



Australian Embassy, Beijing

Agency	Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
Location	Australian Embassy, Beijing
Title	Senior Research and Program Officer (Agriculture)
Position number	BJ5-001
Classification	LE5.1
Section	Agriculture
Reports to (title)	Senior Policy Officer
Status	Ongoing, Full-time
Gross Monthly Salary	RMB16,840.85 (plus loading where applicable)
Commencement date	January 2018

About the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) leads the development of policy advice and provides services to improve the productivity, competitiveness and sustainability of agriculture, fisheries, forestry and related industries as well as to help people and goods move in and out of Australia while managing the risks to the environment and animal, plant and human health.

The Department has a network of overseas officers to help maintain and expand market access for Australia's agricultural exports and to manage the agricultural relationship with key trading partners.

The Department works closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and other Australian Government agencies as part of a whole of government approach to advance Australia's global, regional and bilateral interests.

About the position

Under limited direction, the Senior Research and Program Officer supports the Agriculture Counsellors – both Policy and Technical - to facilitate trade of agricultural products between Australia and China, provide advice on the Chinese agriculture market, and build relationships with relevant Chinese agricultural agencies and industry.

To support this work, the Senior Research and Program officer will; provide high-level research, analysis and evaluation on agriculture related matters and produce succinct and accurate reporting material; develop and maintain strong working relationships with key stakeholders; provide highly technical translation and interpreter support to Agriculture Counsellors and to visiting delegations

(often including very senior officials and ministers from Australia); and, under the direction of the Senior Policy Officer (LE6), supervise and support the Research and Program Officer (LE4).

Key responsibilities

- Provide highly technical translation from both English to Chinese and Chinese to English and interpreter support to Agriculture Counsellors and visiting delegations.
- Undertake independent research, analysis and evaluation on matters relating to Australia-China agriculture trade (using both Chinese and Australian sources) and produce succinct, accurate and timely reporting material.
- Build new and maintain effective networks of key contacts with relevant Chinese government agencies, key industry associations, Chinese and Australian producer groups, importers, exporters and distributors to progress key priorities and monitor appropriate policy environments.
- Represent Agriculture Counsellors at conferences, events and industry meetings.
- Respond to enquiries and calls on issues such as bilateral agricultural trade and import/export administration and requirements.
- Organise and facilitate programs for visiting government officials, including ministers, and Australian business representatives.
- Manage the financial and administrative requirements of the Agriculture Section.
- Supervise and support the Research and Program Officer (LE4).

******* This position is being readvertised. Previous applicants need not reapply *******

Selection Criteria

Applicants should address all five (5) of the selection criteria below, clearly outlining their claims and specific experience that makes them suitable for this position.

- Demonstrated ability to communicate with high-level of fluency in both Mandarin and English (verbal and written), and strong abilities in both translation and interpretation of highly technical agricultural terminology in a professional environment.
- Demonstrated ability to work with limited direction; prioritise a busy workload; work under pressure; and meet deadlines with close attention to detail.
- Demonstrated ability in representation and contact building with internal and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated research skills and an ability to conduct research with limited direction.
- Strong familiarity with the Australian Government's agriculture trade policy goals (including tertiary qualifications in a relevant discipline are desirable), and knowledge of the agricultural and biosecurity relationships between Australia and China.

What we offer

- A diverse and inclusive workplace and attractive remuneration package
- Exciting and fulfilling work in a diplomatic mission

- The opportunity to work with strong, smart, visionary and experienced leaders who encourage and support to develop your skills.

PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

Your application, written in English, should include:

1. **Curriculum Vitae** (maximum 2 pages)

Please attach current curriculum vitae.

2. **Selection criteria** - Complete Attachment A

Applicants are required to address the selection criteria by completing Attachment A. For each criterion, applicants should limit their response to 250 words. Appendix 1 provides useful information on how to address the selection criteria. Applications that do not address the selection criteria will not be considered.

