Fixed Term Appointment Recruitment Campaign

External Candidate Recruitment Guidance
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Mae’r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.
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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in working for the Welsh Government team at this important time. Our aim is to help the First Minister and Welsh Ministers to build a fairer, more equal and greener Wales. The COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges which will continue for the foreseeable future. We are working to prepare Wales for life outside the European Union, and develop our own ways of delivering what we used to do in partnership with the EU. We have much to deliver before next May’s Welsh election.

Team working is at the heart of everything we do so our jobs will suit people who are capable of developing collaborative relationships with a mix of people at all levels. You will need to be open to ideas from a range of sources, building strong partnerships across public services, the third sector, the trade unions and business in Wales. The First Minister has set a framework of social partnership: working together with our partners to solve problems and find solutions to the challenges facing Wales. The Welsh Government has an excellent track record of working in partnership with its trade unions. We support staff to join a recognised trade union as an important mechanism for making sure their voice is heard in the workplace.

The Welsh Government is accountable to the people of Wales through the Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament. We aim to meet high standards of transparency and openness, and demonstrate honesty, objectivity, integrity and impartiality in everything we do. We aim to create a working environment which is stimulating, supportive, diverse, challenging and adaptable.

We work hard to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all staff to grow and perform to the best of their ability.

This candidate guidance has been developed to assist you in applying for an opportunity to work in the Welsh Government on a Fixed Term Appointment or Secondment basis. It includes useful advice on:

- The Assessment Process.
- How to evidence your skills, experience and ability against Behaviours listed on the Job Advert.
- Terms of Appointment.
- Step by Step guidance to the online Application Form.
2 Principles for Recruitment into the Civil Service


3 Points to Note

Diversity and Equality

The Welsh Government is committed to providing services which embrace diversity and which promote equality of opportunity. This is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 and will be adhered to at each stage of the recruitment process. Our goal is to ensure that these commitments are also embedded in our day-to-day working practices with all our customers, colleagues and partners.

We are committed to increasing diversity in the Welsh Government, removing barriers and supporting all our staff to reach their potential. We welcome applications from everyone regardless of age, marriage (including equal/same sex marriage) and civil partnership, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, impairment or health condition, race, religion or belief or pregnancy/maternity.

We are currently ranked 9th in the UK in the Stonewall Top 100 list of employers, we are a Stonewall Diversity Champion, a Disability Confident Level 3 (Leader) organisation and received gold status from a:gender in 2018. Key to supporting this work and providing peer support are four Board sponsored Staff Networks (Disability Awareness and Support (DAAS); Minority Ethnic Support Network (MESN); PRISM (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex +) and Women Together.

Disability Confident

Welsh Government accepts the social definition of disability, in which it is recognised that barriers in society act to disable people who have impairments or health conditions or who use British Sign Language. We are committed to removing barriers so that all (or potential new staff) can perform at their best. The Equality Act 2010 uses the medical definition of disability (“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term impact on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”).
We guarantee to interview anyone who is disabled whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. By ‘minimum criteria’ we mean that you must pass the online tests and provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you generally meet the level of competence for the role and any qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential. We are committed to the employment and career development of disabled people.

If you have an impairment or health condition, or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of this recruitment process, or wish to discuss how we will support you if you were to be successful, please email ExternalRecruitment@gov.wales as soon as possible and a member of the team will contact you to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have.

**Welsh Language**

The Welsh Government acknowledges the importance of developing and growing its bilingual workforce. Applications for any post can be submitted in either Welsh or English. Applications submitted in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than applications submitted in English.

**A Great Place to work for Veterans**

We offer veterans who meet the minimum standard on each of the job’s essential criteria the opportunity to go directly to the next stage of selection. If you have completed at least one year in her Majesty’s Armed Forces (as a regular or Reserve) and are in transition from the Armed Forces, or no longer a member, you can apply for roles in the Civil Service under the Great Place to Work Veterans initiative [www.gov.wales/greatplacetowork](http://www.gov.wales/greatplacetowork).

