**Investigating Officer**

**Role description**

The candidate will be capable of investigating complex multi-issue complaints to assess whether there has been a breach of relevant Codes 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.

Section:Complaints Handling

Responsible to: Director of Investigations and Solicitor to the Commissioner (DISC)

Location: The post is based at the Commissioner’s office in Edinburgh, which is currently operating remotely. The postholder may, on future occasions, be required to travel in order to fulfil the role successfully.

Terms of Appointment:Based on the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Grade 4 salary scale range of £35,586 - £44,322. The post is full time based on a 37-hour week.

Job purpose

The Investigating Officer (IO) is one of a small number of investigators who report to the DISC. The Commissioner receives complaints about possible breaches of the Code of Conduct for Councillors, the Code of Conduct for MSPs and of Codes of Conduct based on the Model Code for members of public bodies. The Commissioner also deals with complaints about lobbying. The IO, under the supervision of the DISC, is responsible for investigating complaints to a conclusion including carriage of the related administrative duties and all contact with the complainer, respondent and others involved in a given case. IOs require to be highly analytical and attentive to detail, capable of assessing evidence adeptly relative to code and other legal requirements and arriving at sound conclusions thereon. IOs will be required to draft reports for submission to tribunal and be capable of successfully communicating with senior individuals from the political sphere. High computer literacy and experience in the use of databases and/or complaints management systems and records management will be a prerequisite as our work is online rather than paper based. The IOs are required to work as effective team members in a relatively small professional organisation.

Main duties and responsibilities

1. Assessment and investigation of complaints of alleged code breaches, in a fair and impartial manner and in accordance with the Commissioner’s procedures.
2. 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.
3. Maintaining 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.
4. Being 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.
5. Obtaining, by way of interviews, research and requests for material, all substantive, relevant information pertinent to the complaint including but not limited to:
* the background to the complaint and the complainer’s concerns
* witness statements
* documentary and online evidence including, as appropriate, online content and content from social media platforms
* evaluating the information obtained for its quality, factual accuracy, relevance and importance and assessing it against the applicable code.
1. Adhering to strict deadlines for each stage of a given investigation and reporting on adherence to those deadlines to stakeholders and the Commissioner.
2. Effective administration to support all of the above functions and in accordance with the applicable office policies including those related to records management.
3. Planning and managing workload effectively.
4. Providing assurance to the Commissioner in respect of all the above functions.
5. Promoting and assisting with the work of the Commissioner:
* attending and participating in training and other days intended to promote understanding of the work of the Commissioner and application of the relevant codes
* providing ad hoc support to colleagues and the Commissioner as required to ensure the smooth functioning of a small office.
* contributing to broader organisational work.
* reporting to the DISC or to any other senior manager to whom the Commissioner delegates management of your work.

**Selection criteria**

| **Criterion for selection** | **Indicators** |
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| A proven track record of effectively conducting complaint investigations to a conclusion. | * Exceptional attention to detail, analytical and forensic skills including the ability to ingather and evaluate complex and sometimes contradictory information and reach a sound conclusion about what it means
* The ability to draft a report reflective of the above and to report concisely, verbally and in writing, within the parameters of a predetermined format suitable to quasi-judicial work.
* The ability to interview a diverse range of people who may be uncooperative, unhappy, upset or aggrieved including interviewing by use of skype
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| ICT, digital and communications skills, experience and knowledge commensurate with the role and with the operation of a modern office environment. | * Excellent telephone skills with the ability to quickly and effectively handle incoming telephone calls regarding allocated investigations cases
* Proficient in the use of MS Office (Word, Excel and Outlook) and database/case management use including data entry and retrieval and records interrogation.
* Experience in using or the ability to quickly become adept in the use of document management tools including redaction tools on different programmes
* A proven track record in applying effective records management practices
* Familiarity with and the ability to interrogate websites and social media platforms for investigatory and/or research purposes
* Familiarity with data privacy concepts
* Able to use Skype or equivalent tools for video interviews and the recording of such interviews.
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| The personal qualities and ability to work effectively as a team member in a relatively small professional organisation within a quasi-judicial, regulatory or comparable context. | * The ability to work efficiently to tight timescales and to deliver flawless output at pace based on high levels of attention to detail.
* The ability and willingness to manage your own day to day case administration.
* A sense of proportion
* Self-motivated with an abundance of initiative and flexibility
* Motivated to act ethically and with empathy
* Fair and not politically partisan
* A good team member who respects and supports colleagues
* Motivated by the provision of highest quality service and exactitude in the work environment
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