

# Annex C | Stage One Research

## Applicant and appointee statistics

1. Applicant and appointee statistics for the two years between April 2005 and March 2007 were analysed to establish the demographic profile of the people applying for public appointments and the profile of the people being appointed. This information provides a baseline against which changes can be measured.

### Key findings

#### a) Applicants

	April 06 – March 07		April 05 – March 06		General Population <sup>1</sup>
	Number	%	Number	%	%
<b>Total</b>	1326		1675		n/a
<b>Gender<sup>2</sup></b>					
<i>Female</i>	395	29.8	462	27.6	51.8
<i>Male</i>	930	70.1	1209	72.4	48.2
<b>BME<sup>3</sup></b>	21	1.6	25	1.5	2
<b>Disabled</b>	82	6.2	133	7.9	20
<b>Age</b>					
<i>Under 30</i>	64	4.8	42	2.5	37.0
<i>31-40</i>	104	7.8	134	8.0	14.6
<i>41-50</i>	269	20.3	366	21.9	14.9
<i>51-60</i>	511	38.5	707	42.2	13.0
<i>61-70</i>	252	19	324	19.3	10.0
<i>Over 70</i>	21	1.6	30	1.8	10.6
<i>Total</i>	1221		1603		
<i>Unspecified</i>	105	7.9	72	4.3	

<sup>1</sup> Data on Scotland's general population is drawn from:

- General Register Office for Scotland's Annual Report 2005 population, age range and gender
- Census 2001 – minority ethnic data
- Disability Rights Commission Scotland – disabled population

<sup>2</sup> During the period 6 applicants declined to indicate gender

<sup>3</sup> This figure does not include applicants who described their ethnicity in their own words as we are unable to determine from the Scottish Government's statistics whether these descriptions fell within the BME category

2. In the past three years the average number of applications for a position on the board of a public body has fallen from 42 to 33. In fact, but for the efforts of one body that attracted almost 200 applications, the average number of applicants would have been even lower - 29 for each post, a fall of over 30%. Three years ago 29% of posts attracted 12 or fewer applications. Today, 35% of posts attract that low number.

The number of applications received in the year April 06 - March 07 was significantly lower than the previous year. This is possibly due in part to appointment activity being suspended in the months leading up to the election in May 2007.

3. The percentage of female applicants increased only very slightly over the two year period. At just under 30% it does not compare well with the percentage of women in Scotland's population (52%). The percentage of applicants from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background is broadly consistent with the figure for the population at the last Census in 2001. However, the BME population is estimated to have increased since that date, an increase that has not been reflected in the applicant pool. The percentage of applicants who stated they were disabled also declined and is low compared to current estimates for the general population, but may be a result of a number of factors including whether the applicant wishes to declare a disability.
4. The most common age range for applicants remains constant. At nearly 40% of all applicants, the 51-60 age group accounts for around twice as many applicants as any other age bracket, despite only 13% of the population falling into this category.

## b) Board members

### Appointments in total

<b>31 March 2007</b>	Total		Male		Female	
Chairs	98		81	83%	17	17%
Members	629		391	62%	238	38%
BME Background	20	3%				
Disabled	18	2.5%				

<b>31 March 2006</b>	Total		Male		Female	
Chairs	102		85	83%	17	17%
Members	647		409	63%	238	37%
BME Background	22	3%				
Disabled	18	2%				

### Appointments made between June 2005 and March 2007

	1 April 2006 - 31 March 2007			1 June 2005 – 31 May 2006 <sup>4</sup>		
	Total	New	Re-appt	Total	New	Re-appt
No. of appointments	197	121 (61%)	76 (39%)	172	102 (59%)	70 (41%)

### Gender split

	1 April 2006 - 31 March 2007		1 June 2005 – 31 May 2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	129 (65%)	68 (35%)	110 (64%)	62 (36%)
Chair	22 (92%)	2 (8%)	18 (82%)	4 (18%)
Member	107 (62%)	66 (38%)	92 (61%)	58 (39%)