4 **Planning your Application**

Before you make your application you should carefully read the Job Advert and assure yourself that you can provide sufficient evidence of the Behaviours listed. It is worth noting that anyone who does not pass both the online tests for the recruitment scheme and/or is deemed unable to provide sufficient evidence against the Behaviours listed in the Job Advert within their Application Form, will not progress to interview. Only candidates who pass both online tests and have provided sufficient evidence against each Behaviour being tested (which for the purposes of the Disability Confident Interview Scheme is the minimum criteria for the grade) may progress beyond the sift stage.

You should plan the completion of your application being mindful of the closing date for the vacancy, as this is a fixed date that will not be negotiated (except where a reasonable adjustment is appropriate and has been agreed beforehand).
5  How to Apply

To apply, you will be asked to register for an account on the Welsh Government on-line system using an email address. It is recommended that you select an email address to which only you have access, as this will be our main method of communication with you regarding the selection process.

If you have an impairment or health condition, or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of this recruitment process, or wish to discuss how we will support you if you were to be successful, please email ExternalRecruitment@gov.wales as soon as possible and a member of the team will contact you to discuss your concerns and requirements.

We welcome applications in Welsh and English. Applications in either language will be treated on the same basis. To access the Welsh version of a vacancy, simply click on the ‘Change Language/Newid iaith’ toggle button at the top right hand of the page. If you would like to apply in Welsh, simply click on the ‘Gwneud cais’ button at the bottom of this page. Please note, once you start an application in Welsh, you aren’t then able to switch to an English application for that post, using the same user account. If you experience any difficulties, or have any questions regarding the process, please contact ExternalRecruitment@gov.wales.

6  Assessment Process

There are 4 stages to the assessment process.

Stage 1. Application Form

When completing the Application Form you will be asked to provide a range of information regarding your eligibility, education, employment history etc. Step by step guidance to each section of Application Form can be found at Appendix A should you require.

You will also be asked to provide evidence, in the form of real examples, of your skills, experience and ability in the Behaviours listed within the Job Advert. This is the most important part of your Application Form as it will be assessed by a recruitment panel at the Sift Stage of the assessment process.

When choosing what examples will best evidence the Behaviours required, consider the following advice:

- Base your examples on a previous experience, you may want to think about your achievements from the last 2 years.
- You can use examples from as wide a range of experiences as you need. Outside of work, this might be experience from education settings or volunteering etc.
• When you have picked your strongest examples, ensure they meet the full requirements of the Behaviour/s you are seeking to evidence. When drafting your examples, allow yourself plenty of time to refine your example/s in line with the Behaviour you are evidencing.

• Ensure the evidence is presented as succinctly as possible and does not go over the word count.

• Remember, a recruitment panel cannot assume what is not included in the example, they can only assess what you have actually written.

• Use ‘I’ not ‘we’. Evidence your role and how you affected the outcome.

• Don’t get caught up telling a story or setting a scene in your example. Your example should include a brief statement regarding the situation/context of your example, then focus on how you went about the task, what actions you instigated/undertook/lead on etc. Explain why you undertook these actions, any obstacles you encountered. Finally include results, using short statements to demonstrate why your actions were effective and/or why they added value. If the result was not entirely successful describe what you learned from this.

• Some candidates find it helpful to use the STAR approach when presenting evidence as it provides structure and focus to examples in both the application form and the interview.

• 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.

Stage 2: Online Tests

Following the closing date of the Job Advert you will be invited to complete an Online Civil Service Verbal Test. If you successfully pass this, you will then be invited to complete an Online Civil Service Judgement Test.

Only those who successfully pass both tests will progress to the Sift Stage. If you fail either test, or fail to complete them by the deadline given, unfortunately your application will not progress to the next stage. You will be notified of this outcome (i.e. whether you have passed or failed) via your registered email address.

Further guidance on this part of the assessment process will be provided when you are invited to undertake the tests.

