

Investigating Officer

Recruitment Information Pack

June 2020

We are recruiting for a new Investigating Officer post in a small team, dealing mainly with Code of Conduct complaints regarding local councillors, MSPs, and members of public bodies. The successful candidate will be capable of investigating complex multi-issue complaints to assess whether there has been a breach of the relevant Code of Conduct, taking into account broader legal issues of relevance to a given complaint, and preparing a draft report thereon suitable for scrutiny at a public quasi-judicial hearing. Suitable candidates are likely to be legally qualified, with experience in civil (rather than criminal law) matters.

As independence from those under investigation is essential, any memberships or other connections which could call the independence of an Investigating Officer into question should be declared at the application stage.

Your application should be submitted to i.bruce@ethicalstandards.org.uk no later than **noon on Tuesday, 30 June 2020**.

For further information, if you have questions about or require assistance with any element of the application process, please contact Ian Bruce on i.bruce@ethicalstandards.org.uk. Applicants should note that, as a result of the office's current operational circumstances, we will only be able to receive applications and/or enquiries about the role via email.

Background Information

The Ethical Standards Commissioner is an independent office-holder appointed by the Scottish Parliament.

The Commissioner's primary functions are to investigate complaints about the conduct of local authority councillors, board members of public bodies and MSPs. We also regulate and monitor how people are appointed to the boards of public bodies in Scotland.

The office is based at Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5HE although all staff are currently working remotely.

The Commissioner's staff complement totals 12.

More information about our work can be found at: www.ethicalstandards.org.uk.

Role Description

Job title:	Investigating Officer (IO)
Responsible to:	Director of Investigations and Solicitor to the Commissioner (DISC)
Location:	Based in our offices at Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5HE although all staff are currently working remotely. In future, some travel may be involved in connection with investigations or public hearings.
Terms of appointment:	Permanent. Pensionable through the Civil Service Pension Scheme.
Starting salary:	£35,586
Salary scale:	Currently £35,586 - £44,322. Equivalent to the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body's Grade 4.
Working hours:	Full-time - five days per week, Monday to Friday (37 hours)
Leave allowance:	25 days increasing to 30 days with 11.5 public holidays
Responsibilities:	<p>The IO will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and investigate complaints of alleged code breaches, in a fair and impartial manner and in accordance with the Commissioner's procedures. • Prepare timely evidence-based reports on findings, in accordance with the Commissioner's in-house reporting style. • Maintain appropriate records and an audit trail for a given complaint investigation utilising the Commissioner's case management system and in accordance with the applicable policies of the office including those relating to records management. • Be the first point of contact for complainers, respondents and others engaged in an individual complaint from the inception of an investigation through to its completion. • Obtain, by way of interviews, research and requests for material, all substantive, relevant information pertinent to the complaint. • Preparing a timeous and succinct case in the form of a written note or report which reaches a sound conclusion about whether the relevant code has been breached, always adhering to pro forma layouts for report production • Set out sound reasons for the conclusions they have reached about the investigations they have conducted. • Adhere to strict deadlines for each stage of a given investigation and to the Commissioner's policies and procedures. • Plan and manage workload effectively. • Promote and assist with the work of the Commissioner and undertake such other duties as may be allocated by the SIO or Commissioner.

	The IO will be expected to plan and manage their workload according to priorities agreed with the SIO on a regular basis.
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A document outlining the [full role description and selection criteria](#) is available on our [website](#).

How to apply

Applicants should submit a CV, providing a full chronological employment history with explanations for any breaks therein, together with a covering letter setting out how they meet the [selection criteria](#). It is essential that you provide an example(s) of how you meet each of the criteria. Please deal with each one separately, using clear headings. The covering letter should include details of any potential conflict of interest(s) for further consideration should you reach interview stage. Please also indicate any notice period applicable in your current employment. Each applicant is invited to submit a recent example (within the last two years) of a report that they have drafted following an investigation, edited to remove identifiers for individuals or organisations, demonstrating their competency in this area.

We also ask you to complete a [diversity monitoring form](#). We want to know that our job opportunities are attractive to the widest range of people and we want to make sure that our recruitment processes are fair. To help us do this, we would be very grateful if you could complete as much of this form as possible. The [monitoring form](#) is available from our [website](#).

Applicants should provide the details of two referees, one of whom should be their current line manager or equivalent. Referees will only be contacted after interviews have been held.

Your covering letter, CV, example report, referee details and monitoring form should be submitted to Ian Bruce at i.bruce@ethicalstandards.org.uk by no later than **noon on Tuesday, 30 June 2020**. The subject heading of your email should read 'Investigating Officer'.

Please note that background checks such as approaching Disclosure Scotland and/or reviewing your online profile may be conducted prior to the appointment of successful applicants.

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Selection for interview

The selection panel will review all applications after the closing date. The selection panel will include Caroline Anderson, the Commissioner, and Martin Campbell, the Director of Investigations and Solicitor to the Commissioner. The panel may be joined by a third member.

We will contact you by email if you have been selected for interview. Interviews will take place via teleconference and video conference on two days in early to mid July.

We will also contact everyone who is not selected for interview.

Prior to interview

Prior to your interview date you will be asked to complete an assessment exercise. This consists of a mock-up complaint and response. You will be given two hours to consider a complaint and draft a report giving your preliminary assessment. Your report will be provided to the selection panel who will review it prior to your interview.

Interview

At interview the selection panel will question key aspects of your application. The interview part of the process will take around an hour.

The Commissioner will only contact referees after the interviews have been completed.

The appointment will be made shortly after interview, pending receipt of references and completion of background checks.

Key Contact

Contact details for further information or clarification are:

Ian Bruce
Public Appointments Manager
E: i.bruce@ethicalstandards.org.uk

Protecting your information

Your application contains your personal data. We are committed to ensuring that personal data is managed safely, effectively and in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation. All material related to unsuccessful applications will be deleted six months after the appointment is made. Material related to the successful application will be transferred to the employee personnel record. You can find out more about how we will handle your application in our [Privacy Statement for job applicants](#) available on our website.

Equality

The Commissioner and our staff are committed to building a culture that promotes equality and celebrates diversity. We aim to treat people as individuals and with respect and dignity. By taking this approach we commit ourselves to meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and as such will not tolerate unfair discrimination, victimisation or harassment. We will not tolerate any action the impact of which on an individual is discriminatory in nature. You can find out more in our [Equal Opportunities Policy](#).

Terms and conditions

All our staff polices are available in the Publications section of our website – www.ethicalstandards.org.uk. We recommend that you review our [Code of Conduct](#).