5. The number of women appointed as chairs has fallen from 18% in 2005-06 to 8% in 2006-07. Overall female appointments remain almost static at 35%, however, this

<sup>4</sup> Because of a change to the Commissioner's reporting year, the figures for 2005-06 run from June 2005 to May 2006 and the figures for 2006-07 from 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007. These figures were provided externally and cannot be adjusted by OCPAS. The result in some slight overlap in the numbers recorded, however, general trends can still be identified.

figure was significantly boosted by the number of female appointments made by the Health Department during 2006-07. The Department appointed 36 women and 31 men. If these appointments were removed from the figures, the percentage of women appointees this year would fall to 25%.

***BME and disabled appointees***

	1 April 2006 - 31 March 2007	1 June 2005 – 31 May 2006
	Total	Total
BME background	5 (2.5%)	2 (1.2%)
Disabled	5 (2.5%)	1 (0.6%)

6. Appointment of people from a BME background broadly reflects the last Census figures for the general population in Scotland, which was approximately 2%. However, the minority ethnic population in Scotland is now expected to be significantly higher, particularly in light of recent Scottish Government initiatives such as Fresh Talent<sup>5</sup> and of increased migration from Eastern European countries. Indeed, 14% of applicants between 2006-07 identified themselves as non-white. It is therefore disappointing to note the low ethnic diversity of appointees.
  
7. It is also disappointing to note that at 2.5% the representation of disabled people among appointees continues to fall far below the estimated 20% of the general population who are disabled.

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<sup>5</sup> The Fresh Talent initiative encourages people to come to live and work in Scotland

# Investigation of appointment practice under the interim Code (conducted November 2005 - July 2006)

## Methodology

8. Following a competitive tendering process, a firm specialising in diversity and recruitment, Clear,<sup>6</sup> was engaged by the Commissioner to conduct research into the appointments process and how it is administered, including identifying
  - the factors which encourage applications
  - the barriers which discourage applications
  - the extent of compliance with equalities legislation
  - how the process mirrors good practice in recruitment.
9. The team carried out research into six appointment rounds conducted during 2005-06 by a cross-section of Scottish Executive departments.<sup>7</sup> This review involved both desk research and interviews with key stakeholders.
10. **Desk research** entailed reviewing the documentation generated during the six appointment rounds and reviewing other documents relating to the appointment process more generally. These additional documents included:
  - *Diversity in the Public Appointments Process in Scotland*, Reid Howie Associates Ltd, commissioned by the Scottish Executive, 2003
  - Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies in England and Wales (adopted as the interim Code of Practice for Scotland)
  - Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland

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<sup>6</sup> Formerly trading as PTI Recruitment. The project team included experts in recruitment and diversity, including an organisational psychologist who verified findings across the research. The role of the psychologist was to consider examples of inadvertent bias and/or unconscious discrimination and determine whether these had the potential to exclude certain individuals and groups from the appointments process or prevent their progress through the process.

<sup>7</sup> This research was conducted before these departments were re-structured to form the current Scottish Government directorates

- *Making Public Appointments in the Scottish Executive*, (Scottish Executive internal guidance), May 2006
  - demographic data for Scotland
  - relevant guidance produced by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), the Employers Forum on Age (EFA), the Employers Forum on Disability and Stonewall.
11. **Interviews** were held with the people who implement each stage of the appointments process. These included Ministers, chairs of public bodies, senior civil servants who sit on selection panels, members of Scottish Government sponsor teams, the Scottish Government central Public Appointments Team, OCPAS Assessors and the central OCPAS team, including the Commissioner.
  12. The views of applicants were also taken to find out what had attracted them to the appointment, their experiences throughout the process and whether or not they would apply again.

