

AcademiWales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Candidate Recruitment Guidance

All Wales Public Service Graduate Programme



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MEWN POBL | IN PEOPLE

Introduction

This guidance has been developed to assist candidates in applying for the All Wales Public Service Graduate Programme. Please use the guidance provided throughout each stage of the recruitment and selection process, it includes useful advice on:

- what you need to do before you apply
- completing an application
- the assessment process

If you have any questions relating to the information contained in this guidance or the application process, please contact Academi Wales via email

AllWalesGrads@gov.wales

Principles for Recruitment into the Civil Service

The Welsh Government is bound by the principles for recruitment as set out in the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Principles.

The main Principles are:

- Individuals will be selected on merit on the basis of fair and open competition: Prospective applicants will be given equal and reasonable access to adequate information about the job and its requirements, and about the selection process; and applicants will be considered equally on merit at each stage of the selection process.
- The process will be based on consistent criteria relevant to the job being applied consistently to all candidates; selection methods will be reliable and guard against bias.

Points to Note

Equality and Diversity

The Welsh Government 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. You will not be able to submit your application if you leave any of the questions unanswered.

The Welsh Government is committed to providing services which embrace diversity and which promote equality of opportunity. Our goal is to ensure that these commitments are embedded in our day-to-day working practices with all our customers, colleagues and partners. The Board has an Equality Champion and receives regular updates on equality and diversity.

We are committed to increasing diversity, removing barriers and supporting all our staff to reach their potential. We are currently ranked 8th 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.

A Great Place to Work for Veterans

This vacancy is part of the [Great Place to Work for Veterans](#) initiative.

Conflicts of interest

Candidates must note the requirement to declare any interests they may have that might cause questions to be raised about their approach to the business of the Welsh Government or any other organization they may be placed in.

They are required to declare any relevant business interests, share holdings, positions of authority, retainers, consultancy arrangements or other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies, both for themselves and for their spouses/partners.

Successful candidates will be required to give up any conflicting interests and his/her other business and financial interests may be published.

Stage 1: The Application Process

The Graduate Programme is advertised on the [Recruitment](#) pages of our website. Select 'Vacancies' to view the different types of opportunities available with the Welsh Government. Vacancy adverts will include a description of the Vacancy and will identify of the Welsh Public Service Values and Behaviours and the Essentials job specific criteria required for the post, together with any other requirements such as particular qualifications. The advert will also provide details of any other assessment method that may be undertaken during the course of the recruitment activity in addition to the interview. It will also set out the general terms and conditions of the vacancy, including the starting salary at which the appointment will be made.

Planning your Application

Before you make your application you should carefully read the job advert and job description and assure yourself that this graduate programme is right for you. Only candidates deemed competent against each of the areas being tested (which for the purposes of the Guaranteed Interview Scheme is the minimum criteria for the post) may progress beyond each assessment 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).

Assistance in completing the Application Form: It is your responsibility to ensure you provide the necessary information in your application. You must not seek advice from anyone who will be involved in the recruitment process, particularly members of the recruitment panel. Assistance may however be provided for a disability-related reason, including the help of an advocate to complete the form in appropriate circumstances.

You are welcome to complete the application form in English or Welsh. You will see that Welsh language skills will be required for some but not all posts. Consideration will be given to the posts available and the Welsh Language requirements of the posts when matching graduates to roles.

How to Apply

The majority of Welsh Government vacancies are advertised via our e-recruitment system, which can be accessed via the Recruitment page on the internet.

To view all the types of opportunities the Welsh Government has to offer, visit the Recruitment page on the internet, and then select the type of vacancy you are looking for.

You are able to track the process of any applications you make via the online recruitment system, in the Candidate Application Centre section of your account.

Did you know?

You can register for Job Alerts via the Candidate Application Centre in your account, so that you are sent the details of any vacancies that meet your search criteria to you via your registered e-mail address. Just select 'Create Job Alert' at the bottom of the vacancies board.

