



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

E161/1/00

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Circular 20/2000: Competition for promotion to Assistant Principal (standard scale) IT posts in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to announce the holding of a confined competition, to be run by the Civil Service Commission, for promotion to Information Technology (IT) posts at Assistant Principal (standard scale) level in the following departments:

- Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development - 4 posts
- Department of the Marine and Natural Resources - 1 post
- Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions - 1 post

Job descriptions

2. Detailed job descriptions for these posts are set out in the appendices as follows:

- Appendix 1 - Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
- Appendix 2 - Department of the Marine and Natural Resources
- Appendix 3- Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

General requirements

3. Detailed personal requirements for the various posts are set out in the aforementioned appendices. The following general requirements apply to all the posts:

- Extensive experience of project appraisal and management techniques.
- A thorough knowledge of the principles and techniques of the management of knowledge and information.
- Proven people management skills, keen intelligence and sound judgment.
- Comprehensive experience of advising on and planning, design and implementation of IT systems.
- A highly evolved knowledge and understanding of IT systems and of developments in IT.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentational skills.

TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

[For department read department/office throughout this circular.]

Eligibility

4. In order to be eligible to compete, prospective candidates must,
- (a) on the date they apply for the competition be serving (i) in an established capacity in the civil service as a Higher Executive Officer or an Administrative Officer or in a departmental grade listed in paragraph 2 of Appendix 4, or (ii) as a Higher Executive Officer on secondment to FÁS or the Health and Safety Authority from the civil service,
- AND**
- (b) on **1 September 2000** have at least three years' service in their existing grade or an aggregate of three years' service in eligible grades (set out at (a)), except in the case of a Social Welfare Officer or a Higher Executive Officer or an Administrative Officer who has prior service in the Social Welfare Officer grade or the former grade of Higher Officer of Customs & Excise (see paragraph 5). In this context, credit is given for all job-sharing service on the same basis as full-time service.
5. Social Welfare Officers must have at least eight years' service to be eligible to compete, and may count up to five years' service in the Executive Officer grade as service in the Social Welfare Officer grade for this purpose. Former Social Welfare Officers and former Higher Officers of Customs & Excise who have been recertified as Higher Executive Officers and/or appointed as Administrative Officers **and** who have less than three years' service in those recertified grades, must have an aggregate of at least eight years' service in eligible grades in order to compete. Service in the former grade of Higher Officer of Customs & Excise will count as service in an eligible grade. Former Higher Officers of Customs & Excise may count up to five years' service in the Executive Officer grade or in the former grades of Officer and Indoor Officer of Customs & Excise as service in the Higher Officer grade for this purpose.
6. Service in the HEO/Systems Analyst grade will count as Higher Executive Officer service for the purpose of paragraph 4.
7. 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.
8. Officers on special leave with pay may apply, if 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. Officers 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.

Conditions of appointment

9. Appointments will be to the grade of Assistant Principal (standard scale) and will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. An officer whose service is not satisfactory, or who opts not to remain in the post, may, at any time up to the end of one year, be returned to his or her former department or duties. Any extra payment arising from the assignment would then cease.

The competition

10. Selection will be by competitive interview conducted by the Civil Service Commission. The interview board may, having examined the applications of all candidates by reference to the nature of the duties and the general and personal requirements set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 above and in the relevant appendices, decide that not all of the candidates will be invited to attend before the board for interview. In addition, the board may, at its discretion, require candidates to undergo a preliminary interview and invite only those who reach the requisite standard to attend for competitive interview to select the candidate best qualified for appointment. The interview(s) will be conducted by a board to be set up by the Civil Service Commission.

11. In placing in order of merit the candidates considered best qualified for appointment, the Civil Service Commission will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English, in accordance with Department of Finance Circular 30/90 and Department of the Public Service Circular 43/75, and any other relevant instruction to candidates qualified for the award of such credit.

Applications

12. Candidates should obtain their application forms from their own Personnel Section. The Civil Service Commission will supply application forms to Personnel Sections on request. Applications should be addressed directly to the Civil Service Commission, 1 Lower Grand Canal Street, Dublin 2, to reach there as soon as possible but not later than **5.15 p.m. on Friday 18 August 2000. This closing date must be strictly observed.** Candidates invited to interview must be prepared to make themselves available at short notice. It is expected that interviews will take place in early September 2000.

