



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

73-79, Sráid an Mhóta Íocht, Baile Átha Cliath 2, Éire.	73-79, Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2, Ireland.	Telephone: 353-1-676 7571 Facsimile: 353-1-604 5499 LoCall: 1890 66 10 10 VPN: 109 http://www.irlgov.ie/finance
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15 March 2000

**Circular 10/2000: Confined competition for appointment as Higher Executive Officer /
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 Higher Executive Officer (HEO)/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 30 June 2002. [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 HEO/Systems Analysts will be to take part in studies related to the feasibility of extending the use of IT in civil service work and to engage in the planning, design, development and implementation of all aspects of IT systems and infrastructures. Duties would also include analysis of business practices e.g. workflow and change. Successful candidates will receive comprehensive training, some of which may involve attendance at courses abroad. They may be called upon to help in the training of other officers in IT.

3. For systems and business 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. In their capacity as team leaders they will be required to deploy supervisory and management skills. An element of relationship building and collaborativeness in work style that transcends formal grade structures will also be necessary. 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.

To all departments etc.

* [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. They are in close touch with management in planning and implementing business solutions, including IT developments. They have, therefore, a special opportunity for developing a keen awareness of management problems and functions, together with a knowledge of modern management techniques.

Eligibility

5. The Civil Service is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

6. Candidates must, on 1 April 2000

(a) (i) be serving in an established capacity in the civil service

or

(ii) be on secondment to FÁS or the Health and Safety Authority from the civil service

and

(iii) be serving in a grade with a salary maximum, exclusive of any long service increments, equal to or above the maximum point of the Executive Officer (standard scale), (the Executive Officer (standard scale) maximum is currently £21,194 per annum)

and

(b) have not less than five years' service in their existing grade or an aggregate of five years' service in eligible grades or not less than seven years' total service of which not less than two years was in an eligible grade (an eligible grade for these purposes is a grade with a salary maximum, exclusive of any long service increments, which is not less than the maximum of the Executive Officer (standard scale) (currently £21,194 per annum).

7. 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).

8. Officers on 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 Circular 18/98 and if they are otherwise eligible. Officers who are 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 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 HEO/Systems Analysts will be on an acting basis for at least one year. 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 his/her parent Department and/or duties in the former grade; any extra payment arising from the assignment to systems analysis work would then cease.

11. Officers appointed as HEO/Systems Analysts will be eligible at all times, subject to being qualified in all other respects, to apply for entry to interdepartmental competitions for which HEOs are eligible.

12. A candidate who accepts an offer of appointment as HEO/Systems Analyst 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 post will cease to be eligible for appointment from this competition.

13. An officer who immediately prior to appointment as a HEO/Systems Analyst was on a salary scale the maximum of which was equal to or above the HEO maximum will enter the HEO/Systems Analyst scale at the minimum or at existing pay plus accrued increment whichever is the greater, subject to the maximum of the HEO scale not being exceeded.

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 is expected to be held in the week commencing 22 May 2000 in Dublin and the week commencing 29 May 2000 in provincial locations. 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 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 at short notice if required. Requests for postponements will not be considered.

16. (i) In determining the order of merit at the competitive interview, the CSC will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English in accordance with Circulars 43/75 and 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

17. Candidates should obtain their application forms from their own Personnel Section. The Office of the Civil Service Commissioners will supply application forms to Personnel Sections on request. Candidates should return their completed application forms directly to **The Secretary, Office of the Civil Service Commissioners, 1 Lower Grand Canal Street, Dublin 2**, to arrive not later than **5.15 p.m. on Friday 31 March 2000**. This closing date must be strictly observed. An applicant who has not heard from the CSC by Tuesday 16 May 2000 should contact that Office immediately.

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

(i) to certify that s/he

- has worked well and been satisfactory in his/her present grade,
- has been satisfactory in general conduct and
- fulfils the conditions of eligibility set out in paragraphs 5 - 8 above,

and

(ii) to send to the CSC

- an assessment of the candidate's suitability for appointment to HEO/Systems Analyst, and
 - promotion if appropriate
- on a form to be supplied by the CSC.

19. 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 Commission. 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 successful candidate's suitability from the point of view of health and sick leave the Commission will have regard to Circular 34/76 (as amended by Circulars 32/91 and 33/99). If candidates have doubts about any aspect of their

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eligibility, they are advised to clarify their position with their Personnel Section before proceeding with the application.

Circulation

20. Personnel Sections should bring this Circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their Departments and associated Offices without delay, including eligible officers on maternity leave, career break, term time leave or other forms of leave.

21. 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,

J. McGovern
Assistant Secretary