

Writing your personal statement

You will be asked to provide your evidence of suitability in the form of a Competency based Personal Statement.

The person specification

This sets out the key personal competencies which are required and are based on the Welsh Government's Senior Civil Service competencies framework. It can also include any job specific requirements such as academic qualifications, experience and knowledge specific to the particular characteristics of the post.

The personal statement

This document will need to reflect your achievements against the competence areas specific to the post. This requires you to provide a self-assessment against the core competence areas and specific behaviours identified in the Job and Person specification. The panel will be looking for evidence that you are able to meet these at the appropriate competence level

- The achievements should be ones in which you invested personal time and effort
- They should be relatively recent although don't let that restrict you from putting something relevant that you have achieved in your career,

A good description of an achievement should:

- Be specific to the core competence and behaviours required
- Explain what you did and why and how you overcame any particular difficulties and or lessons learned
- State the outcomes and benefits
- Give an approximate time-scale and date
- Outline the impact that this evidence achieved

Your personal statement and an up to date CV should be attached to your application form on the 'Evidencing your suitability for the post' page. Both documents should be prepared in a Word document or can be converted from another format into pdf format. You can then follow the instructions in the form to attach both documents.

If you have any questions about the job you should consider contacting the line manager.

How do I provide my evidence?

You should include real examples to demonstrate the competency behaviours / person specification criteria listed in the advert. They should be written in a way that helps the panel assess your suitability for a vacancy or promotion exercise

Competencies

These are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The [Civil Service Competency framework \(link to the intranet page\)](#) outlines 10 competencies (under 3 key areas or 'clusters') which are deemed to be key for successful performance within the Civil Service. For each competency there is a description of what it means in practice and some examples of effective and ineffective behaviours at all levels, you will be asked to provide evidence, in the form of real examples, of how you demonstrate the key competency behaviours identified as essential for the role for which you are applying. Competencies are used to benchmark how you have behaved in the past, as this is likely to be a good indication of how you will perform in the future. If you are applying on promotion, your examples should also aim to reflect the level of responsibility of the grade that you are applying for, to show the panel that you are ready for progression to that grade.

Person specification

You should identify how you meet any specific criteria listed in the job description by drawing on experience, knowledge, and achievements.

The person specification criteria are areas identified by the recruiting line manager as crucial to the particular role that they are recruiting to. They could include particular skills, experience or knowledge in a field relevant to the role, or even a specific qualification relevant to the role. If you do not sufficiently evidence all criteria, it is unlikely that your application will pass the sift stage.

Preparing your evidence

When completing your personal statement you should always pick your strongest examples which allow you to evidence how you meet the competency and job specific requirements in the context of role. When choosing your examples, consider the following advice:

- Ensure your examples are at the right level for the grade. Refer to the SCS competencies as contained within the [Civil Service Competency Framework \(link to the intranet page\)](#); this will help you pitch your examples at the right level.
- Use evidence from work if possible, however you won't be penalised if you use examples from a role you hold outside of work, as long as the example demonstrates competency at an equivalent level of responsibility for the role
- Draft in clear language that is grammatically correct, including the spelling. Be succinct, and ensure you don't go over the word limit
- Avoid using jargon, abbreviations or specialist terms
- Make use of the past tense e.g. achieved, verified. Use active verbs to create greater impact (e.g. organised, managed, improved, established, facilitated).
- Don't assume the sift panel has any knowledge of the situation. They cannot assume what is not included in the example and can only assess what you have actually written.

- Don't forget to include results and show how you overcame problems/obstacles, why your actions were effective and/or how you could have improved on what you did.

The **STAR** approach may also help you to present your evidence by providing structure and focus to your examples in both the application form and the interview. The STAR approach includes:

- **Situation** – briefly describe the context and your role
- **Task** – the specific challenge, task or job that you faced
- **Action** – what you did, how and why you did it
- **Result** – the outcomes and what you achieved through your actions.

Keep the **situation** and **task** parts brief. Concentrate on the **action** and the **result**. If the result was not entirely successful describe what you learned from this and what you would do differently next time.

STAR may help you to cover all the points you need to make. It may help you in drafting your application and ensure that you cover what you personally have done. Make sure you focus on your strengths. It may also help you at the interview stage, by giving you a structure to form your answers to questions asked at interview.

There are however other frameworks available which could help you with structuring your evidence. Spending some time researching application and interview techniques prior to applying for a vacancy could help you to identify a framework that best suits you.