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

(a) to certify that the candidate

- has worked well and been satisfactory in his or her present grade,
- has been satisfactory in general conduct, and
- fulfils the conditions of eligibility set out in paragraphs 4 to 8 above;

AND

(b) to send to the Civil Service Commission an assessment of the candidate's suitability for promotion to Assistant Principal (standard scale) on a form to be supplied by the Commission.

14. Candidates should note that (i) eligibility for the competition, and (ii) health and the level of sick leave, are not verified by the Civil Service Commission until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment after the competitive interview stage. Admission to the competition and invitation to interview therefore, do not imply that a candidate meets the health and sick leave criteria. In considering a candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave the Commission will have regard to Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76, as amended by Department of Finance Circulars 32/91 and 33/99. Candidates with doubts about any aspect of their eligibility should clarify their position with their Personnel Section before applying.

Circulation and further information

15. Personnel Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their departments and associated offices without delay, including officers on maternity leave, career break and other relevant forms of leave. If candidates have any queries about the circular they should contact their Personnel Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed to the Civil Service Commission.

Mise le meas,

Joe McGovern
Assistant Secretary

APPENDIX 1**POSTS TO BE FILLED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Four posts in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development (DAFRD) will be filled from this competition. The context in which these posts have arisen is set out below, along with job description and personal requirements details.

Job context

The Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development has some 4,000 staff, deployed in many locations around the country. It is responsible for the expenditure of and accounting for some £2 billion annually of national and EU funds.

Information Systems (IS) play a critical role in enabling the department to achieve its business goals and deliver its services. While there has been a significant development of systems over the past decade, the department faces major challenges over the coming years in adapting and developing its Information Systems to meet its business objectives. These challenges include the changes required to implement measures under Agenda 2000, the completion of a number of major systems currently in development and the implementation of the Government's Information Society commitments.

In light of these demands, the department has revised its IS strategy using consultancy support. The revised strategy provides the framework within which the department will adapt and further develop its Information Systems over the next few years to meet requirements in relation to service delivery, accountability, information management and organisational change.

Job description

The appointee's duties will include:

- Systems maintenance and development.
- Redevelopment of systems to take account of the new technical architecture as envisaged in the department's new IT strategy.
- IT strategic planning.
- IT architecture.
- Data management.
- Internet/intranet technologies.
- e-Government implementation.
- Resource planning and development of appropriate training and skills planning for the department's IT staff.
- Technical support to the computer development project teams.
- Network planning and design.
- Restructuring and managing the department's help desk function.
- IT security.

Personal requirements

Candidates must have some or all of the following qualifications:

- A proven record of leading major IT projects through full life-cycle from initiation to implementation.
- Extensive experience in software development.
- A commitment to the implementation of strategic change.
- A thorough knowledge of the principles and techniques of data management.
- Proven people management skills, keen intelligence and sound judgement.
- Experience of planning, design and implementation of IT systems.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentation skills.
- Familiarity with or capacity to quickly acquire a good working knowledge of the department's wide range of activities at national and EU level.

APPENDIX 2**POST TO BE FILLED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE MARINE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

One post in the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources will be filled from this competition. The context in which this post has arisen is set out below, along with job description and personal requirements details.

Job context

The Department of the Marine and Natural Resources currently has about 400 staff (approximately 250 administrative and 150 professional/technical). Of these about 300 are based in Dublin (in four offices) and the remainder work at locations around the country.

The department had limited development of Information Systems prior to 1999. An Information Technology (IT) Strategy Plan was adopted in mid-1999, which incorporates IT and Information Systems (IS) strategies. This forms the basis for a new development and investment programme in the department over the coming years. An initial 3-year development and investment programme has been finalised to achieve the goals identified in the strategy and to transform the department's information management procedures and technology to modern, structured and efficient systems.

