



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

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E109/83/03

17th June 2003

Circular 19/2003: Confined competition for appointment as Executive Officer/Junior Systems Analyst

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to say that the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners (CSC) will hold a confined competition for appointments as Executive Officer/Junior Systems Analyst on Information Technology (IT) work in the Civil Service. The appointments from this competition may be made in any Department* where fillable vacancies exist for systems analysis work. Additional panels may be established to fill vacancies, if any arise, in certain provincial locations. It is not envisaged that appointments from this competition will be made after 31 December 2004. (Appointments may also be made in departments by the internal promotion of eligible officers who are employed on IT work).

Job Requirements

2. The duties of the EO/Junior Systems Analysts will be to participate in a range of tasks related to the analysis, development (which may include programming), implementation and support of IT systems. They will receive comprehensive training, some of which may involve attendance at courses abroad. They may also be called upon to help in the training of other officers in IT.

3. For systems analysis work, officers must be logical, imaginative and persistent in their approach to problems. They should be able to express themselves lucidly, cogently and persuasively both verbally and in writing. They should be self-confident, adaptable, amenable to collaborative working and should have a commitment to achieving results. While they do not need to have had previous experience in IT or related fields, candidates should be able to demonstrate an interest in IT generally and their experience should preferably be of a kind that would help them to become good systems/business analysts.

* For Department, read Department/Office throughout this Circular.

4. For officers with the necessary aptitudes and disposition, systems analysis is a highly interesting field of work. The nature of the work provides an opportunity for developing a keen awareness of management problems and functions, together with knowledge of modern management techniques.

Competencies

5. The following competencies are necessary for the satisfactory performance of Executive Officer / Junior Systems Analyst duties:

Systematic Approach: Executive Officer/Junior System Analysts need to take a thorough and structured approach to organising tasks and solving problems. The effective EO/Junior Systems Analyst must prioritise steps to be taken and monitor progress in order to ensure that the task is completed/problem solved within the required timeframe.

Customer Service Orientation: Executive Officer/ Junior Systems Analysts must be able to establish and maintain good relations with others, establishing their needs and being receptive and responsive to their queries.

Coaching / Demonstration Skills: Executive Officer/ Junior Systems Analysts need to communicate confidently and persuasively, in a structured and concise manner within a coaching / demonstration context. This includes breaking down complex information into a simpler form.

Willingness to Learn New Skills: The effective Executive Officer/ Junior Systems Analysts in the Civil Service must demonstrate a willingness to learn and to acquire new skills on a continual basis, and must take the initiative in keeping abreast of new developments and in applying new skills in order to enhance performance on the job.

Self-Direction and Commitment to Delivering Quality Results: Effective Executive Officer/Junior Systems Analysts distinguish themselves by taking responsibility within given parameters and being personally committed to ensuring work undertaken is completed well.

Eligibility

6. The Civil Service is an equal opportunity employer. Promotion within the service is made on the basis of qualifications and the ability to carry out the responsibilities of the grade or post.

7. Candidates must, on **1 July 2003**

(a) be an established civil servant (or be on secondment to FAS or the Health and Safety Authority from the civil service)

(b) serving in a grade with a salary maximum, exclusive of any long-service increments, equal to or below the maximum point of the Executive Officer standard scale, exclusive of any long-service increments. The Executive Officer standard scale maximum is currently €33,054 per annum, or €34,793 for those making a personal

pension contribution. (Salary is subject to the increases awarded through the Benchmarking process).

and

(c) (i) have been serving as an Executive Officer for at least one year

(Officers on probation are not eligible to compete excepting where they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade and they have served continuously since satisfactorily completing a period of probation (periods of special leave without pay should not be considered to break continuity of service for this purpose).

or

(ii) have not less than two years' service in a grade/grades with a salary maximum equal to or above the maximum point of the Clerical Officer (standard scale), exclusive of any long-service increments (the relevant Clerical Officer (standard scale) maximum is currently €26,314 per annum (€505.29 per week) or €27,697 (€530.80) for those making a personal pension contribution)

or

(iii) have at least five years' service in the civil service overall.

8. Officers who are special leave with pay may apply, if otherwise eligible. Officers who are on career break may apply if the terms of their career break conform with the provisions of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and if they are otherwise eligible. Officers on special leave without pay (e.g. to serve with the EU) may be eligible - Personnel Sections should check individual cases with this Department if they are not covered by Department of Finance Circular 33/91.

General conditions of appointment

9. All officers appointed under this Circular will be assigned to IT duties either in their parent department or in another department. Officers are expected to serve on IT duties for a minimum of five years.

10. Appointments as EO/Junior Systems Analyst will be on an acting basis for at least one year. During this period they will be expected to undergo extensive IT training. This training may consist of a combination of structured in-house training, external courses and certified training courses. In order to complete the probationary period and be made substantive in the new grade, appointees will be expected to meet a required standard on all in-house and certified training and be able to apply the skills learned to the IT work of the Department / Office.

11. An officer whose service is not satisfactory, or who opts not to remain on systems analysis work, may, at any time up to the end of twelve months, be returned to the

parent department and/or duties in the former grade; any extra payment arising from the assignment to systems analysis work would then cease.

12. Officers appointed as EO/JSA will be eligible at all times, subject to being qualified in all other respects, to apply for interdepartmental competitions for which EOs are eligible.