### **Summary of key findings**

13. Whilst there were some examples of effective practice in the appointment rounds scrutinised, several areas of concern were identified.
  - 13.1 Intent was generally positive and the business case for diversity was widely known, however, the reality of what is required in practice was less well understood.
  - 13.2 Awareness and understanding of diversity was generally low, irrespective of whether previous training had been received.
  - 13.3 Responsibility for key tasks in the process was being placed on relatively junior members of staff who were not trained or equipped with the skills and knowledge to perform these duties.

- 13.4 The majority of Ministers showed a far greater understanding of diversity and inclusion than the sponsor teams or central Public Appointments Team, however, there was limited evidence that Ministers used their knowledge to practical effect<sup>8</sup> in appointment rounds. At least one Minister had the impression that the process was ‘owned’ by the central Public Appointments Team and that Ministers were not empowered to be as involved as they might like.
- 13.5 From a diversity perspective the Scottish Government’s internal guidance did not fare well, with some of its advice placing readers at risk of non-compliance with legislation and the duty to promote race equality.<sup>9</sup>
- 13.6 The audit trail for appointment rounds was often unclear and incomplete, most notably around sift/shortlist decisions.
- 13.7 The perception of an ‘ideal candidate’ was deeply ingrained, so barriers to diversity were evident right from the initial step of creating a person specification and continued throughout the process.
- 13.8 Diversity was largely viewed as an ‘add-on’ and in some cases as a barrier to achieving effective appointments. There was a perception held by some key stakeholders that increasing diversity meant ‘lowering the bar’.

## Findings from desk research

### 14. **Person specifications** - Examples were found of discrepancies between person specifications,

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<sup>8</sup> Ministers are actively involved in the process at the planning stage, including approving the requirements in the person specification and role description. They therefore have the opportunity to make any changes that they consider to be appropriate from a diversity perspective.

<sup>9</sup> This part of the research was conducted before the corresponding gender and disability duties came into force.

advertisements and application forms, making it difficult to determine the criteria against which applicants were selected for interview.

15. Person specifications often contained restrictive requirements which would be unlikely to attract a diverse field of applicants, requirements which were not clearly defined and requirements which would be hard to describe in an application form or to assess during interview. This made it difficult for selection panel members to reach consensus on which candidates were appointable and difficult for candidates to be explicit about how they matched the criteria.
16. **Publicity** - One of the appointment rounds studied had taken a new approach to advertising by using an advertorial style complete with testimonials from current board members in order to attract a broader spectrum of applicant. Unfortunately, the board members featured were not themselves diverse. There was no post-advertisement analysis to evaluate whether this new approach was any more effective than the previous style employed.
17. One advertisement appeared in a voluntary sector publication although the experience required referred to the private or public sector.
18. Generally, the advertisements scrutinised were unappealing, with blocks of text and details of governance arrangements. They were all presented in the house style of the Scottish Government with no personalisation to reflect the individuality of the public bodies themselves.
19. **Application forms** did not always differentiate between essential and desirable criteria, so applicants may not have been aware of what exactly they were being assessed against. In one instance the form did not relate to the person specification at all and in another the wording of the criteria across the various documents was inconsistent.
20. **Sifting** - In once instance, a disabled applicant who was excluded at the sift stage had to be granted an interview when it emerged, following their request for feedback, that



the person had clearly met the essential criteria for the role. (At the time of the appointment, the Scottish Government guaranteed an interview to all disabled candidates who met the essential criteria.) No offer of reasonable adjustments was made in the invitation to interview and no reference was made to whether the interview venue was accessible.

