



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

E109/191/02

2 October 2002

Sráid Mhuirfean Uacht., Upper Merrion Street, Telephone: 353-1 676 7571
Baile Átha Cliath 2, Dublin 2, Facsimile: 353-1 631 8128
Éire. Ireland. LoCall: 1890 66 10 10
VPN: 8109
<http://www.irlgov.ie/finance>

Circular 35/2002: Confined Competition for appointment as Clerical Officer (Senior Computer Operator) Dublin only

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. It is not envisaged that appointments will be made from this competition after 31 December 2003

Eligibility

2. The civil service is an equal opportunity employer. Promotion within the service is made on the basis of qualifications and the ability to carry out the responsibilities of the grade or post.

3. The competition will be confined to officers who, on 11 October 2002,

(i) are serving in the civil service or on secondment from the civil service to FÁS or to the Health and Safety Authority and

(ii) are serving in a grade with a maximum pay scale equal to or less than that of the Clerical Officer higher scale. The Clerical Officer higher scale maximum is currently €28,332 per annum (€542.97 per week) or €29,823 per annum (€571.54 per week) for those making a personal pension contribution.

4. Officers on special leave with pay may apply, if otherwise eligible. 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. 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 Department of Finance Circular 33/91 does not cover them.

* *For department read department/office throughout this circular.

5. **Candidates may wish to note that officers can apply while on probation or in an unestablished position.**

6. Candidates should have a particular interest in working in an I.T. area. Previous experience of I.T. work would be welcome but is not necessary, as officers appointed from this competition 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, inter alia,

- responding in a timely manner to systems requests/prompts
- setting up the computer for each category of job
- 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.

Personal Requirements

8. In order to carry out these job requirements, being effective in certain skill areas would be an advantage.

These skill areas include:

- being a good team player, working well with others, being aware of the different roles in a team and being willing to help and support others,
- being helpful in dealing with customers, offering appropriate advice, anticipating customer needs and working to meet them,
- being able to listen to the requirements of others and to communicate effectively with a range of people
- being open to learn and develop new skills from a variety of situations and be willing to apply these new skills to improve the way things are done.

Senior Computer Operators would also need to be accurate and organised and clear of what's expected of them, asking for help when unsure. The ability to break down projects into simple tasks would also be necessary.

General conditions of appointment

9. 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.

10. Officers will be appointed on a trial basis for three months and during this 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 he/she is appointed to as Clerical Officer (Senior Computer Operator). Officers are expected to serve on I.T. duties for a minimum of 5 years.

11. 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. An officer who is not certified as a competent Computer Operator will not be entitled to any additional pay because of having been on Senior Computer Operator duties.

12. An officer who accepts an offer of appointment as Senior Computer Operator, from 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.

13. A Clerical Officer (Senior Computer Operator) is a general service Clerical Officer and is eligible in the usual way for promotion or admission to confined competitions. Officers who have not completed a period of probation and are appointed as Senior Computer Operator will be assigned in rotation to general clerical duties in their new department for a period of three months. This is to ensure that the officer obtains relevant experience in the important work aspects of the Clerical Officer grade. The period of service in general service duties will begin not later than one year after the original date of assignment to Senior Computer Operator. This will not affect an officer's rate of pay, including their additional pay in respect of shift work.

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 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 Dublin in the week commencing 11th November 2002.**

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 test will, where appropriate, issue to candidates in advance.

15. 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.

16. (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 Department of the Public Service Circular 43/75 and Department of Finance Circular 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

17. Candidates should apply on line at www.publicjobs.ie. Alternatively candidates may complete applications over the telephone by phoning (01) 8587625, 8587858 or 8587465. Candidates are required to have their PPS Number (formerly RSI Number) available when telephoning.

Closing date

18. The closing date for receipt of applications is 5.30pm on Tuesday 15 October 2002. This closing date must be strictly observed. An applicant who has not heard from the CSC by Friday 1st November 2002 should contact that Office immediately.

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 she or he fulfils the conditions of eligibility specified in paragraphs 3 and 4 of this circular.

19. Candidates will retain their scores in the Diagrammatic Reasoning Test and in the Fault Diagnosis Test for a period of twelve months. Accordingly, candidates who apply for any competition(s) where the selection process includes a Diagrammatic Reasoning Test

and/or Fault Diagnosis Test during that twelvemonth period will carry their scores forward to that competition(s).

20. 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, 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 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 Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76 (as amended by Department of Finance 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

21. Please take special care to bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers in your department and associated offices without delay (including officers newly appointed up to the closing date, and all other eligible officers e.g. on maternity leave, career break, term time leave, or any other forms of leave).

22. If candidates have any queries about this circular, they should contact their Personnel Section. Any subsequent enquiries about the progress of their application should be addressed to the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners.

Mise le meas,

Joe McGovern
Assistant Secretary