If you need a reasonable adjustment to be made (for example, if your assistive technology is not compatible with the test) you should contact ExternalRecruitment@gov.wales as soon as possible and a member of the team will contact you to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have.

If you would like to undertake any practice tests before you undertake the tests scheduled as part of the assessment process you are able to do so at www.gov.uk/guidance/civil-service-online-tests.
Stage 3: Sift
A two stage sift process will be conducted for candidates who have passed the Online Tests.

**Sift Stage 1**
The evidence you provide in your Application Form for the first two Behaviours listed within the Job Advert will be assessed by a recruitment panel. If the panel agree that you have provided sufficient evidence against the Behaviours your application will progress to Sift Stage 2.

**Sift Stage 2**
A recruitment panel will assess the remaining four Behaviours you have evidenced in your Application Form. If the panel agree you have provided sufficient evidence against these Behaviours you will be invited to attend an Online Interview using Microsoft Teams.

You will be given a minimum of five working days’ notice (this can be extended if you are disabled and need a longer time-scale to be put in place as a reasonable adjustment).

If you fail either Sift Stage 1 or Sift Stage 2, unfortunately your application will not progress to Interview. Notification of the outcomes of Sift, will be issued to all candidates by email to their registered email address.

Due to the scale of this recruitment exercise unsuccessful candidates will only receive brief written feedback on their application, we do hope however that it will be helpful if considering future applications.

**Disability Confident:** We will guarantee an interview to disabled people who have:
- selected in their application form that they wish to be given a guaranteed interview under the guaranteed interview scheme; and
- meet the minimum criteria for the grade through the online tests and sift.

(Further detail of this commitment and how it is applied is on Page 3.)

Stage 4: Interview
The Online Interview will take place over Microsoft Teams and involve a blend of Behaviour and Strength based questions.

**Behaviours:**
The Behaviour questions will explore in detail what you are capable of and will be in line with the Behaviours listed on the Job Advert.

The aim is to find out how you have behaved and used your skills in the past to deal with challenges and problems, on the premise that this is likely to be a predictor of how you will perform in the future.

The questions at interview will be designed to allow you to provide evidence of the required Behaviours, through the use of relevant examples from your experience.
Please remember, even though the panel will be looking for evidence of a specific Behaviour, you need to ensure that you answer the specific question that they ask you at Interview. It is important to remember to listen carefully to the question, and then use the most appropriate example to evidence that question.

**Strengths:**
The Strengths questions will explore what you enjoy and your motivations relevant to the grade requirements. They will also be in line with the Strengths listed in the Job Advert. There is no expectation or requirement for you to prepare for Strengths questions in advance of the interview, though you may find it helpful to spend some time reflecting on what you enjoy doing and what you do well.

**Interview Panel**
At interview, there will be a recruitment panel of two or three people. They will hope to see you at your best at the interview and will do all they can to give you the opportunity to evidence that you can meet the Behaviours and Strengths required for the role/grade.

Interviews will follow the structure below:
- The Chair will introduce the panel and explain the format and timing of the interview. You will be given the opportunity to ask any questions about the format and be asked if there may be any extenuating circumstances which may affect your performance at interview i.e. a recent bereavement, car accident etc. This is to ensure that there is nothing which may inhibit your performance. In the event that something has occurred, you will be provided with the opportunity to reschedule your interview. However, if you do choose to go ahead with the interview, you will not be able to reschedule for another time if afterwards you feel you did not perform at your best.
- Each member of the panel will then take it in turns to ask questions.
- At the end of the interview, the Chair will give you the chance to ask any questions you may have.

**Interview duration**
Typically the interview will last anything between 45-70 minutes depending on the grade of the role applied for.

**Interview Language**
We will endeavour to ensure that your interview is conducted in your preferred language, English or Welsh (based on the preference you indicated in your application form). In some cases where a full Welsh-speaking panel cannot be convened, simultaneous translation from Welsh to English may need to be provided for the benefit of any panel members who don’t speak Welsh. In such cases, you will be informed of the arrangements prior to the interview.
Purpose of the Interview
The purpose of an interview is to:
• Test a candidate’s suitability for the requirements of the role/grade.
• Give all candidates an opportunity to present their evidence.
• Recommend which candidates should be offered roles and produce an order of merit based on scores achieved.

