

16 December 2016

Circular 21/2016:
Interdepartmental Competition for Promotion to
Executive Officer (EO) in the Civil Service

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to say that the Public Appointments Service (PAS) will hold a confined competition to set up a panel from which appointments as Executive Officer may be made. It is not envisaged that appointments will be made from this competition after **30 April 2019**.

2. **Pay**

The Executive Officer (EO) Standard Salary scale will apply to this position.

Personal Pension Contribution

PPC (Personal Pension Contribution) salary for this position, with effect from 1 January 2016, is as follows:

€27,739, €29,712, €30,821, €32,687, €34,360, €35,977, €37,588, €39,166, €40,760, €42,311, €43,909, €44,967, €46,473 (LSI-1), €47,975 (LSI-2)

This rate will also apply where the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6th April 1995 and is required to make a personal pension contribution.

Long service increments may be payable after 3(LSI-1) and 6(LSI-2) years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

A different rate will apply where the appointee is a civil or public servant recruited before 6th April 1995 and who **is not required** to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Important Note

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. The terms of Circular 34/77 – Starting Pay on Promotion or Establishment will apply, as appropriate, to appointments under this competition.

Subject to satisfactory performance increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy. (See Haddington Road Agreement paragraph 2.19.)

3. **Executive Officer Role**

Executive Officers are engaged in critical analysis of proposals and reports and in examining

the more complex, non-routine cases on which decisions are required. Executive Officers are involved in a wide range of roles and activities, including: researching and drafting proposals relating to policy issues and legislation; acting as junior managers in Government Departments; responsibility for managing operations and, after some experience, large numbers of people and other resources; dealing directly with the public in support of services provided to them by the Civil Service. Executive Officers are employed in all Government Departments/Offices covering a wide range of functional responsibilities. The Executive Officer grade is the entry level to junior management in the Civil Service. (See Appendix I)

In order to be effective in the role of an Executive Officer in the Civil Service, candidates need to be:

- interested in public affairs and committed to the concept of public service;
- capable of planning and organising people and resources to meet goals, targets and objectives;
- understanding and sensitive in dealing with others, and persuasive when communicating in general;
- interested in making sure all tasks are completed to a very high standard;
- willing to share ideas and information with people, with the purpose of achieving a particular result;
- interested in working as part of a team;
- capable of presenting written material in a clear, concise, comprehensive and convincing manner;
- fully committed to achieving quality results;
- capable of using initiative as and when appropriate;
- able to conduct an in-depth review of intricate, non-routine subject areas and make appropriate recommendations.

4. **Eligibility**

The eligibility requirements for this competition reflect those set out in General Council Agreed Report 1526 in respect of new promotion arrangements to apply in the Civil Service. Available by clicking the link below:

<http://hr.per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Letter-to-Personnel-Officers-Jan-2014-and-General-Council-Report-1526.pdf>

5. Candidates for promotion to Executive Officer must on or before the closing date of **12th January, 2017**:
- a) be serving in an established, unestablished or acting (see para 5.b) below) capacity in the Civil Service in a grade below that of Executive Officer,
and
 - b) have not less than two years service in the Civil Service. Unestablished officers and officers serving in an acting capacity in the eligible grades may compete in the competition provided they fulfil the eligibility requirements set out above.
6. Where an officer was acting or serving on a Fixed-Term contract and was subsequently appointed in a substantive capacity, eligibility may be based on the aggregate service, e.g. six months in an acting capacity or on contract and eighteen months in a substantive capacity, can be aggregated to give two years service. For the purpose of deciding eligibility, officers must be serving on the closing date of **12th January, 2017**

Officers on probation are not eligible to compete except where they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade. Periods of special leave without pay should not be considered to break continuity of service for this purpose. Grades equivalent to the Executive Officer grade (i.e. have the same maximum pay scale or higher) are not eligible to compete in this promotion competition.

Successful candidates will only be offered an appointment if they are serving civil servants at the time of offer.