21. In another case, feedback indicated that a number of candidates had been sifted out because they had failed to meet a criterion which had not actually appeared in the person specification. In a third case, sifting (the administrative process conducted by officials before the selection panel receives the application forms) had reduced the initial number of applications from 101 to just 8, but how this was achieved was not clear from the audit trail.
22. **Interviews** - In some instances there were no records of the questions covered at interview; in one case where questions appeared on file they did not cover all of the essential criteria for the position. In others, questions were mostly of the 'what do you think' construction which, in order to eliminate subjectivity, should have had pre-determined model answers to ensure the response of each candidate was judged equally and equitably. This type of question rarely gives evidence of an applicant's ability to do the job since it tests knowledge and opinion rather than functional skill.
23. Notes about candidates' suitability for a post were usually phrased subjectively and not substantiated by any recorded evidence.
  - *'[I] got the impression that the candidate would not be a good team player'*
  - *'[His] delivery could be interpreted as self-satisfied'*
  - *'A safe pair of hands'*
24. **Audit** - The audit trail for appointment rounds was often unclear and incomplete, most notably around sift/shortlist decisions. Files were difficult to navigate and it was not always clear which were drafts and which were final documents.

25. There was no evidence of action to comply with the duty to promote race equality (the only equality duty in force at that time) contained in the documentation reviewed.
26. There was evidence in audit trails of attempts by OCPAS Assessors to address some of the above issues. Nevertheless, the Commissioner recognises that the practices described above took place in appointments rounds in which OCPAS Assessors participated. To address this concern OCPAS has since provided additional training on equality and diversity to all OCPAS Assessors.
27. **Scottish Government Guidance**<sup>10</sup> – The guidance issued by the central Public Appointments Team describes itself as *‘a practical guide for all those staff in the [Scottish Government] involved in making public appointments... It provides information on minimum requirements together with advice on what is considered to be best practice’*.
28. Producing the guidance clearly involved a substantial amount of work, resulting in a document that is over 250 pages long, however, ministerial interviews confirmed that the length and format of the document reduced its efficacy. The depth of administrative detail included may be linked to the fact that the process was (and still is) administered by fairly junior sponsor team members who have little or no experience in recruitment or appointment, so who therefore need instruction and advice at every stage.
29. From a diversity and inclusion perspective the guidance did not fare well, placing readers at risk of non-compliance with legislation and the duty to promote race equality.<sup>11</sup>
30. There was no reference to reasonable adjustments in the template advertisement, application pack or invitation to interview provided as annexes to the guidance, contrary to best practice guidelines. Throughout the guidance the approach to disability was reactive, rather than pro-active,

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<sup>10</sup> The guidance document reviewed was the version available at the time of the research, published by the Public Appointments Team in May 2006

<sup>11</sup> This part of the research was conducted before the corresponding gender and disability duties came into force.

leaving those responsible at risk of breaching legislative requirements.

31. The template advertisement in the guidance was particularly restrictive with no opportunity for creativity and the guidance showed no evidence of advertising expertise. Nor was there any evidence that advertising strategies should be, or were in practice, reviewed after each round to monitor the effectiveness of the various publications or methods used. This suggests that substantial sums of public money were being used for advertising public appointments, without the effectiveness of that expenditure being monitored either from a diversity perspective, or at all.
32. The checklists in the guidance did not require evidence of how each of the points on the list has been met. Further observations on this point were made during stakeholder interviews.

### **Findings from stakeholder interviews**

33. Interviewees had varying degrees of understanding about appointment practice and provided very little evidence of activity and awareness in relation to diversity. There was much confusion about the difference between positive action and positive discrimination and clear evidence of a perception in some quarters that increasing diversity meant a lowering of standards.
34. The creation of the person specification was seen by Ministers and chairs of selection panels as a key area of concern. There was recognition that appointment rounds were conducted with a pre-conceived view of '*what good looks like*'. There was also recognition that the person specification was invariably based on the one used in the previous appointment round for that post, which led to a similar type of board member being attracted and appointed on each occasion. There was concern that the person specification often lacked objective criteria against which applicants could be assessed. One selection panel chair admitted:

- *‘There can be no objective assessment made against these criteria and so the whole process from this point onwards is subjective and dependent upon the selection panel’s judgement.’*

35. Other panel members interviewed expressed concern over making selection decisions based on the person specification, saying it was not sufficiently robust, valid or defensible. They cited examples of people who had not been successful in the process, because they were not able to demonstrate merit in the application form (which is based on the person specification), but whom they thought would have demonstrated merit at interview.

