

20 August 2018

**Senior Management Opportunities**  
**Circular 13/2018:**  
**Interdepartmental Competition for Promotion to**  
**Assistant Principal Standard (AP) in the Civil Service**

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to say that the Public Appointments Service (PAS) will hold an interdepartmental competition to set up panels from which appointments as Assistant Principal Standard may be made. It is not envisaged that appointments will be made from this competition after **30 October 2020**.
2. **Pay**

**The Assistant Principal Standard Salary Scale (rates effective from 1 January 2018) for the position are as follows:**

**Personal Pension Contribution (PPC)**

€65,837; €68,216; €70,583; €72,957; €75,327; €76,693; €79,085 (LSI1); €81,485 (LSI2)

This rate will apply where the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6<sup>th</sup> April 1995 and is required to make a personal pension contribution.

**Non-Personal Pension Contribution (Non-PPC)**

€63,596; €65,910; €67,184; €69,435; €71,688; €72,991; €75,259 (LSI1); €77,536 (LSI2)

This rate will apply where the appointee is a civil or public servant recruited before 6<sup>th</sup> April 1995 and who **is not required** to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Long service increments may be payable after 3(LSI-1) and 6(LSI-2) years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

**Important Note**

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. The terms of Circular 34/77 – Starting Pay on Promotion or Establishment will apply, as appropriate, to appointments under this competition.

Subject to satisfactory performance increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy.

### 3. Assistant Principal Role

The Assistant Principal is a senior managerial grade in the Civil Service and is a critical post in terms of ensuring quality service delivery to the public. The Civil Service operates in a range of locations across the State and while the greater number of vacancies to be filled from this competition are likely to occur in Dublin, some positions may be offered in other locations.

The role of Assistant Principal is a hugely diverse one, the context of which can vary from Department to Department and from post to post. Assistant Principals are key participants in the senior management process of Departments/Offices with a critical management role in implementing government policy in the economic, financial, international, environmental and/or social arenas.

They are key drivers of the Civil Service Renewal Plan which outlines a vision for the Civil Service including practical changes that will create a more unified, professional, responsive, open and accountable Civil Service, providing a world-class service to the State and to the people of Ireland. They will play a central role in driving organisational change and are ideally placed to make a significant contribution to shaping the future of Ireland. They report to a Principal Officer but will also advise and interact with senior management in respect of your areas of responsibility. Assistant Principals may be required to act as representatives for their Departments/Offices and may also represent the country at a European and international level.

### 4. Eligibility

The eligibility requirements in this competition reflect those set out in General Council Agreed Report 1526 in respect of new promotion arrangements to apply in the Civil Service. Available here:

<https://hr.per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Letter-to-Personnel-Officers-Jan-2014-and-General-Council-Report-1526.pdf>

### 5. Candidates for promotion to Assistant Principal must:

- a) be serving in an established, unestablished or acting (see para 5.e below) capacity in the Civil Service in a grade below that of Assistant Principal, and
- b) on or before the closing date of **6<sup>th</sup> September 2018** and have not less than two years' service in the Civil Service. Unestablished officers and officers serving in an acting capacity in the eligible grades may compete in the competition provided they fulfil the eligibility requirements set out above.
- c) Have management experience at an appropriate level and also demonstrates significant experience of some or all of the following: People management, project management, managing budgets, strategic and change management;
- d) Demonstrate that they possess the skills/competencies identified as being important for the role. These, as outlined in Appendix I include:

Leadership  
Judgement, Analysis and Decision Making  
Management and Delivery of Results  
Interpersonal and Communication Skills  
Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development  
Drive and Commitment in Public Service Values

- e) Where an officer was acting or serving on a Fixed-Term contract and was subsequently appointed in a substantive capacity, eligibility may be based on the aggregate service, e.g. six months in an acting capacity or on contract and eighteen months in a substantive capacity, can be aggregated to give two years' service. For the purpose of deciding eligibility, officers must be serving on the closing date of **6<sup>th</sup> September 2018**.
- f) Officers on probation are not eligible to compete except where they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade. Periods of special leave without pay should not be considered to break continuity of service for this purpose.

**It would be a decided advantage:**

- g) To hold third level educational qualifications in relevant discipline(s) commensurate with the role
6. Officers on special leave with pay may apply if otherwise eligible. Officers on career-break may apply if their career break conforms to the terms of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and if they are 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.

