

University Nominee | Helen Stratton, Griffith University



Helen Stratton is currently an Associate Professor in the School of Environment and Science, Griffith University. Helen has over 29 years' experience in water and wastewater research developing a comprehensive understanding of the technical, social and economic issues that the industry faces. She has worked extensively as a consultant to the water industry and has developed strong partnerships throughout Australia and internationally. Helen has built an international profile, publishing over 90 refereed articles in internationally peer reviewed journals, reports and conference papers. She

has been a passionate volunteer for the Australian Water Association (AWA) since 1998, including being elected to roles such as the QLD Branch president and was an AWA Director for 10 years. This dedication has resulted in her being awarded the AWA Queensland Branch Distinguished Service Award in 2015 and Life Membership in 2016. Helen maintains her service to the Water Sector as a committee member of the Australian Branch of the International Water Association, Advisor on the Water Research Foundation USA, Scientific Advisor for the Fitzroy River Partnership and maintains active membership with AWA.

Nominee response to essential criteria

Corporate governance experience

I have been actively involved in the Australian Water Association for 25 years, as Queensland Branch President and on the AWA Federal Board for ten years. My role involved setting AWA's strategic direction and providing leadership to implement strategic actions, supervising the management of the organisation, and ensuring prudent financial decisions. During my time as AWA Director I oversaw and assisted in the change and new appointments of three CEOs. I was Executive Director at the Smart Water Research Centre (SWRC) from 2014-2016 managing the consortium of industry, university and government agencies.

Accounting Experience

I have developed financial management acumen through my roles of AWA Director, Executive Manager of the SWRC and lead Chief Investigator of projects to the value of over \$18M. Over the past 28 years, I have had to understand a wide range of accounting systems and budget reports for the NFP sector and University financial reporting systems. In my role as Program Lead and Executive Director for the SWRC I was required to ensure our budget remained on track and manage financial decisions. I also had to prepare financial reports for the quarterly SWRC Board meetings.

Legal Experience

I have acquired robust legal acumen and contract literacy through my various executive and management roles. One example of my experience dealing with complex legal issues was a successful project that I lead that had two sources of funding - the Australian Water Recycling Centre of Excellence and the Queensland State Government. I was responsible for negotiating, setting contract details and putting in place multiple contract types for the different partners and staff engaged on the project.

Experience gained in industry, research or regulation relating to the Australian water sector, water recycling and wastewater management

I have over 29 years' experience in water research, solving water and wastewater issues with national and global impact. Every project I have undertaken has been in partnership with water sector organisations and government agencies. I have also been member of the AWA Strategy and Policy Committee for over 20 years, including Chair 2004-2006. I have been an invited expert to Local and State Government groups, including the

Items highlighted in blue denote nominee self-responses to high priority gaps as identified by the WaterRA Board for 2021

Queensland Water Recycling Strategy and Qld State Government 30 Year Strategy. I am currently an elected scientist on the Fitzroy Partnership for River Health, Scientific Panel.

Nominee response to desirable characteristics

Research, education and training for water industry

My entire research and teaching career has been dedicated to the Australian and international water industry. My work has been cited over 1670 times and I have supervised 12 HDR and honours students in water research projects. I have delivered training courses to Water Treatment Plant Operators since 1997. We have trained over 500 operators and deliver the course up to four times per year. The wastewater course I co-developed has been adopted a unit of competency in the National Water Training Package.

Online learning/distance education

For the past 10-15 years the teaching mode that I have delivered my undergraduate teaching has been in a blended mode of face-to-face and online. All teaching material that I have developed over the past 2 years has been flexible and able to be delivered in multiple modes.

IT Systems/ Digitisation

I have worked closely with IT staff to develop content and have provided user advice to developers. Through my academic and director roles I have provided strategic advice and feedback on new IT systems at times of changing or improving platforms.