36. A number of Ministers commented that the process as it stood is too restrictive and narrow:

- *‘Yes there is a formal process but this does not get into the hearts and minds of those delivering it.’*
- *‘We need to be more explicit in the work we are doing to engage with communities and incorporate that into appointment rounds.’*

37. Applicants confirmed this view:

- *‘They are still not using a wide enough spread of communication to reach the ethnic community candidate.’*

38. Applicants also commented on the style used in publicity material:

- *‘If they want to attract more diverse applicants they have to get away from pitching ads at middle class professionals’.*
- *‘They seem to have a house style which is over formal and gives the impression that the roles are heavily technical/ regulatory/legal/boring.’*

Applicants remarked on the turnover of sponsor team members during appointment rounds, which led to frustration and sometimes a failure to respond to queries.

39. OCPAS Assessors monitoring the process also demonstrated varying degrees of understanding of diversity and of the ways to attract diverse applicants:
  - *‘I know that board level jobs are usually high level, attracting a certain type of individual, and do not lend themselves to smaller or free papers’.*
40. In discussions around barriers to diversity and inclusion, most of the people administering the process thought that the strategy for attracting applicants was a key issue, as was the influence of the media. There was little acknowledgement that the way the process is administered is a major factor in encouraging or discouraging diversity.
41. Several people were genuinely unaware that their actions may have discriminated against certain groups or individuals. Evidence was found that people who are known to selection panel members were treated differently to other applicants; this affected applications both positively and negatively.
42. The Scottish Government’s internal guidance on making public appointments asks sponsor teams to complete a checklist *‘confirming that the Scottish Government has adequately and appropriately addressed equality, diversity and proportionality issues’*. In the appointment rounds reviewed, this item had been ticked as being satisfied, but when questioned, sponsor teams provided no evidence of these issues being addressed and some were uncertain what the question was asking them to do, but had still ticked the item to indicate it had been completed.
43. Responsibility for key stages in appointment rounds was generally held by fairly junior sponsor team members. For one third of sponsor team members involved in the rounds scrutinised, this was the first time they had been involved in administering a full appointment round:

- *‘I didn’t have any experience of recruitment prior to being placed with the sponsor team... but I am responsible for putting together role descriptions and person specifications and doing the initial sift.’*
44. Understandably, this led to reliance throughout the process on the Scottish Government’s central Public Appointments Team, whose awareness of diversity and inclusion was not evidenced as being stronger than that of other interviewees.
45. Overall, there was a lack of evidence available to support claims that diversity and inclusion are considered throughout appointment rounds. No monitoring or review of the diversity of applicants had taken place at any stage within the appointment rounds reviewed.

## **Investigation of appointment practice under the new Code (conducted April 2006 – January 2007)**

### **Methodology**

46. To assess the impact of the new Code on the issues identified in the above research, the Commissioner reviewed the early appointment rounds under the new Code to establish what improvements had been made and which issues remained to be addressed.
47. This review involved analysing the experiences and observations about the practices employed in the rounds of both OCPAS Assessors and the OCPAS central team.

### **Key findings**

48. Many of the difficulties which arose under the interim Code still remained, particularly those related to
- the knowledge and experience of the personnel involved in the process
  - the Scottish Government’s guidance
  - the structure of the process itself.
49. **Person specifications** - The concern about the inclusion of restrictive requirements remains. For example, one

person specification listed ‘*knowledge of corporate governance and value for money*’ as a criterion. Its inclusion was queried by the OCPAS Assessor at an early stage, but the public body considered it to be essential, so it was listed as such in the person specification. As a result, many applicants had to be ruled out at the shortlisting stage because they could not provide evidence of having the required knowledge. It was later accepted by the public body that the criterion was not in fact essential for the post, but having insisted upon it being included, the panel was obliged to rule out those applicants who could not meet it.

