



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

E100/10/84

17th June 2003

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Circular 20/2003: Confined competition for promotion to Staff Officer

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to say that the Civil Service Commission (CSC) will hold a confined competition to set up panels from which appointments as Staff Officer may be made. It is not envisaged that appointments will be made from this competition after 30 June 2005.

Eligibility

2. The Civil Service is an equal opportunities 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.

3. The competition will be confined to officers who on **1 July 2003**,

- (i) are serving in an established capacity as Clerical Officer (general service) in the Civil Service or on secondment from the Civil Service to FAS or the Health and Safety Authority; and
- (ii) have not less than two years' service in the grade of Clerical Officer.

Previous service in the following grades, viz.

- Clerical Assistant (general service) on clerical, shorthand-typing, typing or data entry duties, including previous service as Writing Assistant, Shorthand-Typist, Clerk-Typist, Typist, Card Puncher or Key-Punch Operator
- Departmental Clerical Officer (Customs and Excise)
- Assistant Officer of Customs and Excise
- Departmental Clerical Assistant (Customs and Excise)
- Departmental Clerical Assistant (Taxes)
- Paperkeeper

may be counted as Clerical Officer service for the purposes of this competition.

To All Departments: [For Department read Department/Office throughout this Circular].

4. Officers on probation are not eligible to compete except 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).

5. Officers who are on special leave with pay may apply, if otherwise eligible. Officers who are on career break may apply if their career break conforms to the terms 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 cases not covered by Department of Finance Circular 33/91 with this Department.

The Competition

6. Selection will be by means of a competition conducted by the CSC which will consist of a qualifying written test, a competitive interview and an optional language test. The written test will consist of a verbal test, a numerical test and a skills experience questionnaire. The written test will be held as follows;

Dublin: week commencing 21st July 2003

Provincial locations: week commencing 28th July 2003

The CSC will contact candidates directly to confirm the date, time and venue of the written test. 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.

7. 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. The interview 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.

8. (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.

9. Test familiarisation material will be made available on the Civil Service Commission website www.publicjobs.ie and from Personnel Sections in your own Department from 1 July 2003.

Applications

10. Candidates should apply online at www.publicjobs.ie. Alternatively, candidates may complete applications by phoning 1890261000. Candidates are required to have their PPS No. (formerly RSI No.) available when applying. The closing date for the receipt of applications is 5.15 pm, 27th June 2003. **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 phoning at (01) 8587656 or (01) 8587858.

Appointments

11. Candidates called to the interview stage of the competition will be invited to apply for all or any of the following panels. (The panel at (a) will be used to fill vacancies in the Greater Dublin area; appointments to Dublin will be offered to candidates who have applied for this panel).

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------|-----|-----------------|
| (a) | Dublin | (n) | Limerick |
| (b) | Athlone | (o) | Longford |
| (c) | Ballina | (p) | Nenagh |
| (d) | Castlebar | (q) | Portlaoise |
| (e) | Cavan | (r) | Roscommon |
| (f) | Cork | (s) | Rosslare |
| (g) | Drogheda | (t) | Sligo |
| (h) | Dundalk | (u) | Tralee |
| (i) | Ennis | (v) | Tullamore |
| (j) | Galway | (w) | Waterford |
| (k) | Kilkenny | (x) | Wexford |
| (l) | Killarney | (y) | Other locations |
| (m) | Letterkenny | | |

12. Candidates can be given no assurance that an appointment to any location listed above will be available. Appointments to an office relocated under a decentralisation programme will not be offered if positions in that office are being filled from special panels set up under the programme.

13. A candidate who refuses an offer of appointment to Dublin from panel (a) above will be removed from this panel but may remain eligible for appointment to a provincial location from panels (b) to (y). A candidate who refuses an offer of appointment to a provincial location from panels (b) to (y) will not be considered for that particular location but may remain eligible for consideration for appointment to any other location (including Dublin) which they have specified. **Candidates are**

strongly advised to apply only for those locations in which they would be prepared to serve.

14. A candidate who accepts an offer of appointment as Staff Officer, whether as a result of this competition or otherwise, will cease to be eligible for appointment from this competition.

15. The CSC will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates being called to competitive interview. For each candidate called to interview, the Personnel Officer will be required to certify that s/he:

- has worked well and been satisfactory in the present capacity
- has been satisfactory in general conduct, and
- fulfils the conditions of eligibility specified in paragraphs 3 to 5 of this Circular.

16. 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.

General

17. Appointments from the panels will initially be in an acting capacity. In the event of reversion, an officer will return to a vacancy in his/her former grade in the former department.

18. The Minister reserves the right to arrange that vacancies for Staff Officer may be filled by separate interdepartmental competition or otherwise where special qualifications are deemed necessary or where other special circumstances exist. Before an interdepartmental competition would be initiated in any case where special circumstances were deemed to exist, there would be consultation between the Official and Staff Sides.

Circulation

19. Please bring this Circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in your department and associated offices without delay, including officers on maternity leave, career break and other relevant forms of leave.

20. 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 Civil Service Commission

Mise le meas,

John C. O'Connell
Assistant Secretary