To apply in Welsh

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 the Corporate Shared Service Centre on 029 20 82 5454 or via email

SharedServiceHelpdesk@gov.wales.

As part of the assessment process you will be asked to complete an online test. You will be given the option of completing the online test in Welsh or English. You can complete your application in Welsh and the online test in English and vice versa.

Creating a new user account

Once you have selected 'Apply' you will be taken to the candidate log in screen. If you do not have an existing candidate account, you will need to select 'Create New Account' which can be found underneath the log in details. Once you have done this, enter your details and read the terms and conditions. If you agree to the terms and conditions, confirm this and select 'Submit Registration'.

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. If you do have information you could include in response to a question, providing as much information as possible against each field will help to ensure that the sifting panel have a complete picture of your skills, experience and knowledge.

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.

Minimum Criteria

The purpose of these questions is to determine if you are eligible to apply for the vacancy. These requirements are set out in the advertisement. You will also need to meet the Civil Service nationality requirements.

The application form will require you to provide some personal details to enable us to process your application effectively. 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.

Answer the questions via the drop down boxes with regards to the minimum eligibility criteria.

Role Specific Questions

Answer either 'yes' or 'no' to these questions if shown. These questions will only appear if the role for which you are applying requires specific qualifications, skills or experience, without which you will not be able to fulfil the requirements of the role. If you aren't able to confirm you meet the requirement(s) your application will not be progressed.

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. All communication will be via email so please ensure you provide the correct email address.

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. It is essential that you provide correct and up to date information, as this may be taken into consideration at the sifting stage.

If a particular qualification has been noted in the vacancy advert as essential or desirable for the post, you should ensure that you include the details of that qualification if you hold it.

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 is relevant to the post for which you are applying.

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, as the information is needed in order to progress your application.

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 essential for one of the posts on the Graduate Programme. It may be necessary to assess your Welsh language skills at the sift or interview stage. Look out for any information regarding this in the vacancy advert, or future communication regarding the vacancy.

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 university or college and have no previous work experience, please make sure that at least one of your referees is one of your lecturers or your personal tutor.

Source of Application

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

Equal Opportunities

Complete the sections with regards to the equality data, such as gender, as required. If you prefer not to answer one or more questions, select 'Prefer not to say'. Please be reassured, the information is collected for monitoring purposes only and is not seen by the selection panel.

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.

Stage 2: The Online Test

Once the closing date has passed and as long as you meet the minimum requirements for the graduate programme, you will be invited to complete an online test. This will be a situational strengths test to assess your suitability for a post on the graduate programme. The online test must be completed between 9am 26/07/2021 and 04/08/2021 5pm), specific details will be sent to you via email. The online test is based on the Welsh Public Service Values and Behaviours. It is important that you familiarise yourself with these before completing the online test:

- [Public Service Values](#)
- [Leading in the Welsh Public Service - a leadership behaviours framework for senior leaders](#)

It is important that you note the dates that the test must be completed within.

Everyone who completes the online test will receive feedback regardless of whether you progress to the next stage of the assessment process. Separate to this, you will receive notification as to whether you will progress to the virtual assessment centre and interview. You will be given a minimum of 5 working days notice of it taking place. You will receive confirmation of the arrangements for the virtual assessment centre and interview, including the location, date and time. The normal 5 days' notice is considered a minimum period and will be extended where any reasonable adjustments have been agreed

If you are unsuccessful in meeting the minimum criteria required to be invited to the next stage of the application, you will be notified by e-mail.

Stage 3: Virtual the Assessment Centre and Interview

If you progress to the Virtual assessment centre and interview stage, this will include an Individual exercise, a group exercise and an individual interview. All candidates will receive feedback on their performance at all stages of the Virtual assessment centre and interview. The assessment centre will be based on the Welsh Public Service Values and Behaviours. It is important that you familiarise yourself with these before taking part:

- [Public Service Values](#)
- [Leading in the Welsh Public Service - a leadership behaviours framework for senior leaders](#)

The Interview

This will involve questions based on the Welsh Public Service values and behaviours. You will be asked to make a presentation during the interview and full details will be included in your invitation to the Virtual Assessment Centre. You will be given a minimum of 5 working days notice of it taking place.