7. Officers on special leave with pay may apply if otherwise eligible. Officers 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.
8. The Public Appointments Service will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates invited/under consideration at the latter stages of the selection process. Personnel Officers will be required to certify a candidate's suitability for consideration with regard to:
 - performance of work in the present grade;
 - verification that the candidate has received an Evaluation of at least "Fully Achieved Expectations" at PMDS End-of-Year Review;
 - general conduct;
 - health, especially sick leave.

9. Application process

Regional Recruitment

While the majority of vacancies arising will be in Dublin some may arise in other regions. On the application form candidates may select up to **a maximum of two regions**.

You must only select regions where you are prepared to work if offered an appointment. Once you have submitted your region choice(s), changes will not be permitted.

If you are offered a position (whether you accept or not) you will, in the normal course, no longer be considered for any other position in that region. Assignment to a position will automatically eliminate you from being considered for positions in your other selected region.

REGION SELECTION (UP TO A MAX OF 2)			
	Carlow		Longford
	Cavan		Louth
	Clare		Meath
	Cork		Monaghan
	Donegal		Mayo
	Dublin		Offaly
	Galway		Roscommon

	Kerry		Sligo
	Kildare		Tipperary
	Kilkenny		Waterford
	Laois		Wicklow
	Leitrim		Westmeath
	Limerick		Wexford

Positions requiring specialist Irish language skills

The Civil Service is fully committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Official Languages Act. It is intended that vacancies arising which require staff to provide a full range of services through the Irish language (Functional Bilinguals), may be filled from this competition.

Candidates who indicate their interest on the application form and who are successful at the final selection stages will be required to undergo an assessment of their Irish language skills.

Positions requiring foreign language skills

Some vacancies may be filled from this competition which require staff to provide a full range of services through a foreign language (Functional Bilinguals). These languages include Polish, Portuguese, Chinese, Lithuanian and Russian.

Candidates who indicate their interest on the application form and who are successful at the final selection stages will be required to undergo an assessment of their chosen language skills.

<p>Username / Password issues</p> <p><i>Forgotten your username or password?</i> If so, click on the following link: https://www.publicjobs.ie/candidateportal/home/forgottenDetails.do</p> <p><i>How to contact PAS?</i> If you continue to have 'User Name' or 'Password' difficulties please email PAS at EOrecruitment@publicjobs.ie outlining your issue and giving your name and contact details, including a telephone number, where you can be reached.</p> <p>Candidates should note that support will only be available during office hours until the closing date.</p>

Practical Matters:

- Applications must be made online through www.publicjobs.ie.
- To apply, candidates must have a "User Account" on www.publicjobs.ie. If you have not already done so, you must register as a '**New User**' to create your Profile (register a New Account).
- If you cannot remember your profile details, please do not create a second profile as this could invalidate your application.
- Candidates should not confuse registering (Creating a Profile) with submitting an application. Once you have created a Profile you must then access the application form, complete and submit it.

- Candidates must use **their own** valid email address. Email addresses from third parties will **not** be accepted and may invalidate your application. PAS will only communicate application information with the candidate and not with any third party.
- ***Username and Password***
It is important that you keep note of your username and password as you will need this information to access your Publicjobs Messageboard.
- It is strongly recommended that you do not change your email address or mobile phone number in the course of this recruitment campaign, as any email/text message notification will be sent to the email address/telephone number originally supplied by you.
- ***Publicjobs Messageboard***
Interaction with candidates during the selection process will primarily be conducted online. PAS will send most communication through your Publicjobs Messageboard. Check your Messageboard on a regular basis as email notifications of updates/tests issued to your Messageboard may sometimes be filtered into your Junk/Spam email folders (or 'Promotions' in the case of gmail). You are also advised to check all these folders regularly.
- If invited to tests and/or interview, the onus is on each applicant to make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the PAS.
- The PAS accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant. They must ensure that they regularly check their Messageboard and access all communications from the PAS.

How to Apply

Please note that in parallel with this Interdepartmental Competition other separate competitions are also being conducted using the same application form. If applying for any of these, please ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements and submit only one application form indicating the competition(s) you wish to be considered for.

Click on the button 'Apply now' to access the application form. This button is located at the end of the job posting page for "Executive Officer" on www.publicjobs.ie. You must complete the application form in full and click the submit button.