At interview, the Panel will be trying to find out how you meet the Behaviours and Strengths listed in the job Advert. You need to be prepared to give answers demonstrating how you meet them.

Useful tips in preparing for interview:
• Try to arrange a ‘mock interview’ with a friend, family member or colleague.
• Prepare more examples than you provided on your application. The panel may ask you for more details and/or other examples if it helps you to provide the evidence required to meet the Behaviours.
• Remember the “STAR” model may be helpful to you when preparing for the interview, as well as during the interview when responding to questions, by giving a clear structure to your responses. See page 6 for more information on STAR.

After Interview
Following the interview, outcomes will be issued at the earliest opportunity via the email you have registered with. Due to the scale of this recruitment exercise unsuccessful candidates will only receive brief written feedback regarding their interview, we do hope however that it will be helpful if considering future applications. If you are successful, the information you have provided in your Application form will be used to help inform which post you will be matched to.

Reasonable Adjustments
When we contact candidates to confirm that they have been successful at interview we will ask whether they have any reasonable adjustments they would like us to consider when matching them to a post. This will help us ensure that each individual is matched into a suitable role.

Grievance and Complaints
Anyone who believes they have been treated unfairly, or has a grievance or complaint, about how the process was conducted should either write to the Head of Resourcing, Welsh Government, Cathays Park 2, Cardiff CF10 3NQ or email ExternalRecruitment@gov.wales. If you are unhappy with the outcome of the complaint raised with the Welsh Government and feel that the principles of appointment on merit through fair and open competition have not been met you have the right to pursue your grievance with the Civil Service Commission at 3rd Floor, 35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BQ.
7 Terms of Fixed Term Appointment

Working Hours
These posts are available on a part-time, job-share and full-time basis. We welcome applications from people who work part-time and if someone who wants to work part-time is successful, we will attempt to match you to a part time post or make proportionate adjustments to the responsibilities of a post if there is a potential match.

Leave
You will be entitled to annual leave and time off in accordance with the Welsh Government’s Annual Leave Policy, Public and Privilege Holiday Policy and family leave policies. Full-time employees are entitled to 31 days annual leave, plus 10 public and privilege days’ leave, pro rata for part time employees.

You will be eligible for sick pay, holiday pay and any absence entitlements in accordance with Welsh Governments Terms and Conditions.

Welsh Government also offers a range of family friendly and flexible working arrangements, which support modern working families. We have designed our policies to enable employees to combine work and family life so that we can retain their valuable skills in the workplace and they can fulfil their potential.

Performance and Training
Objectives will be agreed between you and the line manager at the start of the Fixed Term Appointment with regular reviews carried out at agreed intervals. The line manager will arrange an induction programme/training as appropriate.

Everyone in Welsh Government is supported to develop their skills and capabilities, which includes access to learning and development. We are committed to Learning and Development and ensure our staff have a minimum of 5 days learning per year.

Location
The majority of posts being filled by this recruitment exercise are Pan Wales. ‘Pan Wales’ means that the location in which the vacancy can be based is flexible, subject to the needs of the business. A list of the Welsh Government’s offices can be found on our website www.wales.gov.uk.

Please note it may not always be possible to accommodate a preference for a specific office location, but requests will be taken into consideration.
We are supportive of home working and tailoring patterns to individual circumstances. In the short term, due to corona virus restrictions, the majority of post holders will be based at home/working remotely.

**Smart Working**

The Welsh Government actively encourages Smart Working. This means focusing on how you use your time, and where and how you work, to meet business needs in the most productive way. This provides staff with considerable flexibility with location and hours worked. Smart, flexible working is becoming a permanent feature of working life in Wales and the Welsh Government will lead the way in this. (In the short term the majority of post holders will be based at home).

