



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE

Welsh Government jobs: external candidate guidance

Guidance to help you apply for a job with Welsh Government.

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Introduction

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in working for the Welsh Government team. Our aim is to help the First Minister and Welsh Ministers to build a fairer, more equal, and greener Wales.

Team working is at the heart of everything we do. Our jobs will suit people who can develop collaborative relationships with a mix of people at all levels.

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 show 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 help you apply for an opportunity to work in the Welsh Government. It includes advice on:

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- the assessment process
- how to evidence your skills, experience and ability against the criteria listed on the job advert
- terms of appointment
- step by step guidance to the online application form

Principles for recruitment into the Civil Service

We recruit on merit and on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the [Civil Service Commission's recruitment principles](#).

Equality, diversity and the Welsh language

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 and same sex marriage) and civil partnership, sexual orientation, sex, gender

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identity, impairment or health condition, race, religion or belief or pregnancy and maternity.

We are a Stonewall Diversity Champion and in their top 100 list of employers with a Gold award in 2023. We are a Disability Confident (Leader) organisation. We have signed Victim Support's Hate Crime Charter, Business in the Community's Race at Work Charter and Changing Faces' Pledge to be Seen which supports people with visible difference. Key to supporting this work and providing peer support are five Board sponsored Staff Networks (Disability Awareness and Support (DAAS); Mind Matters; Minority Ethnic Support Network (MESN); PRISM (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex +) and Women Together.

Name-free recruitment

The Welsh Government operates name-free recruitment. The recruiting panel will not see personal information such as a candidate's name and address during the sifting process. This policy is in line with our commitment to end bias and promote equality and diversity.

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").

The Welsh Government is a Disability Confident Leader. We guarantee to

interview any candidate with an impairment, health condition, who is neurodivergent or who uses British Sign Language if they meet 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 SharedServiceHelpdesk@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.

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](#).

Redeployment Interview Scheme

Civil Service employers can offer an interview to a fair and proportionate number of civil servants who are at risk of redundancy and who meet the minimum job requirements.

For example, you may be at risk if your work area has launched a voluntary or

compulsory redundancy scheme that you're eligible for, or you are aware that your employer has begun consultation on how to reduce staff in your immediate team or work area.

To be considered for an interview, you must:

- have good reason to believe that you are likely to be made redundant in the near future
- have demonstrated in your application and testing stages that you meet the minimum job criteria detailed in the person specification
- be applying for a job at the same grade as, or lower than, your current job

The application form will ask if you want to apply under the Redeployment Interview Scheme, or guidance will be in the job advert.

At the interview, you will be given the opportunity to demonstrate your abilities and you will be marked solely on merit.

Welsh language

Wales is a bilingual country, with both Welsh and English used routinely in our daily lives and workplaces. The Welsh language has official status in Wales. There are measures in place to ensure it is not treated less favourably than English.

The First Minister has set out his vision for the future of the language in [our Welsh language strategy Cymraeg 2050: a million Welsh speakers](#). This Government's vision is to see the number of people able to enjoy speaking and using Welsh reach one million by 2050. It also wants to double the percentage of people using the language daily.

As an organisation we have a legal obligation to provide services and information to the public in Welsh, for example providing bilingual correspondence and newsletters and answering the phone bilingually. The

details of this are set out in the [Welsh Language Standards](#). The standards also ensure that Welsh speaking employees have access to internal services in Welsh such as:

- a bilingual Intranet
- Human Resources (HR) documents
- IT tools to help us work bilingually

We want to support our employees to improve their language skills at all levels. We have many opportunities for our staff to start learning or brush up on skills they already have. Our bilingual working strategy [Cymraeg. It belongs to us all](#) sets out our ambition to become a truly bilingual organisation by 2050. Our initial goal is to become exemplar in our use of the language over the next five years.

The Welsh Government therefore 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. You can also request an interview through the medium of Welsh and deal with us through the medium of Welsh throughout the recruitment process.

How to apply

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 criteria listed. It is worth noting that anyone who is deemed unable to provide sufficient evidence against the criteria listed in the job advert within their application, will not progress to any following stages. Only candidates who are deemed to have provided sufficient evidence against each criteria being tested (which for the purposes of the Disability Confident Interview Scheme is the minimum criteria for

the grade) may progress beyond the initial first 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).

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 to and one which you can always 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 SharedServiceHelpdesk@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 for most adverts however for some Welsh Essential roles, only applications in Welsh will be accepted. Please ensure you have understood what is required of you from the advert. Where applications in either language are accepted, they will be treated on the same basis. To access the Welsh version of a vacancy, select **Newid Iaith**. If you would like to apply in Welsh, select **Gwneud Cais**. Please note, once you start an application in Welsh, you are not 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 [Shared Service Helpdesk](#).

Assessment process

The Welsh Government use **Success Profiles** as the basis for our application and assessment process. This is a government wide approach that uses a number of different “elements” (experience, strengths, ability, technical and behaviours) to determine our selection methods. We strongly recommend that you read this information before starting your application.

There will usually be a minimum of two stages; an initial application and first stage followed by an interview or assessment process. However, there could be several different stages to the assessment process, depending on requirements. Please refer to the advert for specific details of each stage and what is required.

The following provides some general information about some of the potential information you may be asked for.

Application form

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

You may also be asked to provide evidence, in the form of real examples, of your skills, experience and ability listed within the job advert. These may fall under any number of elements of **Success Profiles**. This is the most important part of your application form as it will be assessed by a recruitment panel.

