

Public Appointments Officer

Recruitment Information Pack

June 2021

We are recruiting for a Public Appointments Officer (PAO) on a fixed term one year contract. The role of the Public Appointments Officer will be to deliver a range of activities reporting to and supporting the Public Appointments Manager.

The PAO will be expected to be able to provide advice on recruitment practices and process, diversity and inclusion and compliance against a Code of Practice to the Public Appointment Advisers, Scottish Government officials and other stakeholders. Excellent communications skills will be required to deal with the range and diversity of people who contact the office and an early and effective contribution to the role will be necessary. An integral element of the role in support of the above will be the updating of databases, research and analysis of information, provision of reports and records management. More information can be found in the job description. The successful applicant will have sound knowledge of recruitment and selection processes and practices (ideally through attainment of a CIPD qualification), diversity and inclusion, and be able to advise on regulations and laws, as well as having excellent communication and ICT skills. They will also share our values which are that we act ethically and with empathy and we value people.

Our work makes a significant contribution to public life in Scotland by providing a level of assurance that those applying for public appointments do so within a process which is fair and transparent and open to all who wish to apply. Our public appointments team play a key role in this so if you are motivated to contribute to society in this way, we'd love to hear from you.

As it is important that the Commissioner and everyone in the Commissioner's employment carries out their role in a fair and transparent way, it is important that you would not allow your judgement or integrity to be compromised in fact or to be reasonably thought to have been compromised by taking part in any party political activity (including campaigning) which could compromise your impartial service to the Commissioner. Any memberships or other connections which could call your independence into question should be declared at the application stage.

Your application should be submitted to info@ethicalstandards.org.uk no later than **noon** on **Friday, 18 June 2021**.

For further information, if you have questions about or require assistance with any element of the application process, please contact Katherine Lafreniere on 0300 011 0550 or info@ethicalstandards.org.uk. Applicants should note that, as a result of the office's current operational circumstances, we are accepting applications via email unless a different format

is required to accommodate a reasonable adjustment, in which case please make contact via telephone to discuss an alternative format.

Background Information

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

The Commissioner regulates and monitors how people are appointed to the boards of public bodies in Scotland and investigates complaints about the conduct of local authority councillors, board members of public bodies and MSPs.

The office is based at Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5HE.

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

Role Description

Job title:	Public Appointments Officer (PAO)
Responsible to:	Public Appointments Manager (PAM)
Location:	Based in our offices at Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5HE, which is currently operating remotely. However, there may be an option for flexible working and/or remote home working in accordance with our applicable policies. Some occasional travel may be involved in connection with meetings or awareness raising events.
Terms of appointment:	Fixed Term for one year. 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). A system of flexitime is in place and as we value diversity will consider flexible working options if requested.
Leave allowance:	25 days with 11.5 public holidays
Responsibilities:	<p>The PAO will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare high quality information and briefings for a range of stakeholders. • Handle enquiries and provide advice on Code compliance and on high quality recruitment practices to a range of stakeholders. • Run surveys using survey monkey and other platforms. Capture and analyse the results and produce high quality reports of the findings. • Conduct research, audits and/ or analyse information as requested and produce high quality reports. • Maintain and develop databases of information as required and conform with office procedures regarding records management • Provide cover for the Public Appointments Manager as required • Promote and assist with the work of the Commissioner by carrying out any other work as required by the senior management team.

A document outlining the full [role description and selection criteria](#) is available on our website.

Selection Criteria

The successful applicant will be the person who most closely matches the following criteria:

1. Excellent knowledge of a range recruitment and selection practices and procedures; understanding of diversity and inclusion and how effective recruitment practices and processes embed inclusion and contribute to high levels of diversity.
2. Ability to interpret a formal system of regulation, set of rules or law, such as a code of practice, code of conduct or legislation and provide constructive advice and guidance on how to comply.
3. ICT, digital and related communications skills and knowledge commensurate with the role and with the operation of a modern office environment.
4. Effective communication skills (this will be assessed throughout every stage of application and assessment)
5. Ability to effectively and constructively challenge and influence a wide range of people, on occasion at a very senior level (such as board chair or senior civil servant).

