 - 36,000	45,000 42,000 - 48,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000
VIC - Melbourne	48,000 35,000 - 50,000	52,000 37,000 - 55,000	55,000 42,000 - 65,000	58,000 50,000 - 65,000
QLD - Brisbane and Gold Coast	44,000 38,000 - 50,000	50,000 42,000 - 54,000	55,000 45,000 - 60,000	60,000 50,000 - 65,000
QLD - Regional	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	48,000 45,000 - 50,000	55,000 50,000 - 60,000	45,000 40,000 - 55,000
SA - Adelaide	42,000 38,000 - 45,000	48,000 44,000 - 52,000	52,000 48,000 - 60,000	55,000 50,000 - 60,000
WA - Perth	45,000 40,000 - 50,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	50,000 45,000 - 57,000	51,000 43,000 - 57,000
ACT - Canberra	43,000 41,000 - 46,000	50,000 47,000 - 52,000	55,000 52,000 - 58,000	58,000 55,000 - 60,000
TAS - Hobart	35,000 33,000 - 38,000	40,000 38,000 - 42,000	43,000 40,000 - 48,000	45,000 42,000 - 50,000
NT - Darwin	43,000 40,000 - 45,000	46,000 44,000 - 48,000	55,000 48,000 - 58,000	50,000 45,000 - 52,000
NZ - Auckland	48,000 45,000 - 52,000	54,000 48,000 - 58,000	56,000 50,000 - 60,000	60,000 56,000 - 64,000
NZ - Christchurch / Wellington	45,000 40,000 - 48,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	55,000 48,000 - 60,000	55,000 45,000 - 60,000

Banking & Finance Support	Specialist Finance PA	Investment Banking Personal Assistant	Advisor Support
	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary
NSW - Sydney	63,000 55,000 - 65,000	65,000 60,000 - 70,000	58,000 55,000 - 65,000
NSW - Regional	45,000 42,000 - 48,000	50,000 47,000 - 53,000	45,000 40,000 - 50,000
VIC - Melbourne	55,000 48,000 - 60,000	60,000 50,000 - 65,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000
QLD - Brisbane and Gold Coast	60,000 50,000 - 70,000	60,000 57,000 - 62,000	52,000 40,000 - 55,000
QLD - Regional	42,000 38,000 - 46,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	35,000 30,000 - 40,000
SA - Adelaide	52,000 45,000 - 55,000	54,000 45,000 - 60,000	48,000 42,000 - 52,000
WA - Perth	60,000 57,000 - 62,000	60,000 57,000 - 62,000	45,000 40,000 - 47,000
ACT - Canberra	48,000 45,000 - 52,000	48,000 45,000 - 52,000	45,000 40,000 - 47,000
TAS - Hobart	45,000 38,000 - 48,000	43,000 41,000 - 45,000	45,000 42,000 - 48,000
NT - Darwin	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	52,000 45,000 - 55,000	48,000 42,000 - 52,000
NZ - Auckland	62,000 56,000 - 68,000	66,000 58,000 - 70,000	55,000 50,000 - 60,000
NZ - Christchurch / Wellington	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	54,000 48,000 - 60,000	48,000 40,000 - 52,000

Construction & Property Support	Document Controller	Project Secretary / Administrator	Site Secretary / Administrator
	Typical Salary	Typical Salary	Typical Salary
NSW - Sydney	55,000 50,000 - 60,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000
NSW - Regional	45,000 42,000 - 47,000	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	42,000 40,000 - 45,000
VIC - Melbourne	53,000 45,000 - 60,000	50,000 40,000 - 60,000	45,000 42,000 - 55,000
QLD - Brisbane and Gold Coast	60,000 50,000 - 80,000	55,000 48,000 - 65,000	55,000 50,000 - 60,000
QLD - Regional	55,000 50,000 - 70,000	50,000 50,000 - 65,000	65,000 50,000 - 80,000
SA - Adelaide	48,000 42,000 - 52,000	48,000 40,000 - 50,000	52,000 44,000 - 57,000
WA - Perth	60,000 55,000 - 70,000	60,000 55,000 - 65,000	55,000 48,000 - 70,000
ACT - Canberra	45,000 42,000 - 50,000	45,000 42,000 - 48,000	50,000 47,000 - 52,000
TAS - Hobart	40,000 36,000 - 42,000	42,000 37,000 - 45,000	43,000 40,000 - 45,000
NT - Darwin	54,000 48,000 - 60,000	60,000 50,000 - 80,000	60,000 55,000 - 80,000
NZ - Auckland	48,000 43,000 - 52,000	48,000 45,000 - 54,000	50,000 45,000 - 55,000
NZ - Christchurch / Wellington	40,000 37,000 - 43,000	45,000 38,000 - 50,000	48,000 38,000 - 52,000

Construction & Property Support	Facilities Administrator	Contracts Administrator (Residential)
	Typical Salary	Typical Salary
NSW - Sydney	45,000 40,000 - 50,000	50,000 45,000 - 60,000
NSW - Regional	42,000 37,000 - 47,000	45,000 40,000 - 50,000
VIC - Melbourne	45,000 40,000 - 50,000	45,000 35,000 - 55,000
QLD - Brisbane and Gold Coast	40,000 35,000 - 45,000	45,000 30,000 - 50,000
QLD - Regional	38,000 35,000 - 45,000	50,000 40,000 - 55,000
SA - Adelaide	43,000 40,000 - 45,000	45,000 40,000 - 50,000
WA - Perth	38,000 36,000 - 47,000	40,000 36,000 - 45,000
ACT - Canberra	42,000 35,000 - 55,000	45,000 40,000 - 52,000
TAS - Hobart	36,000 34,000 - 40,000	45,000 40,000 - 50,000
NT - Darwin	45,000 40,000 - 48,000	55,000 50,000 - 60,000
NZ - Auckland	45,000 40,000 - 60,000	50,000 45,000 - 60,000
NZ - Christchurch / Wellington	42,000 38,000 - 48,000	46,000 40,000 - 55,000