**8 Terms of Secondment**

A Secondee is required to remain employed by their current employer for the entire secondment period. A Secondee therefore retains their terms and conditions (as specified in the Employment Contract with their employer) and remain on their employers Pay Roll. The employer will then invoice the Welsh Government for the provision of the Secondee’s Services on a quarterly arrears basis for actual salary (inc. Pension, NI etc.).

We anticipate that the majority of candidates who seek to secure a secondment through this opportunity will move laterally, as such they would be able to remain on the same pay they receive from their employer. It is only in exceptional cases, e.g. where a secondment opportunity would equate to a temporary promotion in terms of pay, that there may be flexibility. In this situation Welsh Government may be prepared for the Secondee to be paid at the minimum of the Pay Band for the Grade being appointed to, however, the Secondee’s employer would need to be in agreement with the terms of the appointment and the temporary increase in their employees pay for the period of the secondment.

Our secondee policy/agreement can be shared with candidates applying on a secondment basis on request.
Appendix A

Step by Step guidance to the Application Form

Navigating the Application form

The fields marked with an asterisk ‘*’ are mandatory, therefore you must provide a response or you will not be able to submit your application. Fields without a ‘*’ are not mandatory, as they may not be relevant to all candidates. Select ‘Continue’ once you have completed all the questions on a page to proceed (this will save what you have completed on that page). You can also select ‘back’ at any point to return to the previous page. Alternatively, you can select a specific page you want to return to by clicking on a link to the page in the Progress Tracker on the left hand side.

Progress Tracker

A green tick by a section shows that you have responded to all the questions in that section. An orange tick shows that you have completed all the mandatory questions in that section. A cross indicates that you have left some mandatory questions unanswered; therefore the application cannot be submitted. You don’t have to complete the whole application form in one go. Once you have completed a section, ensure you click the ‘Continue’ button to save all you have done in that section. You can then log out of your account and return to your unfinished application at any point up to the closing date for the vacancy. To return to the application form, simply log in to your account, select ‘My applications’ and click on the relevant vacancy title, which should be in your applications history.

Eligibility Criteria

The purpose of these questions is to determine if you are eligible to apply for this opportunity. You will be asked as part of your eligibility, to confirm your nationality details and that you are legally allowed to work in the United Kingdom. This is a requirement for working within the Civil Service. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria as set out in the application form, your application will not be taken further. If it becomes apparent at a later stage in the process that you aren’t eligible to apply, your application may be withdrawn, or offer retracted.

Personal Details

Complete the fields regarding your personal details such as your name, address etc. It is essential that you provide correct and up to date information, as the information is needed in order to progress your application.
Education

Please provide us with details of your education history. The institution refers to the school/college/university you have attended, and the subject will be what you studied there. You are able to add another instance of the boxes to input your information if there are too few to enter your qualifications.

Learning and Development

Please provide us with the details of any wider learning and development you have undertaken that may be relevant to the application. This could include any personal development you have undertaken which hasn’t led to a qualification, but may help us match successful candidates into the most suitable role.

Employment History

Complete the fields with regard to your current (or most recent) employment and then add any previous employment. To add the details of an additional employer or role, respond ‘Yes’ to the ‘Do you have previous employment?’ question. This will add another instance of the employer details section. It is essential that you provide correct and up to date information.

You will need to provide details of the name of your previous employers, position(s) held and reason(s) for leaving, for at least the last 3 years (unless you have not been in employment for this long – please provide as many details as you are able). If you have no employment experience, select ‘No’ to the ‘Are you currently serving as a civil servant?’ question, and then insert ‘No employment history’ in the ‘Employer Name’ box.

Languages

Select your level of Welsh language ability for the various skills areas listed, as well as your preferred language for assessment. Your level of ability will only be taken into account if Welsh is identified as being essential or desirable for the role we are matching successful candidates to. If Welsh is essential for a role, it may be necessary to assess your Welsh language skills.