13. A candidate who accepts an offer of appointment as EO/JSA, whether as a result of this competition or otherwise, will cease to be eligible for appointment from this competition. A candidate who resigns, retires is suspended or dismissed from his/her position in the civil service will cease to be eligible for appointment from this competition.

The competition

14. Selection will be by means of a competition conducted by the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners which will consist of a qualifying written test, a competitive interview and an optional language test. The written test will be designed to ascertain candidates' potential competence for systems analysis work and will not require any special knowledge. The written test will encompass aptitude tests covering specific task oriented capabilities in multiple choice format. The examination will be held in Dublin in the week commencing 21st July 2003, and in provincial locations in the week commencing 28th July 2003.

A certificate of attendance will be issued to all candidates at the test venues. Officers should present this certificate to their Personnel Section on their return to verify their attendance. The CSC will contact candidates directly to notify them of the date, time and venue of the examination. Details regarding the format and structure of the written tests will issue to candidates, where appropriate - in advance.

15. Those candidates who obtain the highest marks at the written examination will be invited to competitive interview. The number to be invited to interview will be determined from time to time having regard to the number of vacancies to be filled. A candidate will be entitled to only one interview from this competition. The interviews will be conducted by a board, or boards, to be set up by the CSC. The interview will be in a structured format. Details of the structure and of the matters to be addressed by the board will be issued in advance to all applicants invited to attend for interview. Applicants must make themselves available for any test and/or interview at short notice, if required. Requests for postponements will not be considered.

16. Test familiarisation material will be made available on the Civil Service Commission website at www.publicjobs.ie and from personnel sections in your own department from 1 July 2003.

17. (i) In determining the order of merit at the competitive interview, credit will be given for proficiency in both Irish and English in accordance with Department of the Public Service Circular 43/75 and Department of Finance Circular 30/90 to candidates qualified for the award of such credit on or before the date of the interview.

(ii) If they so wish, candidates other than those qualified for the full credit of 6% as at (i) above, may, if they are admitted to the competitive interview, have an assessment made of their ability to communicate effectively in both Irish and English. Ability in the language in which the interview is conducted will be assessed at the interview and in the other language by a separate language test. Candidates who, as a result of this assessment, show that they are proficient in both Irish and English, will be given credit in respect of such proficiency.

Applications

18. Candidates should apply online at www.publicjobs.ie. Alternatively candidates may apply over the telephone by calling 1890 261000. Candidates are required to have their PPS (formerly RSI) number available when telephoning. Closing date for receipt of applications is 5.15 pm 27th June 03. **The closing date must be strictly observed.** Candidates who have not heard from the Civil Service Commission by 17th July 2003 should contact that office immediately by telephoning 01 – 8597656 or 01 – 8587858.

19. The CSC will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates being called for competitive interview. For each candidate called for competitive interview the Personnel Officer will be required to:

- (i) certify that he or she
- has worked well and been satisfactory in her/his present grade
 - has been satisfactory in general conduct, and
 - fulfils the conditions of **eligibility** set out in paragraphs 6-8 above

and

(ii) Send to the CSC an assessment of the candidate's suitability for

(a) appointment as EO/JSA, and

(b) promotion (if appropriate),

on a form to be supplied by the CSC.

20. Candidates should note that (i) eligibility for the competition and (ii) health and the level of sick leave are not verified by the CSC until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment. Admission to the competition, or any of the selection stages of the competition, does not imply acceptance by the CSC. In particular, candidates should note that the Personnel Officer will not have verified health and the level of sick leave of those called to competitive interview - accordingly, admission to the competition, or any of the selection stages of the competition, does not imply that they meet the health and sick leave criteria. In considering a candidate's suitability from the point of view of health and sick leave, the CSC will have regard to Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76 (as amended by Department of Finance Circulars 32/91, 33/99 and 17/03). If candidates have doubts about any aspect of their eligibility, they are advised to clarify their position with their Personnel section before proceeding with their applications.

21. Candidates who sat the competitions for Clerical Officer Computer Programmer and/or Clerical Officer Senior Computer Operator announced in Circulars 34/2002 and 35/2002 respectively are reminded that they will retain the scores they achieved in the Diagrammatic Reasoning Test and in the Fault Diagnosis Test in those competitions for a period of twelve months. Accordingly, candidates who are eligible to apply for the EO/JSA competition will carry their scores forward to this competition.

Sustaining Progress

22. In keeping with the commitment to improving promotion systems in the Civil Service, the Sustaining Progress Agreement provides that:

- *The proportion of posts filled under mobility provisions of interdepartmental promotion competitions will be increased from 33.3% to 40% from the beginning of the next competitions to be held under the existing arrangements for interdepartmental promotion schemes (Sustaining Progress paragraph 22.17(ii) refers).*

This new arrangement applies to this competition and will take effect when the panels become valid. The change will require two vacancies in every five to be filled under the scheme and means that in a sequence of five, the second and fourth vacancy will be filled from the interdepartmental panel.

Circulation

23. Please bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in your department and associated offices without delay, including eligible officers on maternity leave, career break, term time leave or any other forms of leave.

24. If candidates have any queries about this circular, they should contact their Personnel Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed directly to the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners.

Mise le meas

John O'Connell
Assistant Secretary