3. **Contact details for two work-related referees** - Complete Attachment B

You need to provide contacts for two referees who are familiar with your professional as well as personal skills and competence. In most cases referees are not contacted unless you are shortlisted for the position, however if we have a tight timeframe we may contact referees before interviews.

Optional requirement**

4. **Employment & Qualification Background** - Complete Attachment C

The form is attached for completion.

Applications should be submitted in writing by email to the Human Resources Section of the Australian Embassy, Beijing at: beijing.hrrecruitment@dfat.gov.au.

Please email your application before 17:00 on **Sunday, 19 November 2017**. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

For further information about this position, please contact beijing.hrrecruitment@dfat.gov.au.

Please note that only applicants short-listed for interview will receive a written reply. If you have not received any communication from the Human Resources Section within four weeks after the close of application, please consider your application unsuccessful. Thank you for your understanding and your interest in working at the Australian Embassy in Beijing.

1. Demonstrated ability to communicate with high-level of fluency in both Mandarin and English (verbal and written), and strong abilities in both translation and interpretation of highly technical agricultural terminology in a professional environment.

Enter response here (maximum 250 words)

2. Demonstrated ability to work with limited direction; prioritise a busy workload; work under pressure; and meet deadlines with close attention to detail.

Enter response here (maximum 250 words)

3. Demonstrated ability in representation and contact building with internal and external stakeholders.

Enter response here (maximum 250 words)

4. Demonstrated research skills and an ability to conduct research with limited direction.

Enter response here (maximum 250 words)

5. Strong familiarity with the Australian Government's agriculture trade policy goals (including tertiary qualifications in a relevant discipline are desirable), and knowledge of the agricultural and biosecurity relationships between Australia and China.

Enter response here (maximum 250 words)

Please provide the names and details of two referees whom the Embassy's HR Section can contact if you are short listed for the interview.

Referee 1

Full name of Referee:	Relation to Applicant (employer/supervisor):
Occupation (Position and Organisation):	Phone:
Email:	

Referee 2

Full name of Referee:	Relation to Applicant (employer/supervisor):
Occupation (Position and Organisation):	Phone:
Email:	

(If required)

ATTACHMENT C Employment & Qualification Background

1. Personal Particulars

	Surname	Given Name(s)
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Contact Details – address, telephone contact details, email address

2. Current Employment

Month/Year Commenced	Employer	Position

3. Qualifications

Year Received	Qualification	Institution

4. Languages

	Proficiency Level

5. Other e.g. Awards, Academic Appointments, Publications, Professional Associations, etc

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The duty statement or role description will help you understand the responsibilities and tasks required in the job. The selection criteria describes the personal qualities, skills, abilities, knowledge and qualifications (if any) a person needs to perform the role effectively.

The Embassy's selection team will assess the responses of all applicants to each criterion. From time-to-time this will be enough to identify the right person for the role. More commonly though, this process creates a shortlist of applicants suitable to move to the next stage—usually an interview.

It is essential to respond to each criterion, writing at least one to two paragraphs explaining how you have demonstrated the particular skill or quality. Provide relevant examples from your work, study or community roles. Be clear and to the point. If a word or page limit is set, make sure you stick to it, and edit your responses for grammar, spelling and punctuation.

It is important to provide evidence to back up your claims. Where possible use actual examples of what you have done, how well you did it, what you achieved, and how it relates to the requirements of the job. The **STAR model** can help you form your answer.

What is the STAR model?

The STAR model is one way of presenting information against selection criteria. For each criterion think about the following and use these points to form sentences:

Situation - Set the context by describing the circumstance where you used the skills or qualities and gained the experience.

Task - What was your role?

Actions - What did you do and how did you do it?

Results - What did you achieve? What was the end result and how does it relate to the job you are applying for?

How do I address the selection criteria?

The most important aspect of addressing selection criteria is to provide evidence through relevant examples. Support your claims with actual, specific examples of what you have done and how well you did it. The following steps provide guidance on how to address selection criteria.