Once you have submitted your application form you should return to your publicjobs account and confirm that it has been successfully submitted via '**My Applications**'. At this point you should consider adding *publicjobs.ie* to your safe senders or contact list within your email account to avoid not receiving email because a *publicjobs* email has been blocked.

Only fully completed and submitted applications will be accepted into the campaign. The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to undertake any element of the selection process is not to be taken as implying that the PAS or other body is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements.

Only one application per person is permitted.

Closing Date

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is **3pm on Thursday 12th January, 2017**. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within two working days of applying, please email EOrecruitment@publicjobs.ie

Selection Process

The selection process for this competition will comprise a number of elements. These may include one or more of the following:

- Completion of an online Assessment Questionnaire;
- Online and/or paper-based assessment test(s);
- Short listing;
- Language tests (oral and/or written), e.g. in the case of applicants for Functional Bilingual positions in the Irish and/or Foreign language streams;
- Interview(s);
- Presentation/Analysis exercise;
- Work sample test or any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

Applicants must successfully compete and be placed highest, in order to be considered for advancement to the next stage of the multi stage selection process. The number to be invited forward at each stage will be determined from time to time by the Public Appointments Service. More detailed information will be made available to the relevant candidates if they are invited to progress through the process.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the Public Appointments Service and ensure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct. The Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

Successful candidates will be placed on a panel(s) from which future vacancies may be filled.

Candidates with Disabilities

Candidates who have indicated on their application form or profile that they would like to avail of reasonable accommodations are asked to submit a psychologists/medical report. The purpose of the report is to provide PAS with information to act as a basis for determining reasonable accommodations where appropriate.

These reports must be forwarded to Troy Murphy, Public Appointments Service, Chapter House, 26-30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1 by close of business on **Thursday, 12th January, 2017**.

Shortlisting

Normally the number of applications received exceeds the numbers required to fill existing and future vacancies. While you may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the positions are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the Public Appointments Service may decide that a number only will be called to interview. In this respect, the Public Appointments Service provide for the employment of a short listing process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable, or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates who are, *prima facie*, better qualified and/or have more relevant experience.

During any short listing exercise that may be employed, the Public Appointments Service are guided by an assessment board(s) who examine the application forms and assess them against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. It is therefore in your own interests to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience on the application form.

On-line Assessment Tests

As indicated, the selection process may comprise a number of stages. Stage 1 will comprise on-line assessment tests. To facilitate candidates' availability and circumstances these initial online assessments will be unsupervised and may be taken in a venue of their choice, wherever they have access to a computer and a reliable internet connection.

On-line Test Taking Environment

Please be aware that taking these assessments within a secure IT network e.g. a network such as your work or college which may have firewalls or other security technology in place may cause you technical difficulties. You should consider taking your assessments in your home or other environment where access to the internet is not restricted to the same level. The onus is on you to ensure that you have full internet access to complete the tests. You should ensure that you can complete the tests in a quiet environment where you can concentrate without being disturbed for the duration of the tests. It is advised to take the assessment tests on a PC or Laptop. Candidates should not attempt to take the test on smart phone, mobile or tablet devices.

Assessment Questionnaire Test Link

A link to the actual on-line assessment questionnaire will be sent to candidates' Messageboards in advance of the test-taking window. It is anticipated that candidates will receive a link to their Stage 1 (A) on-line assessment questionnaire by 17th January, 2017. If you do not receive communication to your messageboard by 18th January, 2017 you should email EOrecruitment@publicjobs.ie

Candidates who have not completed the on-line questionnaire before the deadline will be deemed to be no longer interested in this competition and their application will receive no further consideration.

Next Steps

Should you come under consideration to proceed to stage 1 (B) (Aptitude tests) and subsequent stages of the selection process, information will be forwarded to you at the appropriate time.

This competition is being conducted in conjunction with another competition for these grades. Irrespective of which of the competitions you have applied for **you may only sit the various stages of the selection process once**. The scores you achieve **will carry across all competitions** for which you applied and for which come under consideration.