The Panel

At interview, the recruitment panel will usually comprise of three people: the Chair, whose responsibilities include ensuring that the process complies with open and fair competition guidance; and two other panel members. Some panels may include a fourth member.

Interview Language

We will endeavour to ensure that your interview is conducted in your preferred language, English or Welsh (you will be asked your preference in the application form). If you select to have an interview conducted in Welsh, we will also need to test your ability in English, so part of the assessment will be conducted in English. You will be informed of the arrangements beforehand. 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.

Interview duration

Typically the interview will last between 30- 45 minutes. This will depend on the number of questions asked by the panel and your responses.

Purpose of the Interview

The purpose of the interview is to:

- Test your suitability for the role
- Score candidates based on the role
- Recommend which candidate should be offered the position and produce an order of merit based on scores achieved
- Help you to decide if the role is right for you.

At interview, the Panel will be trying to find out how you meet the requirements of the graduate programme. The panel will not be allowed to ask you questions about your personal circumstances.

Please note, you will not be allowed to take notes into the interview. Prompt cards can however be used where a presentation is being made as part of the assessment.

Preparing for the interview

Here are some useful tips to help you in preparing for your interview:

- try to arrange a 'mock interview' with a friend, family member or colleague
- research the area of work that you are applying for

- Prepare for the interview by familiarising yourself with the Welsh public service values and behaviours.

The Interview itself

The panel will hope to see you at your best at the interview and will do all they can to give you the opportunity to show that you can meet the criteria. They will not be trying to trick you. The panel will want to complete the picture of what you can do by learning more about you in a face-to-face situation. Interviews will generally follow the following structure:

- The Chair will introduce the other panel members and explain the format of the interview (including which panel member will ask questions on each area being assessed) and will outline the timing of the interview (which will be the same for all candidates). You will be given the opportunity to ask any questions about the format of the interview. You will also 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.
- If a presentation is required you will be notified in advance. It will be limited to a specified 5 or 10 minutes.
- The interviewing panel will ensure that reasonable adjustments are taken into account for any disabled candidate who has identified specific requirements on their application form, in relation to any aspect of the interview process. It is important therefore that any specific requirements you may have are identified as soon as possible – there is a section in the application form to note these.
- Each member of the panel will then take it in turns to ask questions. It is the Chair's job to ensure these are focused and the interview or assessment method runs to time.
- At the end of the interview, the Chair will give you the chance to ask any questions you may have about the post.

Stage 4: After Interview

Issuing Outcomes

The panel Chair will give you an indication at the end of the interview of when the outcome of your Virtual assessment centre and Interview will be issued. All outcomes will be notified by e-mail.

What you should do if you are unsuccessful in an application

Take time to reflect. Look at the feedback provided in your outcome e-mail and the points made. Remain positive and look at what you did achieve. You should be aware that, inevitably, you may receive different feedback from different panels for

similar or even identical job applications. The overall agreed score rating will have been achieved by a consensus decision by all panel members.

Starting in your new post (for successful candidates)

Once you have been notified of your successful outcome, the Shared Service Centre will send you a new employee starter pack, which will include a conditional contract, security vetting documentation and any other documentation needed to start your employment. The starter pack will include instructions on how to ensure your employment can start as quickly as possible, including how to arrange to attend a Security Vetting Clinic, and what documentation needs to be returned to the Shared Service Centre before your starting date can be agreed. Your references will also be taken up at this point.

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 SharedServiceHelpdesk@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:

e-mail info@csc.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 020 7271 0831

Civil Service Commission
Room G/8
1 Horse Guards Road
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SW1A 2HQ