Step one –Understand the selection criteria

As an example, take *written communication skills*. The associated selection criterion could be:

'Well developed written communication skills. This includes the ability to:

- *structure written communications such as reports to meet the needs and understanding of the intended audience;*
- *express opinions, information and key points of an argument clearly and concisely; and*

- *write convincingly in an engaging and expressive manner*’.

It is important that you clearly understand what is meant by each selection criterion before drafting a response. Your application itself may also be used to assess this criterion.

Step two – Opening sentence

Begin each selection criteria with an opening sentence that clearly states your claim to this criterion. For example:

‘I possess strong written communication skills, which I have developed over the course of my career.’

Support the statement with detailed examples of where you demonstrated these skills. The following steps will help you to provide a structured, easy-to-understand response.

Step three – Brainstorm ideas for each criterion

For each selection criterion, brainstorm ideas from your recent work life. Ideally, confine your examples to the last two or three years of employment, or other relevant examples (e.g. study, community participation). At this stage, it is useful to generate as many examples as possible.

Step four – Expand on your brainstorming ideas and provide the evidence

Expand on these points from step three. Go back to each criterion and choose which examples to use, by matching them against the wording of the criterion. Once you have finalised your examples, you need to demonstrate how they meet the different aspects of the criterion. Be specific and describe exactly what you did, including the outcome, to demonstrate convincingly that you have met the requirements of each criterion. Here, the STAR method described earlier can be used. For example:

Situation – role as Research Support Officer

Task – needed to ensure that managers were kept informed of policies and procedures

Action or approach – initiated monthly newsletter, which was emailed to each manager. Took responsibility for writing the main articles. This involved obtaining ideas and input from other stakeholders to ensure that the articles reflected managers’ needs (in terms of content and language)

Result – led to improved lines of communication between managers and the Research Support Unit. Feedback was consistently excellent. Received divisional achievement award for newsletter quality.

Once this has been achieved, you can then write the draft paragraph in full. For example:

As Research Support Officer, I needed to ensure that managers were kept informed of policies and procedures. To do this, I initiated a monthly newsletter, which was emailed to each manager. I took responsibility for writing the main articles in each publication. This involved obtaining ideas and input from other stakeholders to ensure that the articles reflected the needs of managers, both in terms of content and language. I received consistently excellent feedback in relation to this newsletter from these internal clients and my own manager. I received a divisional achievement award for the quality of this newsletter from management. Importantly, this initiative resulted in improved lines of communication between managers and the Research Support Unit.

Remember to use only one or two of your strongest examples to respond to the selection criteria.

Step five – checking work

At this stage, you should read through your application, and check the following points:

- a) Have I been honest? Your responses should reflect an accurate picture of your role and achievements.
- b) Have I used positive and specific language? Avoid ambiguous or unclear expressions such as *'involved in'* or *'assisted'* as it makes it difficult to understand exactly what you did. Words and phrases which could reduce credibility should also be avoided (e.g. some, a little, limited, somewhat).
- c) Have I used strong action (doing) words? Avoid using passive language. For example, *'I received consistently excellent feedback in relation to this newsletter from these internal clients and my own manager'*, is better than simply stating, *'Feedback in relation to this newsletter was consistently excellent'*.
- d) Have I avoided unsupported claims about my capabilities? For example, rather than simply saying, *'The newsletter was received well by others'*, this assertion is substantiated in the following way: *'I received a divisional achievement award from management for the quality of this newsletter'*.
- e) Have I addressed all aspects of the criterion? It is important that you go back to the wording of the particular selection criterion. In the example provided, it is clear that the content refers mainly to the first descriptor, *'structure written communications to meet the needs and understanding of the intended audience'*. To make a full statement against the criterion, *'well developed written communication skills'*, it would be necessary to address the remaining two descriptors in additional paragraphs.
- f) Have I paid attention to the language of the criterion? For example, writing a response to the criterion *'well developed written communication skills'* requires a focus on actual experiences and the degree of skill in this area. However, if the criterion was phrased *'knowledge of effective written communication skills and techniques'*, this would require different examples which do not necessarily rely on describing actual performance in the workplace.