Your attention is drawn to Appendix II 'Important Information'. Please note that while candidates complete on-line tests in an unsupervised environment, those who qualify and are placed highest on the order of merit may be required to sit similar tests in a supervised environment at a later stage in the process. If a candidate's performance at a supervised test is outside the expected scoring range from their unsupervised test, they may be excluded from subsequent stages of the selection process.

Candidates should note that (i) eligibility for the competition, (ii) health and the level of sick leave, (iii) performance of work in the present grade, (iv) verification that the candidate has received an Evaluation of at least "Fully Achieved Expectations" at the previous year's PMDS End-of-Year Review, and (v) general conduct are not verified by the PAS 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 Public Appointments Service. In particular, candidates should note that the Personnel Officer will not have verified the above including 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 candidates meets the eligibility criteria including health and sick leave.

In considering a candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave, the Public Appointments Service will comply with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 6/2014. Candidates having doubts on any aspect of their eligibility are advised to clarify their position with their Personnel Section before proceeding with their application.

Selection Process Key Dates

Closing Date	3:00pm Thursday 12 th January, 2017
Candidates with disabilities must forward reports by	Thursday 12 th January, 2017
Stage 1 (A) online assessment	17 th – 20 th January, 2017

questionnaire	
If test link not received contact EOrecruitment@publicjobs.ie	By 18 th January, 2017

Conditions of Appointment

Appointment to the post of Executive Officer in the Civil Service will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. On appointment the appointee will serve a one-year probationary period in the post of Executive Officer. Prior to the end of this probationary period a decision will be made on substantive appointment to the grade.

10. Candidates should note that the provisions of Circular 6/89, Removal Expenses, will not apply to any offers of appointment arising from this competition.
11. A candidate who accepts an offer of appointment as Executive Officer, whether as a result of this competition or otherwise, will cease to be eligible for appointment from this competition. An officer who retires, resigns, etc. from his or her position in the Civil Service will cease to be eligible.
12. Candidates not promoted at the expiry of panel(s), will have no claim to promotion from this competition thereafter as a result of having been placed on a panel(s).

13. Codes of Practice

The recruitment and selection process for appointment to this position will be conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice titled Selection of Persons for Appointment on Promotion to Positions in the Civil Service (No. 02/04) published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments.

The Code of Practice reflects the following core principles:

- Probity
- Appointments Made on Merit
- An Appointments Process in Line with Best Practice
- A Fair Appointments Process Applied with Consistency
- Appointments Made in an Open, Accountable and Transparent Manner

Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the contents of the Codes of Practice including, inter alia, the provisions in relation to the responsibilities placed on candidates who participate in the recruitment and selection process.

14. Requests for Feedback/Test Rechecks

Feedback in relation to the selection process is available on request. There are no specific timeframes set for the provision of feedback or for carrying out rechecks.

Please note that the Review Process as set out in the Code of Practice is a separate process with specified timeframes that must be observed. It is not necessary for a candidate to compile a detailed case prior to invoking the appeals mechanism. The timeframe set out in the CPSA Code cannot be extended for any reason including the provision of feedback and/or the outcome of rechecks.

15. Complaints/requests for review will be considered by the Public Appointments Service in accordance with the procedures set out in the Codes of Practice.

16. The Codes of Practice may be accessed by visiting www.cpsa.ie or by contacting directly the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA), 18 Lower Leeson Street Dublin 2. The main switchboard for the Office is 01-639 5750.

17. **General Arrangements in Respect of Appointments**

Appointments from the panels will initially be in an acting capacity. An officer whose service is not satisfactory will be notified of the action to be taken. Where a decision is made not to confirm the appointee in the post of Executive Officer, the appointee may request that the Civil Service Disciplinary Code Appeal Board review the decision. (Ref. Circular 19/2016 Civil Service Disciplinary Code.) 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 Executive Officer may be filled by separate interdepartmental competition or otherwise where special qualifications are deemed necessary or where other special circumstances exist. In such circumstances there will be consultation between the Official and Staff Sides.

19. **Information on Panels**

The information on panel(s) formed as a result of this competition will be made available to Personnel Officers in all Departments/Offices and The Workforce Planning Unit in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. In addition, candidates will be asked to agree to the same information being made available to the relevant civil service unions for the purpose of monitoring the operation of the scheme.