**7. Application process**

Practical Matters:

- Applications must be made online through [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie).
- To apply, candidates must have a "User Account" on [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie). If you have not already done so, you must register as a '**New User**' to create your Profile (register a New Account). To register click on "**Login**" and then enter your details under '**New User**'.
- If you cannot remember your profile details, please do not create a second profile as this could invalidate your application.
- Candidates should not confuse registering (Creating a Profile) with submitting an application. Once you have created a Profile you must then access the application form, complete and submit it.

**Username / Password issues**

***Forgotten your username or password?***

If so, click on the following link:

<https://www.publicjobs.ie/candidateportal/home/forgottenDetails.do>

***How to contact PAS?***

*If you continue to have 'User Name' or 'Password' difficulties please email PAS at [aprecruitment2018@publicjobs.ie](mailto:aprecruitment2018@publicjobs.ie) outlining your issue and giving your name and contact details, including a telephone number, where you can be reached.*

Candidates should note that support will only be available during office hours until the closing date.

- Candidates must use **their own** valid email address. Email addresses from third parties will **not** be accepted and may invalidate your application. PAS will only communicate application information with the candidate and not with any third party.
- ***Username and Password***  
It is important that you keep note of your username and password as you will need this information to access your Publicjobs Messageboard.
- It is strongly recommended that you do not change your email address or mobile phone number in the course of this recruitment campaign, as any email/text message notification will be sent to the email address/telephone number originally supplied by you
- ***Publicjobs Messageboard***  
Interaction with candidates during the selection process will primarily be conducted online. PAS will send most communication through your Publicjobs Messageboard. Check your Messageboard on a regular basis as email notifications of updates/tests issued to your Messageboard may sometimes be filtered into your Junk/Spam email folders (or 'Promotions' in the case of gmail). You are also advised to check all these folders regularly.
- If invited to tests and/or interview, the onus is on each applicant to make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the PAS.
- The PAS accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant. They must ensure that they regularly check their Messageboard and access all communications from the PAS.

## **How to Apply**

Please note that in parallel with this Interdepartmental Competition other separate competitions are also being conducted using the same application form. If applying for any of these, please ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements and submit only one application form indicating the competition(s) you wish to be considered for. The onus is on the candidate to select the correct competition(s).

Click on the button 'Apply now' to access the application form. This button is located at the end of the job posting page for "Management Opportunities" on [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie). You must complete the application form in full and click the submit button.

Once you have submitted your application form you should return to your publicjobs account and confirm that it has been successfully submitted via '***My Applications***'. At this point you should consider adding *publicjobs.ie* to your safe senders or contact list within your email account to avoid not receiving email because a *publicjobs* email has been blocked.

### **Only fully completed and submitted applications will be accepted into the competition.**

The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to undertake any element of the selection process is not to be taken as implying that the PAS or other body is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements.

**Only one application per person is permitted. Remember, you must include your PPS number when applying.**

## **Regional Recruitment**

It is proposed to establish regional panels as set out in the table below from which vacancies will be filled, should they arise.

On the application form candidates may select up to a **maximum of two regions**.

REGION SELECTION (UP TO A MAX OF 2)			
	Carlow		Longford
	Cavan		Louth
	Clare		Meath
	Cork		Monaghan
	Donegal		Mayo
	Dublin		Offaly
	Galway		Roscommon
	Kerry		Sligo
	Kildare		Tipperary
	Kilkenny		Waterford
	Laois		Wicklow
	Leitrim		Westmeath
	Limerick		Wexford

You must only select regions where you are prepared to work if offered an appointment. Once the closing date has passed changes to your region choices will not be permitted.

You should only select locations where you would be prepared to work if offered an appointment. The onus is on applicants to select their correct regions. **Once you have submitted your location choice, changes will not be permitted.** No exceptions will be made.

If you are offered a position (whether you accept or not) you will, in the normal course, no longer be considered for any other position in that region. Assignment to a position will automatically eliminate you from being considered for positions in your other selected region.

### Closing Date

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is **3 pm on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2018**. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within two working days of applying, please email [aprecruitment2018@publicjobs.ie](mailto:aprecruitment2018@publicjobs.ie) Candidates should note that support will be available during office hours until the closing date.