50. There were instances of person specifications including the possession of IT skills or the ability to receive documents electronically as a criterion for appointment. Even as a desirable criterion this has implications for under-represented groups and may raise issues of disability or age discrimination.
51. Some person specifications included a large number of desirable criteria, which may discourage some people from applying. For example, research has shown that women will only apply if they have at least 8 out of 10 of the criteria asked for, men will apply if they have six.<sup>12</sup>
52. **Publicity** - The new Code requires appointment opportunities to be publicised in a proportionate way which is designed to reach as wide and diverse an audience as possible. There has been some use of targeted publicity, such as mailshots to appropriate professional bodies, but heavy reliance is still placed on the use of newspaper advertising.
53. Following advice from OCPAS, the advertisement template was amended to offer information packs in alternative formats on request, however, despite every advertisement stating that “*the Scottish Government is committed to appointing a diverse range of public appointees*” there was no evidence of any effective strategy which might achieve this.

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<sup>12</sup> See for example, DTI Women and Equality Unit report, *Brighter Boards for a Brighter Future*

54. More than 80 local and national groups, such as Non-Governmental Organisations, charities and community groups, were, and still are, notified of every public appointment vacancy which arises. While this appears to inform a diverse range of people about the opportunities, it has not been effective in encouraging applications.
55. **Scottish Government guidance** – The guidance remained unchanged throughout the rounds studied, with the exception of some of the template forms which were amended and re-issued following OCPAS comments. For fuller comments on the guidance please see above.
56. **Priority given to public appointments** – A recurring theme in the rounds studied was the low priority accorded to public appointments within the Scottish Government. In addition to key stages of the process being left in the hands of junior officials, several OCPAS Assessors reported an apparent reluctance by senior civil servants and public bodies' representatives to dedicate the time required to the appointment process. For example, there were instances of selection panel members arriving at shortlist meetings without being prepared, sometimes without having read all the applications at all.
57. **Knowledge of equalities issues** - A number of selection panel members were unfamiliar with the basic legal requirements of discrimination legislation. Comments such as, *'Should we be trying to put some women on the shortlist?'* (made after the shortlisting process had already been completed based on merit) whilst said with the best intentions, betrayed a clear lack of awareness that positive discrimination is both unlawful and contrary to the requirements of the Code.

## **Comparison of the public appointments process and the Senior Civil Service recruitment process**

58. This element of the research concentrated on external recruitment to civil service posts as external recruitment is comparable to external appointment to public boards. The research involved scrutiny of the paperwork used during



the recruitment process and discussions with both civil servants and representatives of the Civil Service Commissioners involved in recruitment.

## **Key findings**

### **Regulation**

59. Both processes are governed by a code of practice. Independent Civil Service Commissioners who are appointed by the Crown issue the code for the SCS recruitment process. They also investigate complaints and audit recruitment practices. The Scottish Government's Human Resources (HR) department is responsible for enforcement of the code and for internal audit to ensure compliance with the code, including an annual self assessment check.
60. The Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland audits the public appointments process. OCPAS Assessors ensure compliance with the Commissioner's Code of Practice throughout every appointment round. The Scottish Government does not conduct a self assessment check or internal audit to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice.

### **Professional advice and support**

61. For SCS recruitment a senior HR team acts as a one-stop advice shop, providing the sponsor team with expert advice and support throughout the recruitment process. This support includes assistance in drafting the role description and person specification and in advertising the role.
62. For public appointments the sponsor team receives no professional HR assistance or support and individual directorates are responsible for their own public appointment processes. The central Public Appointments Team (PAT) is available to provide advice and guidance on the process and has produced a comprehensive guidance document (250 pages including template documents) to which sponsor departments are asked to refer. However, sponsor teams are not obliged to follow the guidance and

external audit has revealed that they often depart from its advice.