Job description

The appointee will play a leading role in the implementation of the department's Strategy Plan and Development Programme and the duties will include:

- Implementation of the department's IT Strategy Plan and the first three-year IT Development and Investment Programme. The Strategy Plan and Development Programme form the basis of the redesign of existing technology systems and the development of new systems to support the department's business needs.
- Managing systems design and development, project planning and implementation, network and communications management and budgetary planning and control.
- Development and implementation of the electronic delivery of the department's public services.
- Managing and developing the department's internal and external IT relationships.
- Managing the implementation of business solutions to meet the changing business requirements of the organisation.
- Business Process Re-engineering in the department.
- Participation on the department's IT Steering Group.

Personal requirements

Candidates for the post should have the following qualifications:

- An extensive knowledge of IT, including significant management experience, in a progressive IT development environment.

- Proven experience of participation on project teams in successful IT development work.
- Proven experience in planning, design, development and successful implementation of IT systems and infrastructure.
- Proven record of a willingness to take the initiative and to adopt a proactive approach to the introduction of IT solutions.
- Sound knowledge and experience of PC networks and office systems.
- Sound knowledge and experience of systems analysis and development methodologies, business and organisational analysis CASE tools, fourth-generation environments and relational database systems in a client/server environment.
- Sound knowledge and experience of groupware and proven experience in the introduction of groupware systems.
- Knowledge of the recommendations of the development of an e-Government / e-public service strategy in response to the Information Society agenda.
- Knowledge of Geographic Information Systems, while not essential, is desirable.
- Proven management ability, keen intelligence and sound judgement.
- First-rate interpersonal, communication and presentation skills.

POST TO BE FILLED IN THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

Job Context

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions was established by the Prosecution of Offences Act, 1974. It is responsible for the direction and supervision of criminal prosecutions. The directions of the DPP are currently implemented by the State Solicitor Service which consists of the Chief State Solicitor and some 32 State Solicitors outside Dublin.

Arising from the Government decision of 5 October 1999 responsibility for the solicitor service is to be transferred to the DPP. The establishment of the new integrated prosecution service will have a major impact on all aspects of the current organisation. As the Office embarks on this new and challenging phase of its development it must establish a dedicated IT Unit to develop its Information Systems for the future.

Job description

The main duties of the job are as follows:

- Day-to-day management of the IT Unit whose responsibilities include:
 - Maintenance of the Office network and hardware.
 - Delivery of technical support to users.
 - Maintenance of the Office's existing GroupWare (Lotus Notes) database and other applications.
 - Development and implementation of IT solutions to meet new requirements of the Office.
 - Evaluation and selection of software/hardware solutions to meet the Office's future needs.
 - IT Security.
 - Internet/Intranet technologies.
- Development of appropriate training and skills planning for the Office's IT Unit.
- Strategic Planning and the formulation of business plans for the Office in the IT area.
- Participation on the Office's IT Steering Group and on any other groups of an IT nature.
- Development and maintenance of IT relationships between the Office and other departments.
- Keeping the Office up to date and implementing policy to reflect Government policy in the areas of IT and e-Government
- Responsibility for IT issues arising from the proposed transfer of the Criminal Trials section of the Chief State Solicitor's Office to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in accordance with the recommendations of the Nally Report.

Personal requirements

Candidates for the post should have the following qualifications:

- Experience of advising on and planning, design and implementation of IT systems.

- A proven record of introducing IT initiatives and following them through from initiation to implementation.
- Proven record of willingness to take the initiative and adopt a pro-active approach to the introduction of IT solutions.
- A commitment to the implementation of strategic change.
- Proven people-management skills, keen intelligence and sound judgement.
- A thorough knowledge of IT systems and developments including PC networks, office systems, GroupWare and internet/intranet technologies.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentation skills.

GRADES ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE

1. The general service grades of Administrative Officer and Higher Executive Officer.
2. The following departmental grades at Higher Executive Officer/Administrative Officer level:

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General
Auditor

Department of Foreign Affairs
Third Secretary

Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas
Senior Clerk

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform - IT and Telecommunications
Division at Garda Headquarters
Systems Analyst

Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs
Social Welfare Officer

3. Certain officers serving in FÁS and the Health and Safety Authority as specified in paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the circular.