Disability Confident

As an Employer we offer the Disability Confident Interview Scheme. We guarantee to interview anyone who is disabled, who has passed the online tests, and whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post.

If you have any reason to need reasonable adjustments that would allow you to take part in this recruitment exercise, please note here an overview of any requirements you may have, or any information you would like to make us aware of with regard to your requirements.
If you have an impairment or health condition, or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of this recruitment process, or wish to discuss how we will support you if you were to be successful, please contact ExternalRecruitmentRequests@gov.wales. We can only work with you to arrange adjustments if we are made aware of your requirements prior to your application submission, test or interview.

We are committed to the employment and career development of disabled people and encourage you to talk to us about adjustments if you need them.

**Behaviours**

This is the most important part of your Application Form. You are being asked to evidence, in the form of real examples, how you meet the Behaviours listed within the Job Advert. Candidates which pass both Online Tests (Stage 2 of the assessment process) will have their Application Form submitted to a recruitment panel for Sift (Stage 3 of the assessment process). This panel will be looking for how well the evidence you have provided demonstrates that you meet the Behaviours required for the grade/role being recruited to.

Behaviours are the actions and activities that people do which result in effective performance in a job. The Civil Service has a defined set of Behaviours that, when demonstrated, are associated with job success. For further information on Civil Service Behaviours see Appendix B.

Each Behaviour that needs to be evidenced is listed in the Application Form above a text box, into which you will enter your evidence. We would expect around 250 words per Behaviour (there are 6 Behaviours in total), but no more. As such, each text box is limited to 250 words only. **You should aim to provide as much evidence as you can for each Behaviour, so make best use of the word allowance for each.**

The evidence of the Behaviours that you provide in your Application Form will be used to benchmark how you have performed in the past, as this is likely to be a good indication of how you will perform in the future. Your evidence should be written in a way that helps panel members assess your suitability for the role.

Unfortunately failure to provide good evidence will result in you not getting through the sift process to interview. For further advice on evidencing the Behaviours see Page 7.

**Any other information**

In this section you are asked to declare whether you are in a close relationship with or are closely related to a current Welsh Government employee or a Welsh Assembly Member. Use links provided within the Application Form for further information.
References
You will need to provide the names of two referees (one must be your current or most recent employer) that cover at least the previous three years of employment. If you have just left school or college and have no previous work experience, please make sure that at least one of your referees is one of your teachers, lecturers or your head teacher or personal tutor.

Source of Application
Please provide information on how you found out about the vacancy – this is for monitoring purposes, to ensure we are using the most effective means of advertising our vacancies.

Equal Opportunities
The Civil Service is committed to achieving a workforce that reflects the society it serves, at all levels including the most senior. Collecting this information enables us to identify whether we are recruiting from the widest possible pool of talent and check that all groups are being treated fairly throughout the process. This form will not be disclosed to anyone involved in assessing your application. If you do not wish to provide a response to a particular question, you should complete the ‘Prefer not to say’ option. We are sensitive to the fact that some people would rather not complete diversity forms – maybe due to a fear that the information will be misused. However we assure you that all information provided is kept strictly confidential, used purely for statistical purposes and will not be used to influence recruitment decisions.

Declaration
Please ensure you read the declaration statement. If you agree to the statements regarding Data Protection, Equal Opportunities and how your application will be processed, select the tick box to confirm your agreement.

Select ‘Submit’ ONLY if you are content that your application is complete and you do not wish to make any changes.

Application Updates
Once you have applied for a vacancy, you will be kept updated on the progress of your application via your registered e-mail address. You can also check on the progress of your application by logging in to your account and viewing the ‘My Applications’ section of your account which is at the top of the page when you are logged in.
Appendix B

Civil Service Success Profiles
www.gov.uk/government/publications/success-profiles

Appendix C

Civil Service Code
As a Civil Servant, you are appointed on merit on the basis of fair and open competition and are expected to carry out your role with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values. For more information on the Civil Service code, please visit:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-code/the-civil-service-code