# Questions and Answers about Public Appointments



# Easy Read

A person holding a document with the words Easy Read on the front.



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## What is a public appointment?

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| 5 seated people at a Board meeting round a table | A public appointmentis when a Scottish Government Minister appoints someone to the **board** of a **public body**.  A **board** and its members look at the work an organisation is doing and check it is working well. |
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| A group of public services staff including a social worker and health staff | **Public bodies** are organisations that work for the Government and give us **public services**.  **Public services** are services we all use like the Scottish Government, schools, hospitals and councils. |
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| A set of scales with 'right' weighing heavily and 'wrong' weighting lighter, next to a rulebook with a green tick and a red cross on the cover. | Some public appointments are **regulated** by the Ethical Standards Commissioner.  **Regulated** means that something has rules that need to be followed. |
| Ethics balance - a set of scales with 'right' weighing heavily and 'wrong' weighting lighter | The law decides if a public appointment is regulated or not. |
|  | You can see a list of public bodies that are regulated on our website: <https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/regulated-bodies> |

## What does the Ethical Standards Commissioner do?

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| A man writing on a checklist and a woman looking closely at things. | The Ethical Standards Commissioner checks how Scottish Ministers make public appointments. |
| the Scottish Parliament building with a red line through ita team of 4 staff | The Commissioner and their team are **independent**.  **Independent** means they do not work for the Scottish Parliament or Scottish Government. |
|  | We make a **Code of Practice** for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland.  The **Code of Practice** is a set of rules about how to appoint someone to the board of a public body in a fair way. |
| a thinking woman next to a document with the title 'guidance' and a signpost on the cover  A group of people | We give guidance and support to Scottish Ministers and boards to make sure they treat everyone who applies to be a board member fairly and boards are **diverse**.  **Diverse** means having a mix of different kinds of people:  • men and women  • young and old people  • people of different ethnic backgrounds  • people from both poor and more wealthy backgrounds  • disabled and non-disabled people. |
| a woman complaining to a man, next to a rulebook with a red line through it.  a man complaining to a woman who is writing information on a notepad | We investigate **complaints** when people or organisations have not followed the rules in the Code of Practice.  A **complaint** is when a person says or writes that they are not happy about something.  We tell the Scottish Parliament when this happens. |
|  | The Ethical Standards Commissioner does not do any of the work to appoint board members. |
|  | The work to appoint board members is done by the Scottish Government. This is called an appointment round. |

## What happens when I apply for a regulated appointment?

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| Two people sitting, talking and listening. The person talking is smiling. | The Code of Practice says that you should feel **respected** if you apply for an appointment.  **Respected** means being treated politely and given all the support you need. |
| 2 people shaking hands and saying 'thank you. | The Ethical Standards Commissioner wants you to have a good experience even if you do not get the appointment. |
| A question mark surrounded by 6 grey silhouettes of heads. | Every appointment round will be different. This is because different public bodies need different people. |
| a smiling man holding a checklist with green ticks against 2 things    A group of people giving a thumbs up. | But to make sure you have a good experience there are some things that **will** happen in every appointment round.  Every appointment round will have an **applicant pack**. This is made by the **panel**. |
| The **applicant pack** has all the information you will need to apply for the appointment.  A **panel** is a group of people who test the people who apply for the appointment. |
| A question mark surrounded by 6 grey silhouettes of heads. | Scottish Ministes choose who the panel members will be. |
| An interview panel with a person being interviewed sitting on the other side of the table. | The applicant pack will include a list of all the important dates during the appointment round. This will include **interview** dates so that you can plan your time.  An **interview** is where you meet with the recruitment panel. At the appointment you can tell them why you would be a good person for the appointment. |
| A smiling woman holding a checklist with 2 green ticks on it.  a man meeting 2 people across a table | If you apply for a public appointment you will be tested against a **person specification** that has been made by the recruitment panel. |
| A **person specification** is a list the things the person who gets the appointment must be able to do. |
|  | The panel will not test anything that is not on the person specification. |
| a thinking man with a thumbs up and a thumbs down in thought bubbles above his head. | The panel will also do some other checks to make sure you are right for the appointment. This is called a **fit and proper person** test.  A **fit and proper person test** is another way the panel make sure you are the right person for the role. It checks whether anything you have done now or in the past makes you not right for the role. For example, the panel will make sure that the time needed to do the role is something you can do. |
| A woman shaking hands with a woman who is a wheelchair user | You can ask for any **reasonable adjustments** during the process.  A **reasonable adjustment** is changing the way something is done to make sure everyone can take part. An example of this might be more time for tests or interviews. |
| A telephone number on a mobile phone, an email on a computer screen and a weblink on a computer screen | If you need to ask for a reasonable adjustment, use the phone number or email address in the pack. |
| 2 people shaking hands and saying 'thank you.' | Sometimes the Scottish Minister will want to meet **short-listed** candidates.  **Short-listed** means when someone has passed the test for appointment.  But this will not always happen. |
|  | If you get the appointment then your name will be put on the Scottish Government website to let people know: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/public-appointments-announcements/> |
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## Public Appointment Advisers

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| A group of four people. | The Ethical Standards Commissioner and their team are helped by a group of **Public Appointment Advisers**.  **Public Appointment Advisers** are a group of people who help with the work of the Ethical Standards Commissioner. |
| a woman checking information next to a large green tick and writing on a notepad. | Public Appointment Advisers work with panel members to make sure they do what the Code of Practice says they should do. |
| An interview panel with a person being interviewed sitting on the other side of the table. | Sometimes Public Appointments Advisers will become a full panel member. |
|  | And sometimes they will take part for just some of the process. For example, they might help the panel to make the appointment plan. |