



An Roinn Airgeadais  
Department of Finance

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**Circular 39/2001: Confined competition for appointment to two Assistant Accountant posts at Higher Executive Officer level in An Garda Síochána**

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to announce the holding, by the Civil Service Commission, of a confined competition for appointment to two posts at Higher Executive Officer level in An Garda Síochána. The posts may be competed for by civil servants at Executive Officer, Administrative Officer or Higher Executive Officer level (see paragraphs 8-10 for full eligibility details). These posts are:

- Assistant Financial Accountant, and
- Assistant Management Accountant.

Both posts will be located at Garda headquarters in the Phoenix Park, Dublin 8.

**An Garda Síochána**

2. An Garda Síochána operates under the aegis of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. A new Garda Finance Department has recently been set up on the basis of a 1998 report which recommended that this new Department was necessary to support greater autonomy and responsibility in financial matters. A significant effort will be required early on to review current business processes. This business process review exercise will provide vital information to identify requirements for any future financial systems. Work is currently underway to develop further the devolution of budgetary control and management reporting. The capture of financial data at the appropriate level is key to this process. The Finance Department is exploring ways to make better use of the existing IT system that is used for procurement / stores purposes (MAPICS). Once data is captured, the Finance Department will develop and trial management reports in select Divisions. Additional activities currently undertaken by 'A' Branch (Finance) will also be assimilated into this new department.

3. The objectives of the new Finance Department are to:

- Manage and develop the finance function.
- Provide effective financial management through budgetary control.
- Support strategic and operational planning.
- Prepare and intercept all financial management information.
- Produce the year-end Appropriation Account and liaise with the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- Enhance, develop and maintain appropriate financial policies, procedures and controls.
- Oversee the implementation of appropriate accounting and financial information systems.

**TO ALL DEPARTMENTS**

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

### **Job description**

4. The assistant accountants will support the business process review, take a lead role in management reporting, provide key support for budgeting and estimating and support the evaluation and strategic planning work. The duties of the two assistant accountants are as follows.

5. Reporting to the Management Accountant, the **Assistant Management Accountant** will be responsible for:

- Budgeting/estimates
- Management reporting
- Variance analysis
- Planning support
- Costings
- Evaluation Unit support
- Special projects

6. Reporting to the Financial Accountant, the **Assistant Financial Accountant** will be responsible for:

- Transaction processing management
- Statutory reporting
- Internal control
- External reporting

### **Personal requirements**

7. The appointees must have good financial knowledge and relevant experience in a range of the above areas. The positions will suit part-qualified accountants or Accounting Technicians. Good interpersonal and team-working skills are necessary. An aptitude for IT work (spreadsheets, word processing etc) will be a significant advantage. The competency requirements for these positions are set out in detail in the application form, which will be designed to allow candidates to present their relevant skills and experience to best effect.

### **Eligibility**

8. In order to be eligible to compete, prospective candidates must, on the date they apply for the competition be serving in an established capacity in the civil service (or be on secondment to FÁS from the civil service) in one of the following grades:

- Higher Executive Officer (including HEO/Systems Analyst).
- Administrative Officer.
- Third Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- Auditor in the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- Senior Clerk in the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas.
- Systems Analyst in the IT and Telecommunications Division at Garda Headquarters of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
- Social Welfare Officer in the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs

**OR**

- (a) on the date they apply for the competition be serving in an established capacity in the civil service as an Executive Officer or a Junior Clerk in the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas or an Executive Officer on secondment to FÁS from the civil service,

**AND**

- (b) on **1 December 2001** must have not less than three years' service in their existing grade or an aggregate of three years' service in eligible grades or not less than five years' total service of which not less than two years was in an eligible grade (set out at (a)). Service in the former grades of Officer and Indoor Officer of Customs & Excise in the Office of the Revenue Commissioners will count as service in an eligible grade.

9. Officers on probation are ineligible unless they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade and they have served continuously since satisfactorily completing a probation period; special leave without pay does not break continuity of service for this purpose.

10. 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 their career break conforms with the terms of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and if they are otherwise eligible.

**Conditions of appointment**

11. If the successful candidate is not already serving as a Higher Executive Officer he or she will be offered appointment to that grade.

12. Appointments will be made on an acting basis for at least one year. An officer whose service is not satisfactory, or who opts not to remain in the position, may, at any time up to the end of twelve months, be returned to his or her parent department and/or duties in the former grade; any extra payment arising from the assignment would then cease.

**The competition**

13. Selection for appointment will be by means of a competitive interview conducted by a board established by the Civil Service Commission. The interview board may, having examined the applications of all candidates decide that a number only of candidates will be invited to attend before them for interview. In addition, the board may, at their discretion, require that candidates undergo preliminary interview and invite only those who reach the requisite standard to attend for competitive interview to select the candidates best qualified for appointment.

14. In ranking the candidates considered best qualified for appointment, the Commission will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English, in accordance with Department of the Public Service Circular 43/75 and Department of Finance Circular 30/90 and any other relevant instruction to candidates qualified for the award of such credit on or before the date of the competitive interview, or such other date as may be agreed between the Official and Staff Sides.

### **Applications**

15. Candidates should obtain their application forms from the Personnel Section of their serving department; the Civil Service Commission will supply forms to Personnel Sections on request. Candidates should return their completed application forms directly to the **Chief Executive Officer, Office of the Civil Service and Local Appointments Commission, 1 Lower Grand Canal Street, Dublin 2**, to reach there as soon as possible but not later than **5.30 p.m. on Thursday 11 October 2001. 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 November 2001.

16. The Civil Service Commission will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates being called for interview. For each candidate called to this stage of the competition 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,
- fulfils the conditions of eligibility set out in paragraphs 8-10 above,

and

(b) to send to the Commission an assessment of the candidate's suitability for

- appointment to the post applied for, and
- promotion if appropriate,

on a form to be supplied by the Commission

17. Eligibility to compete, and health and level of sick leave, will not be verified by the Civil Service Commission until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment. So admission to the competition does 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 Board will have regard to Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76, as amended by Department of Finance Circular 32/91. Candidates with doubts about any aspect of their eligibility should clarify their position with their Personnel Section before applying.

### **Circulation**

18. 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,

Pat Casey  
Principal