



An Roinn Airgeadais  
Department of Finance

E100/14/80

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12 April 2001

**Circular 23/2001: Confined competition for appointment as Clerical Officer (Senior Computer Operator)**

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 to set up a panel from which appointments as Clerical Officer (Senior Computer Operator) may be made. Appointments from this competition may be made in any department\* where there are suitable vacancies. Additional panels may be established to fill vacancies, if any arise, in certain provincial locations. It is not envisaged that appointments will be made from this competition after 30 June 2003.

**Eligibility**

2. The civil service is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

3. The competition will be confined to officers who, on 1 May 2001,

(i) are serving in an established capacity in the civil service or on secondment from the civil service to FAS or to the Health and Safety Authority and

(ii) are serving in a grade with a pay scale the maximum of which is equal to or less than that of the Clerical Officer higher scale. The Clerical Officer higher scale maximum is currently £ 20,337 per annum (£ 389.74 per week) - £21,407 per annum (£410.25 per week) for those making a personal pension contribution.

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).

\* For department read department/office throughout this circular

To/all departments, etc

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 Circular 18/98 and if they are otherwise eligible. Other 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.

6. Previous experience of IT work is not required as officers appointed will be given full training.

### **Job requirements**

7. A Clerical Officer (Senior Computer Operator) has general responsibility, under the supervision of a shift leader, for the operation of the computer and peripheral equipment (e.g. diskette readers, printers, tape/disk drives) in accordance with operating instructions. The duties include

- responding in a timely manner to systems requests/prompts
- setting up the computer for each category of job
- preparing peripheral equipment, with disks, diskettes, magnetic tape, printers, etc.
- notifying the shift leader of any hardware or software failure
- liaising with engineers, systems analysts, computer programmers and computer users.

An officer appointed may, from time to time, be required to undertake clerical duties in the computer input/output control section, tape library, etc.

### **General conditions of appointment**

8. Assignment to Clerical Officer (Senior Computer Operator) duties will involve shift work. The current agreed arrangements provide for payment of one-sixth of salary in addition to basic pay in respect of shift work on a two shift rota basis between 8.00 a.m. and midnight Monday to Friday and one quarter of salary in addition to basic pay in respect of shift work on a three shift basis round the clock Monday to Friday. An officer on shift work would attend for the same number of hours each day as an officer on normal working hours.

9. Officers will be appointed on a trial basis for three months and during the period will be on loan from the parent department. If an officer is certified to be a fully competent computer operator, a definitive transfer to the position of Clerical Officer (Senior Computer Operator) will be made. During the period of loan an officer will be paid by the department to which appointed as Clerical Officer (Senior Computer Operator). At any time during the trial period the officer on loan may be returned to the parent department in the former grade, if the officer either so requests or is found to be unsuitable for the work.

10. Clerical Officers (Senior Computer Operators) are general service Clerical Officers and are eligible in the usual way for promotion or admission to confined competitions.

### **The competition**

11. Selection will be by means of a competition conducted by the Office of the CSC which will consist of a qualifying written test, a competitive interview and an optional language test. The written test will be designed to assess candidates' potential competence for senior computer operator duties and will not require any special knowledge. The written test will encompass aptitude tests covering specific task oriented capabilities in multiple choice format. The written test is expected to be **held in the week commencing 21 May 2001 as follows:**

**Provincial locations: 21 & 22 May, 2001  
Dublin: 26 May 2001**

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. The CSC will contact candidates direct to notify them of the date, time and venue of the test. Details regarding the format and structure of the written tests will, where appropriate, issue to candidates in advance.

12. Those candidates who obtain the highest marks at the written test 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. Details of the format 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 for any test and/or interview at short notice if required. Requests for postponements will not be considered.

- 13 (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 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 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**

14. Candidates should obtain their application forms from their own Personnel Sections. The CSC will supply application forms to Personnel Sections on request. Candidates should return their completed application forms directly to the **Chief Executive Officer, Office of the Civil Service Commissioners, 1 Lower Grand Canal Street, Dublin 2**, or by e-mail to [graham.hartnett@cslac.irlgov.ie](mailto:graham.hartnett@cslac.irlgov.ie) to arrive not later than **5.30 p.m. on Thursday 26 April 2001. This closing date must be strictly observed.** An applicant who has not heard from the CSC by Friday 11 May 2001 should contact that Office immediately.

15. The CSC will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates being called to competitive interview. For each candidate called to competitive 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) the level of sick leave are not verified by the CSC until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment. Admission to the competition does not imply acceptance by the CSC. In particular, candidates should note that the Personnel Officer will not have verified the health and level of sick leave of those called to competitive interview - accordingly admission to the competition or an invitation to any of the selection stages of the competition does not imply that candidates 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 CSC 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 eligibility, they are advised to clarify their position with their Personnel Section before proceeding with the application.

### **Circulation**

17. 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, term time leave, or other forms of leave).

18. If candidates have any queries about this circular, they should contact their Personnel Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed direct to the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners.

Mise le meas,

J. McGovern  
Assistant Secretary