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

- Base your examples on a previous experience, you may want to think about your achievements from the last few 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.
- When you have picked your strongest examples, ensure they meet the full requirements of the criteria you are seeking to evidence. When drafting your examples, allow yourself plenty of time to refine your example/s in line with the criteria 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 written.
- Use 'I' not 'we'. Evidence your role and how you affected the outcome.
- Do not get caught up telling a story or setting a scene in your example. Your example should include a brief statement regarding the situation or context of your example, then focus on how you went about the task, what actions you instigated, undertook or lead on. Explain why you undertook these actions, any obstacles you encountered. Finally include results, using short statements to demonstrate why your actions were effective 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.

Sift

The evidence you provide will be assessed by a recruitment panel. If the panel agree that you have provided sufficient evidence against the criteria, your application will progress to the next stage.

You will be given a minimum of five working days' notice for any further stages (this can be extended if you are disabled and need a longer timescale to be put in place as a reasonable adjustment).

If you fail at any stage, your application will not progress to any following stages. Notification of the outcomes of each stage will be issued to all candidates by email to their registered email address.

Unsuccessful candidates will only receive brief written feedback on their application.

Technical tests or exercises

For some applications you might be invited to undertake some type of test or exercise. These may be as a standalone stage or form part of an interview.

For some applications, only those who successfully pass the tests will progress to any following stage. Failure to complete any test by any deadline given, will mean that your application will not progress to the next stage.

The advert may state that you need to undertake tests or an exercise. If this is the case, further guidance will be provided at the point you are invited to take 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 SharedServiceHelpdesk@gov.wales as soon as possible. A member of the team will contact you to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have.

Interview

Our interviews are normally online, using Microsoft Teams, but occasionally may be held in one of our offices. Interviews involve a blend of questions based on different elements of **Success Profiles**. You will be provided with information, in advance, of what the interview will consist of. Either as part of the advert or via further communications at each stage. This might include some of the following types of questions:

Behaviours

Behaviour questions will explore in detail what you are capable of and will be in line with those 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, by using 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

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.

Technical or experience based questions

These are designed to explore your professional skills, technical knowledge and understanding and experience within a bespoke context. These may include questions relating to specific professional competency frameworks or explore your qualifications or professional knowledge.

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 sift stages

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 criteria required for the role and 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 such as a recent bereavement or car accident. This is to ensure that there is nothing which may inhibit your performance. If 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

The interview will usually last between 45 to 70 minutes depending on the grade of the role applied for and type of assessment required.

Interview language

We will try to carry out your interview in your preferred language, English or Welsh (based on the preference you indicated in your application form). If we are unable to offer a full Welsh Speaking panel, simultaneous translation from Welsh to English may need to be provided. 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 and 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 criteria 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 other examples if it helps you to provide the evidence required to meet the behaviours.
- think about using the STAR model to structure your responses

After interview

Following the interview, outcomes will be issued at the earliest opportunity using the email you have registered with. Candidates will receive brief written feedback regarding their interview.

Grievance and complaints

Anyone who believes they have been treated unfairly, or has a grievance or complaint should contact us via our [Complaints Unit](#).

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the complaint 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.

Terms of appointment

Working hours

Posts are available on a part-time, job-share and full-time basis. We welcome

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applications from people who work part-time.

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 or 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

Most posts are classed as pan Wales unless otherwise stated in the advert. '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 GOV.WALES.

Please note it may not always be possible to accommodate a preference for a specific office location.

We are supportive of home working and tailoring patterns to individual circumstances. In the short term, most post holders will be based at home or 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 most post holders will be based at home).

Salary

Successful candidates will be appointed at the amount listed under "Actual Starting Salary". This applies to all external applicants, regardless of whether they are already working for Welsh Government, are existing Civil Servants or have never worked for the Civil Service. Existing salary points for existing Civil

Servants will not be matched.

Terms of secondments

Sometimes posts are advertised as a secondment opportunity. If this is the case, it will state it in the advert. Secondments are for non-civil servants. Secondee's will remain employed by their current employer for the entire secondment period and on their existing terms and conditions and payroll. Secondees are not eligible for Welsh Government terms, conditions or benefits.

As a secondee remains on their terms and conditions, they will transfer on their current salary. Exceptionally, Welsh Government may be prepared for the secondee to be paid at the minimum of the pay band (at the point of entry only) for the grade being appointed to, however, the secondee's employer would need to agree with the terms of the appointment, and the temporary increase in their employees pay for the period of the secondment. Where an individual is classed as a lower grade in their home organisation but currently earns within our pay range, they will remain on their current salary. Secondees will not receive any pay awards, increment or salary changes awarded to WG employees.

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

Loans

Loans are only open to existing Civil Servants, recruited to the Civil Service via fair, open and on merit competition. Individuals moving on Loan will be subject to the **Civil Service Transfer Principles**. Unless the agreement is for less than 6 months, successful individuals will move to the Welsh Government's terms and conditions.

Unless otherwise stated in the Job Advert, Loans are not expected to gain a

permanent transfer or permanent promotion to Welsh Government (this is subject to the ongoing need for the role and funding being confirmed at the end of the loan period) and unless otherwise stated in the advert, only those applying laterally are eligible to apply. Individuals on loan will be expected to return to their home department at the end of the agreement and to their substantive grade.

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