### 8. Selection Process

The selection process for this competition will comprise a number of elements. These may include one or more of the following:

- Completion of an online Assessment Questionnaire;

- Online and/or paper-based assessment test(s);
- Short listing;
- Language tests (oral and/or written), e.g. in the case of applicants for Functional Bilingual positions in the Irish language;
- Interview(s);
- Presentation/Analysis exercise;
- Work sample test or any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

Applicants must successfully compete and be placed highest, in order to be considered for advancement to the next stage of the selection process. The number to be called forward will be determined from time to time by the PAS.

More detailed information will be made available to the relevant candidates if they are invited to progress through the selection process.

Successful candidates will be placed on a panel(s) from which future vacancies may be filled.

Candidates should note that test scores attained at any stage in this competition may carry forward, should they apply for future competitions conducted by the Public Appointments Service within a 12 month period. This will be determined by PAS on a case by case basis.

#### **Candidates with Disabilities**

Candidates who have indicated on their application form or profile that they would like to avail of reasonable accommodations are asked to submit a psychologists/medical report. The purpose of the report is to provide PAS with information to act as a basis for determining reasonable accommodations where appropriate.

These reports must be forwarded to Gerry Tyson, Public Appointments Service, Chapter House, 26-30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1 by close of business on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2018**.

If you have recently applied for a competition with PAS and submitted a report, please email [Amanda.kavanagh@publicjobs.ie](mailto:Amanda.kavanagh@publicjobs.ie) to confirm that your report is on file.

#### **Positions requiring specialist Irish language skills**

The Civil Service is fully committed to fulfilling obligations under the Official Languages Act. It is intended that vacancies arising which require staff to provide a full range of services through the Irish language (Functional Bilinguals), may be filled from this competition.

Candidates who indicate their interest on the application form and who are successful at the final selection stages will be required to undergo an assessment of their Irish language skills.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the PAS and ensure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct. The PAS will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

9. Candidates should note that (i) eligibility for the competition, (ii) health and the level of sick leave, (iii) performance of work in the present grade, (iv) verification that the candidate has received an Evaluation of at least "Fully Achieved Expectations" at the previous year's PMDS End-of-Year Review, and (v) general conduct are not verified by the PAS 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 Public Appointments

Service. In particular, candidates should note that the Personnel Officer will not have verified the above including health and the level of sick leave of those called to competitive interview – accordingly, admission to the competition, or any of the selection stages of the competition does not imply that candidates meets the eligibility criteria including health and sick leave.

In considering a candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave, the Public Appointments Service will comply with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 6/2014. Candidates having doubts on any aspect of their eligibility are advised to clarify their position with their Personnel Section before proceeding with their application.

## **STAGE 1**

### **On-line Assessment Tests**

As indicated, the selection process may comprise a number of stages. Stage 1 will comprise on-line assessment tests. To facilitate candidates' availability and circumstances these initial online assessments will be unsupervised and may be taken in a venue of their choice, wherever they have access to a computer and a reliable internet connection.

### **On-line Test Taking Environment**

Please be aware that taking these assessments within a secure IT network e.g. a network such as your work or college which may have firewalls or other security technology in place may cause you technical difficulties. You should consider taking your assessments in your home or other environment where access to the internet is not restricted to the same level. The onus is on you to ensure that you have full internet access to complete the tests. You should ensure that you can complete the tests in a quiet environment where you can concentrate without being disturbed for the duration of the tests. It is advised to take the assessment tests on a PC or Laptop. We recommend that candidates do not attempt to take the test on smart phone, mobile or tablet devices.

### **Assessment Test Link**

A link to the actual on-line assessment tests will be sent to candidates' Messageboards in advance of the test-taking window. It is anticipated that candidates will receive a link to their Stage 1 on-line assessment tests by Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018. If you do not receive communication by Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018 you should email [aprecruitment2018@publicjobs.ie](mailto:aprecruitment2018@publicjobs.ie).

Candidates who have not completed the on-line tests before the deadline will be deemed to be no longer interested in this competition and their application will receive no further consideration.

Your attention is drawn to Appendix II '*Important Information*'. If invited to progress through the selection process, a candidate may be required to sit tests in a supervised environment. If their performance is outside the expected scoring range from their unsupervised test, it will call into question the validity of their unsupervised test scores and they may be excluded from the selection process.