20. **Circulation and Further Information**

HR Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their Departments and associated Offices without delay, including eligible fixed term workers, officers on term time, secondment, maternity leave, career break, contract, and all other relevant forms of leave

21. If candidates have any queries about this circular, they should contact their HR Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed directly to the Public Appointments Service.

22. The Civil Service is an equal opportunities employer.

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David Cagney
Civil Service Chief Human Resources Officer



EXECUTIVE OFFICER
People Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consults and encourages the full engagement of the team, encouraging open and constructive discussions around work issues • Gets the best out of individuals and the team, encouraging good performance and addressing any performance issues that may arise • Values and supports the development of others and the team • Encourages and supports new and more effective ways of working • Deals with tensions within the team in a constructive fashion • Encourages, listens to and acts on feedback from the team to make improvements • Actively shares information, knowledge and expertise to help the team to meet it's objectives
Analysis & Decision Making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively deals with a wide range of information sources, investigating all relevant issues • Understands the practical implication of information in relation to the broader context in which s/he works – procedures, divisional objectives, etc. • Identifies and understands key issues and trends • Correctly extracts & interprets numerical information, conducting accurate numerical calculations • Draws accurate conclusions & makes balanced and fair recommendations backed up with evidence
Delivery of Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes ownership of tasks and is determined to see them through to a satisfactory conclusion • Is logical and pragmatic in approach, setting objectives and delivering the best possible results with the resources available through effective prioritisation • Constructively challenges existing approaches to improve efficient customer service delivery • Accurately estimates time parameters for project, making contingencies to overcome obstacles • Minimises errors, reviewing learning and ensuring remedies are in place • Maximises the input of own team in ensuring effective delivery of results • Ensures proper service delivery procedures/protocols/reviews are in place and implemented
Interpersonal & Communication Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifies communication approach to suit the needs of a situation/ audience • Actively listens to the views of others • Liaises with other groups to gain co-operation • Negotiates, where necessary, in order to reach a satisfactory outcome • Maintains a focus on dealing with customers in an effective, efficient and respectful manner • Is assertive and professional when dealing with challenging issues • Expresses self in a clear and articulate manner when speaking and in writing
Drive and Commitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is committed to the role, consistently striving to perform at a high level • Demonstrates flexibility and openness to change • Is resilient and perseveres to obtain objectives despite obstacles or setbacks • Ensures that customer service is at the heart of own/team work • Is personally honest and trustworthy • Acts with integrity and encourages this in others
Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays high levels of skills/ expertise in own area and provides guidance to colleagues • Has a clear understanding of the role, objectives and targets and how they support the service delivered by the unit and Department and can communicate this to the team • Leads by example, demonstrating the importance of development by setting time aside for development initiatives for self and the team

Appendix II

IMPORTANT INFORMATION Terms and Conditions

Your attention is drawn to this important information. By accessing or attempting any assessment/test materials you are agreeing to be bound by the terms set out below.

1. All test and assessment materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the tests/ assessment materials (including any text, questions and/or potential answer options) or associated materials (including practice and/ or familiarisation materials) may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, printing, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process. Any person(s) who contravenes this provision, whether an applicant or other, or who assists another person(s) in contravening this provision, is liable to prosecution and/ or civil suit for loss of copyright and intellectual property.
2. Your attention is drawn the Commission for Public Service Appointment's Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service. In particular please note Section 5 - Responsibility of Candidates (see below).

Canvassing

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify them and will result in their exclusion from the appointments process.

Candidates' obligations

Candidates in the recruitment process must not:

- Knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- Canvass any person, with or without inducements
- Interfere with or compromise the process in any way.

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Penalties for failure to comply

Any person who contravenes the above provisions, or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine and/or imprisonment.

If a person found guilty of such an offence was or is a candidate in a recruitment process, then:

- Where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate
- Where he/she has been appointed subsequent to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

3. The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to undertake any element of the selection process is not to be taken as implying that the Public Appointments Service is satisfied that such a person fulfils the essential requirements.