## **The Planning Stage**

63. For an SCS position a manager is required to develop a job description and personal requirements for a post, as well as planning for the key stages of the recruitment process such as the dates of the sift/assessment centre/interviews. The responsible manager must complete a vacancy profile and submit it to the Central Resourcing Unit (CRU), part of the HR shared service centre. The vacancy profile asks the appointing manager to identify the key and desirable competencies for the role. A competency framework is available to assist managers to identify the key competencies required.
64. For public appointments, the relevant Minister and the chair (or a representative) of the public body determine the specific requirements of the board. They are consulted about the content of the role description, person specification and appointment timetable. There is no competency framework available to inform the decision about which skills, knowledge and personal qualities are required of the appointee, although departments are advised to draft a skills matrix of the requirements of the board as a whole, help them identify which of those skills the new appointee needs to bring.

## **Encouraging applications**

65. External recruitment for the SCS is treated as a key public relations exercise. The toolkit for the process states that *'the way it is managed affects the Scottish Government's image, and consequently its ability to attract and appoint high calibre staff'*. The toolkit provides advice on advertising positions, including details of available publications, publication dates, copy deadlines and advertising rates. The CRU provides information on the response rates from various media to previous similar advertisements and managers are encouraged to see this before making any decisions. The effectiveness of the publicity for each vacancy across various media is measured and recorded

for future reference. TMP, the Government's supplier of advertising services can provide advice on the different media which can be used, including internet advertising, and can design adverts and online campaign sites which help to deliver effective recruitment campaigns. The CRU completes the administrative work associated with placing external adverts.

66. For public appointments, a template advert is provided in the Public Appointments Team's guidance manual and advice and guidance is available on request from the team. The team's guidance offers the following checklist for public appointments advertisements:

- include key facts concerning the body
- provide some of the key essential criteria that must be satisfied by applicants
- give details on the location of meetings
- indicate the time commitment involved
- give the level of remuneration and whether or not appointment is pensionable
- state that travelling and reasonable dependent carer expenses will be reimbursed
- note the possibility of re-appointment subject to satisfactory performance review
- use the model advertisement

The effectiveness of publicising vacancies across various media is not measured or recorded for future reference, so is therefore not known.

## **Processing applications**

67. For SCS positions, the HR department's CRU handles much of the administration for processing applications. Selection panel members are trained in the techniques that are used for the selection of candidates, including competency based selection and assessment centre techniques. Assessment centres are used for all external candidates; they employ a range of techniques including:

- interview
- group discussion

- written exercises
- role play
- psychometric testing (verbal, numerical and reasoning skills)
- online personality questionnaire.

68. For public appointments an external contact centre is contracted by the Scottish Government to issue application packs and take receipt of completed packs. All applicants are assessed on the basis of a written application form, from which they are shortlisted for interview. Selection panel members are expected to be familiar with the requirements of the code of practice, but do not routinely receive training on how to assess applications.

## **Interviews**

69. For SCS positions, the interview is one of a suite of techniques used to identify whether an applicant is suitable for a role. All interview panels must include a minimum of two interviewers, of which at least one must be trained in competency based selection. In all cases interviewers must be sufficiently competent to be able to make a fair selection decision. An hour per interview is normally allowed - 45 minutes for the interview and 15 minutes for questions and summing up.
70. For public appointments, interviews are used as the sole selection technique for all shortlisted candidates. There are no requirements to be trained in any selection techniques and no requirement to show competence in interview skills. The time allowed for interviews varies across sponsor departments. Some interviews last for as little as half an hour.

## **Selection**

71. The appointment decision for a SCS position is based on the results of the various assessment tools, including interview, that have been used to assess the merit of candidates. The candidate assessed as being the most meritorious is appointed.

72. For public appointments, the selection panel determines which candidates are appointable on the basis of their written application forms and their performances at interview. A choice of appointable candidates is provided to the Minister along with an objective analysis of each candidate's suitability for appointment. The Minister decides which of these candidates to appoint.
  
73. So, in summary, the process used for Senior Civil Service recruitment appears to be more rigorous than the process used to appoint the board members of public bodies that are responsible for spending 11 billion pounds of public funds each year.