## **Stage 2**

### **Shortlisting**

Candidates will be ranked on the outcome of their on-line assessment tests and will be shortlisted in accordance with their ranking. In this respect, the Public Appointments Service provide for the employment of a short listing process to select a group for the next stage who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position. This is not to

suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable, or incapable of undertaking the job, rather than there are some candidates who are, prima facie, better qualified and/or have more relevant experience.

During any short listing exercise that may be employed, the Public Appointments Service are guided by an assessment board(s) who examine the application forms and assess them against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. It is therefore in your own interests to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience on the application form.

### **Next Steps**

Should you come under consideration to proceed to subsequent stages of the selection process, information will be forwarded to you at the appropriate time.

Irrespective of which of the competitions you have applied for i.e. Open or Interdepartmental competition **you may only sit the various stages of the selection process once**. The scores you achieve **will carry across all competitions** for which you applied and for which come under consideration.

## **10. Conditions of Appointment**

Appointment to the post of Assistant Principal in the Civil Service will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. On appointment the appointee will serve a one-year probationary period in the post of Assistant Principal. Prior to the end of this probationary period a decision will be made on substantive appointment to the grade.

11. Candidates should note that the provisions of Circular 6/89, Removal Expenses, will not apply to any offers of appointment arising from this competition.

12. A candidate who accepts an offer of appointment as Assistant Principal 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 or her position in the Civil Service will cease to be eligible.

13. Officers not promoted at the expiry of the panels, will have no claim to promotion thereafter because of having been on the panels.

### **14. Codes of Practice**

The recruitment and selection process for appointment to this position will be conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil and Public Service published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments.

The Code of Practice reflects the following core principles:

- Probity
- Appointments Made on Merit
- An Appointments Process in Line with Best Practice
- A Fair Appointments Process Applied with Consistency
- Appointments Made in an Open, Accountable and Transparent Manner

Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the contents of the Codes of Practice including, inter alia, the provisions in relation to the responsibilities placed on candidates who participate in the recruitment and selection process.

## **Candidates' Rights – Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process**

For information on Review Procedures please view:

[http://www.publicjobs.ie/restapi/documents/18164707\\_Review\\_Procedures\\_in\\_relation\\_to\\_the\\_Selection\\_Process.doc](http://www.publicjobs.ie/restapi/documents/18164707_Review_Procedures_in_relation_to_the_Selection_Process.doc)

### **Requests for Feedback/Test Rechecks**

Feedback in relation to the selection process is available on request. Feedback and rechecks may be requested for up to six months after completion of each stage of the competition. However, please note that the Review Process as set out in the Code of Practice is a separate process with specified timeframes that must be observed. Receipt of feedback is not required to invoke a review. It is not necessary for a candidate to compile a detailed case prior to invoking the review mechanism. The timeframe set out in the CPSA Code cannot be extended for any reason including the provision of feedback and/or the outcome of rechecks.

### **17. General Arrangements in Respect of Appointments**

Appointments from the panels will initially be in an acting capacity. An officer whose service is not satisfactory will be notified of the action to be taken. Where a decision is made not to confirm the appointee in the post of Assistant Principal, the appointee may request that the Civil Service Disciplinary Code Appeal Board review the decision. [Ref. Circular 14/2006 Civil Service Disciplinary Code paragraphs 11 and 50 (ii).] In the event of reversion, an officer will return to a vacancy in his/her former grade in the former Department.

18. The Minister reserves the right to arrange that vacancies for Assistant Principal may be filled by separate interdepartmental competition or otherwise where special qualifications are deemed necessary or where other special circumstances exist. In such circumstances there will be consultation between the Official and Staff Sides.

### **19 Information on Panels**

The information on panel(s) formed as a result of this competition may be made available to Personnel Officers in all Departments/Offices and Workforce Planning Unit in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. In addition, candidates may be asked to agree to the same information being made available to the relevant civil service unions for the purpose of monitoring the operation of the scheme.

### **20. Candidates Obligations**

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- personate a candidate at any stage of the process
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

It is important to remember that this is a competitive process for a role where integrity is paramount. Sharing information on the test material, e.g. through social media or any other means, may result in you being disqualified from the competition.

Please note that all test materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the test material (including passages of information, questions or answer options) or associated materials may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process. Any person who contravenes this provision, or who assists another person(s) in contravening this provision, is liable to prosecution and/ or civil suit for loss of copyright and intellectual property.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; &
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

21. **Circulation and Further Information**

HR Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their Departments and associated Offices without delay, including eligible fixed term workers, officers on term time, secondment, maternity leave, career break, contract, and all other relevant forms of leave

22. If candidates have any queries about this circular, they should contact their HR Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed directly to the Public Appointments Service.