It is also desirable, but not essential that the successful applicant has the following:

1. Experience of running or advising on recruitment and selection practices
2. Knowledge of the regulated public appointments system and of board governance

It is expected that the evidence you provide against the selection criteria at each stage of the process will also demonstrate how your behaviours and approach have been guided by our values which are that we act ethically and with empathy and we value people; and this will be tested throughout the process.

How to apply

If you wish to apply, please submit a letter of application. In this letter you should include the following details:

An answer to the following statement using no more than 600 words:

- Please give an example of at least 3 types of recruitment and selection exercises you have been involved with and/or are aware of, along with your views on their respective validity.

A description of how you feel you would meet the following requirements for the role (using no more than 300 words for each):

- High level ICT, digital and related communications skills and knowledge including ability to use MS Office tools, ability to conduct research, audits and/ or analyse information to produce high quality reports and ability to use survey tools such as Survey Monkey.
- Ability to effectively and constructively challenge and influence a wide range of people, on occasion at a very senior level (such as board chair or senior civil servant).

Practical details:

- Any notice period required by a current employer
- Details of two referees who could confirm your suitability to the role, one of whom should be your current or most recent line manager or equivalent (e.g. college/university professor if studying). Referees will only be contacted after interviews have been held.
- Details of any potential conflict of interest(s) for further consideration should you reach interview stage

Please deal with each section separately, using clear headings.

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](#).

Your letter of application and monitoring form should be submitted to Katherine Lafreniere at info@ethicalstandards.org.uk by no later than **noon on Friday, 18 June 2021**. The subject heading of your email should read 'Public Appointments Officer'.

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

ICT Competency exercise

All applications will be reviewed after the closing date. We will notify all applicants whether they have been shortlisted for interview by email around 30 June 2021.

Applicants shortlisted for interview will be required to complete an ICT simulated exercise prior to their interview. This exercise will be used to assess the criteria:

- ICT, digital and related communications skills and knowledge commensurate with the role and with the operation of a modern office environment
- Effective Communication skills

It will involve demonstrating the ability to provide a quality report using ICT (MS Word, excel and Outlook, or equivalent)

Applicants will be notified of the specific date and time they can expect to receive this exercise via email and it will take an hour to complete. If an applicant is unavailable to take the competency exercise at an allotted time, we will endeavour to agree an alternative date and time. It is anticipated that the competency exercise will be conducted between 1 to 8 July 2021.

Selection for interview

Interviews will take place remotely using MS Teams (or other applicable remote working platform) on 9 or 12 July 2021. As such, applicants are requested to please keep these

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dates free in case invited to interview. The report produced by the applicant during the simulated exercise will be provided to the selection panel who will review it prior to interview, and may ask questions about it at the interview.

What to expect at interview

The selection panel will include Ian Bruce, the Acting Commissioner, Melanie Stronach, the Acting Public Appointments Manager and Bill Smith, a Public Appointments Adviser.

Pre-Interview Exercise

60 minutes in advance of your interview, you will be sent a question that you will be asked about at the interview. This will be used to test the criteria:

- Ability to interpret a formal system of regulation, set of rules or law, such as a code of practice, code of conduct or legislation and provide constructive advice and guidance on how to comply.
- Ability to effectively and constructively challenge and influence a wide range of people, on occasion at a very senior level (such as board chair or senior civil servant)
- Effective communication skills

The question will involve a number of scenarios, similar to that which you could face when undertaking the role and will require you to provide advice based on the [Code of Practice for ministerial appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland](#) and the accompanying [Statutory Guidance](#) which are available to view at any time on our website.

Interview

The interview panel will ask you to summarise the advice you would give as requested in the pre-interview exercise. They may ask some questions about the ICT exercise and will also ask some questions about the information provided in your application and around the other selection criteria. The interview should last around an hour.

Our office will only contact referees after the interviews have been completed.

The appointments 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:

Katherine Lafreniere
Corporate Services Officer
Ethical Standards Commissioner
Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh EH12 5HE
E: info@ethicalstandards.org.uk
T: 0300 011 0550

Central email: info@ethicalstandards.org.uk
Switchboard: 0300 011 0550

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. As an organisation who values diversity we will consider flexible work options for any vacancy and will make reasonable adjustments for anyone who requires them in order to participate in any part of the recruitment process or to fulfil the role effectively. All our recruitment material can be made available in an alternative format if required. Our [Equal Opportunities Policy](#) is available to view on our website.

Terms and conditions

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