



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

E100/1/85

7 November 2000

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Circular 32/2000: Confined competition for promotion to Executive 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 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 2002.

Eligibility

2. The civil service is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.
3. The competition will be confined to officers who, on 1 November 2000
 - are serving as established civil servants in the grades of Staff Officer (general service) or Clerical Officer (general service) in the civil service or on secondment from the civil service to FÁS or the Health and Safety Authority, and
 - have completed at least two years' service in the aggregate in these grades.

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.

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; special leave without pay does not break continuity of service for this purpose.

TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

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

5. Officers who are 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 Department of Finance Circular 18/98, and if they are otherwise eligible. Other 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 Circular 33/91.

Appointments

6. Candidates called to Stage II of the competition - see paragraph 11 below - 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.)

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------|-----|-----------------|
| (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 | | |

7. Candidates can be given no assurance that even one 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.

8. A candidate who refuses an offer of appointment to Dublin from panel (a) 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 further for that particular location but may remain eligible for consideration for appointment to any other location (including Dublin) which they have specified. A candidate who refuses an offer of appointment may remain on panel (y) for any provincial location to which panel (y) is applicable and on any other panel on which s/he has been placed. **Candidates are strongly advised to apply only for those locations in which they would be prepared to serve.** However, candidates who are successful in the written examination will be permitted to delete locations from (but not add locations to) the list of locations where they indicated they would be prepared to serve at any time up to the time when they are called to interview if they notify the CSC in writing that they are no longer interested in appointments to such locations.

9. Candidates may also apply for positions where fluency in Irish is required. To be considered for such a position candidates must satisfy the Irish language requirements at paragraph 12 (iii) below.

10. 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/her position in the civil service will cease to be eligible.

The competition

11. Selection will be by means of a competition conducted by the Civil Service Commission. It should be noted that the written test will differ from that used in certain previous competitions for similar appointments.

The Executive Officer selection process will consist of two stages.

- (a) Stage One will be qualifying and will consist of numeric and verbal reasoning tests and a job simulation exercise. These tests, which will be in multiple choice format, are expected to take place in Dublin on 19 and/or 20 January 2001 and in provincial locations on 26 and/or 27 January 2001. Candidates will be notified of the time and venue by the CSC. Only those candidates who reach such a standard in these tests as the Civil Service Commissioners consider satisfactory will proceed to the second stage.
- (b) Stage Two will be a written junior management exercise and a structured interview for those candidates who have reached a satisfactory standard in Stage One. The number to be invited to Stage Two will be determined by the Civil Service Commissioners from time to time having regard to the number of vacancies to be filled.

A detailed description of the selection process will be outlined in the General Information to be issued to all candidates with the application form. In advance of the Stage One written tests, all candidates will receive a test familiarisation booklet which will give details regarding the format and structure of the written tests.

Only candidates who have qualified in the competitive written junior management exercise and competitive interview will be eligible for selection. The order of merit of these candidates will be determined by the marks gained at the competitive junior management exercise, the competitive interview and any marks awarded under paragraph 12 below.

- 12.(i) In determining the order of merit at the interview, credit will be given 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 by such date as may be determined by the CSC.
- (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.
- (iii) Candidates who wish to be considered for positions where fluency in Irish is required will have a special assessment made of their ability to communicate effectively in both Irish and English.

13. Candidates should obtain their application forms from their own Personnel Section. The CSC will supply application forms to Personnel Sections on request. The completed application form should be returned direct to the Civil Service Commission, 1 Lower Grand Canal Street, Dublin 2 to arrive not later than 5.30 p.m. on Thursday 23 November 2000.

The closing date of 23 November 2000 must be strictly observed. An applicant who has not heard from the CSC by 12 January 2001 should contact that Office immediately.

14. The CSC will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates being called to Stage Two of the competition process. For each candidate called to Stage Two the Personnel Officer of the department will be required to

- (i) certify that s/he
 - has worked well and been satisfactory in the present grade
 - has been satisfactory in general conduct
 - fulfils the conditions of eligibility in paragraph 3 above, and

- (ii) send to the CSC
 - an assessment of the candidate's suitability for appointment as Executive Officer on a form to be supplied by the CSC.

15. 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 of the department will not verify health and the level of sick leave of those called to Stage Two of the competition process - accordingly admission to the competition, or an invitation to 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 for appointment from the point of view of health and sick leave the Civil Service Commissioners will have regard to Circular 34/76 (as amended by Circulars 32/91 and 33/99). If candidates have a doubt about any aspect of their eligibility, they are advised to clarify the position with their Personnel Section before proceeding with the application.

Circulation

16. Please take special care to bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers in your department and associated offices without delay (including eligible officers on maternity leave, career break or other forms of leave).

17. If candidates have any queries about this circular, they should contact their Personnel Section. Any subsequent enquiry about the progress of their application should be addressed direct to the CSC.

Mise le meas

J. McGovern
Assistant Secretary