23. The Civil Service is an equal opportunities employer.

Mise le meas



David Cagney  
Civil Service Chief Human Resources Officer

Appendix I

Key Competencies for effective performance at Assistant Principal level:



## Assistant Principal Officer Level Competencies

Leadership	Actively contributes to the development of the strategies and policies of the Department/ Organisation
	Brings a focus and drive to building and sustaining high levels of performance, addressing any performance issues as they arise
	Leads and maximises the contribution of the team as a whole
	Considers the effectiveness of outcomes in terms wider than own immediate area
	Clearly defines objectives/goals & delegates effectively, encouraging ownership and responsibility for tasks
	Develops capability of others through feedback, coaching & creating opportunities for skills development
	Identifies and takes opportunities to exploit new and innovative service delivery channels
Judgement Analysis & Decision Making	Researches issues thoroughly, consulting appropriately to gather all information needed on an issue
	Understands complex issues quickly, accurately absorbing and evaluating data (including numerical data)
	Integrates diverse strands of information, identifying inter-relationships and linkages
	Uses judgment to make clear, timely and well-grounded decisions on important issues
	Considers the wider implications, agendas and sensitivities within decisions and the impact on a range of stakeholders
	Takes a firm position on issues s/he considers important
Management & Delivery of Results	Takes responsibility for challenging tasks and delivers on time and to a high standard
	Plans and prioritises work in terms of importance, timescales and other resource constraints, re-prioritising in light of changing circumstances
	Ensures quality and efficient customer service is central to the work of the division
	Looks critically at issues to see how things can be done better
	Is open to new ideas initiatives and creative solutions to problems
	Ensures controls and performance measures are in place to deliver efficient and high value services
	Effectively manages multiple projects
Interpersonal & Communication Skills	Presents information in a confident, logical and convincing manner, verbally and in writing
	Encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues
	Promotes teamwork within the section, but also works effectively on projects across Departments/Sectors
	Maintains poise and control when working to influence others
	Instills a strong focus on Customer Service in his/her area
	Develops and maintains a network of contacts to facilitate problem solving or information sharing
	Engages effectively with a range of stakeholders, including members of the public, Public Service Colleagues and the political system
Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development	Has a clear understanding of the roles objectives and targets of self and the team and how they fit into the work of the unit and Department/Organisation
	Has a breadth and depth of knowledge of Department and Governmental issues and is sensitive to wider political and organisational priorities
	Is considered an expert by stakeholders in own field/area
	Is focused on self development, seeking feedback and opportunities for growth to help carry out the specific requirements of the role
Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values	Is self motivated and shows a desire to continuously perform at a high level
	Is personally honest and trustworthy and can be relied upon
	Ensures the citizen is at the heart of all services provided
	Through leading by example, fosters the highest standards of ethics and integrity

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**  
**Terms and Conditions**

***Your attention is drawn to this important information. By accessing or attempting any assessment/test materials you are agreeing to be bound by the terms set out below.***

1. All test and assessment materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the tests/ assessment materials (including any text, questions and/or potential answer options) or associated materials (including practice and/ or familiarisation materials) may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, printing, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process. Any person(s) who contravenes this provision, whether an applicant or other, or who assists another person(s) in contravening this provision, is liable to prosecution and/ or civil suit for loss of copyright and intellectual property.
2. Your attention is drawn the Commission for Public Service Appointment's Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service. In particular please note Section 5 - Responsibility of Candidates (see below).

**Canvassing**

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify them and will result in their exclusion from the appointments process.

**Candidates' obligations**

Candidates in the recruitment process must not:

- Knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- Canvass any person, with or without inducements
- Interfere with or compromise the process in any way.

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

**Penalties for failure to comply**

Any person who contravenes the above provisions, or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine and/or imprisonment.

If a person found guilty of such an offence was or is a candidate in a recruitment process, then:

- Where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate
  - Where he/she has been appointed subsequent to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.
3. The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to undertake any element of the selection process is not to be taken as implying that the Public Appointments Service is satisfied that such a person fulfils the essential requirements.
    - Where s/he has been appointed subsequent to the recruitment process in question, s/he shall forfeit that appointment.