



Recruitment and Selection in the Public Appointments Service, Ireland

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Overview of the session

- ❖ Public Appointments Service – an overview
- ❖ Competencies
- ❖ Large Volume recruitment
- ❖ Online testing
- ❖ Some additional information including Recruitment and Selection toolkit

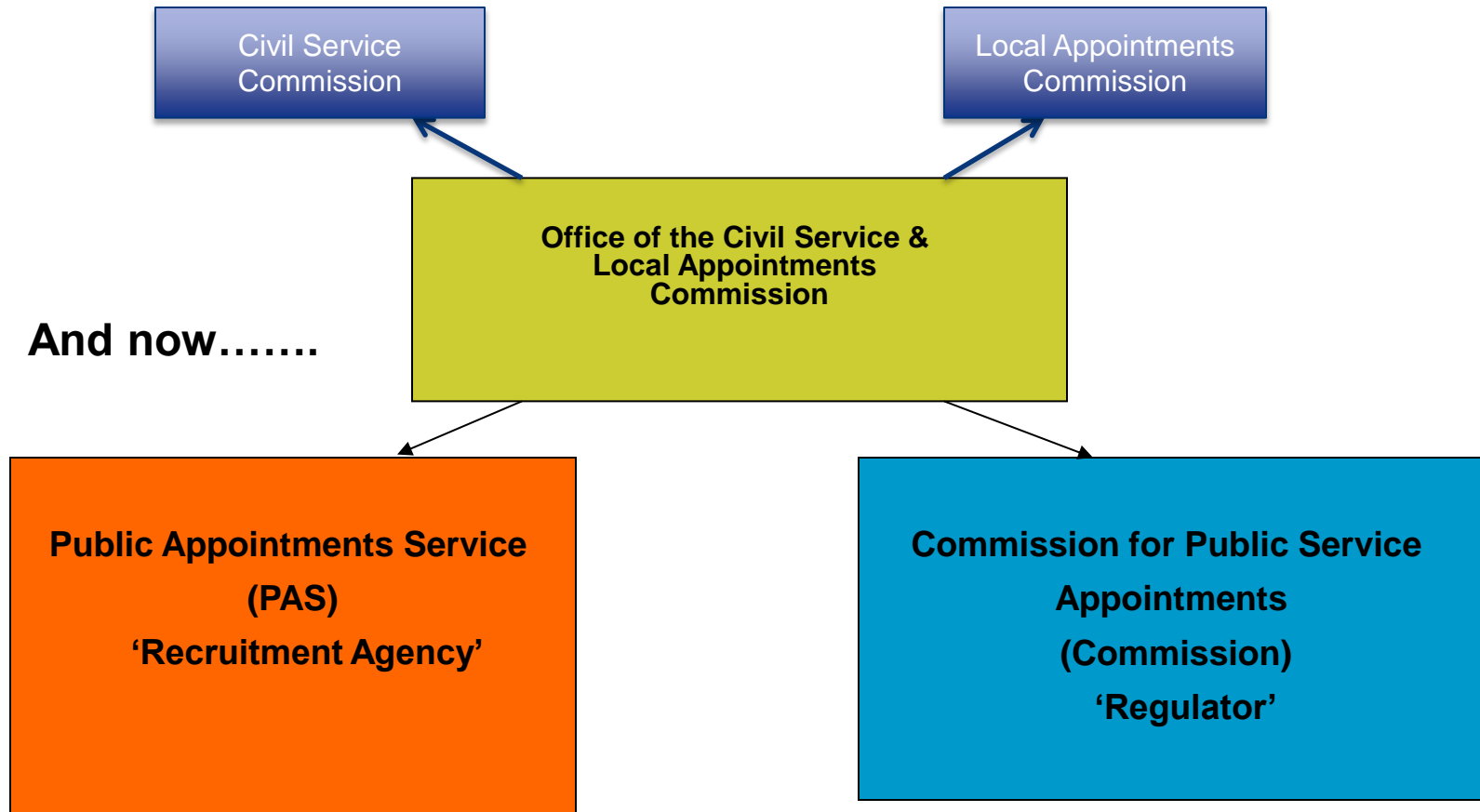
The Public Appointments Service – Brief Overview

- ❖ **Centralised recruitment, assessment and selection body** for the Civil Service, Local Authorities, Health Service, Police Force, Defence Force, Agencies, Semi-state Bodies, and other public sector bodies.
- ❖ **To undertake such other selection and recruitment competitions, including promotions**, for all of the above at the request of the relevant Minister.
- ❖ We are an assessment and recruitment body – working in partnership with our clients, we assign candidates to Government Ministries

Our Services

- ❖ **Assessment & Testing Service**
 - ❖ In-house Test Design & Development
 - ❖ Procuring Tests from External Test publishers
- ❖ **Recruitment & Selection Service**
 - ❖ Design of Interviews and other tools
- ❖ **Training of Assessors**
- ❖ **Advisory and Consultancy**
 - ❖ E.g. Job Analysis
 - ❖ E.g. Role Evaluation & alignments following mergers
 - ❖ E.g. Strategy for introducing competencies to underpin HR systems

History of the Public Appointments Service



New Legislation October 2004

- ❖ CPSA set and uphold standards / award recruitment licenses
- ❖ Clients to 'own' recruitment process
- ❖ Public Appointments Service – Central Agency to provide service and develop as a centre of recruitment / selection expertise
- ❖ Greater flexibility in approach

Our Mission

To be....

“the leading recruitment, assessment and related human resources solutions provider for the public service”.

Commission for Public Service Appointments

- ❖ Our regulatory body – sets out codes of practice under which we operate
- ❖ Principles are
 - ❖ Probity
 - ❖ Appointments made on merit
 - ❖ An appointment process in line with best practice
 - ❖ A fair appointment process applied with consistency
 - ❖ Appointments made in an open, accountable and transparent manner
- ❖ Set out the appeals process for candidates (Section 7 and Section 8) and can be appealed directly if there is a suspected serious breach
- ❖ Carry out audits on individual competitions and thematic audits

The Public Appointments Service – the challenges

- ❖ High volumes of applications for a large number of roles
- ❖ Short-time frames to deliver to our clients
 - ❖ e.g. 1408 vacancies filled for the Clerical Officer
- ❖ Increasing appeals and challenges from candidates
- ❖ Reduced number of staff due to the downturn in the economy
- ❖ Sudden lifting of the moratorium on recruitment
- ❖ Reduced budget (Vote) from the Government – doing more with less

Public Appointments Service Activity 2009 - 2015

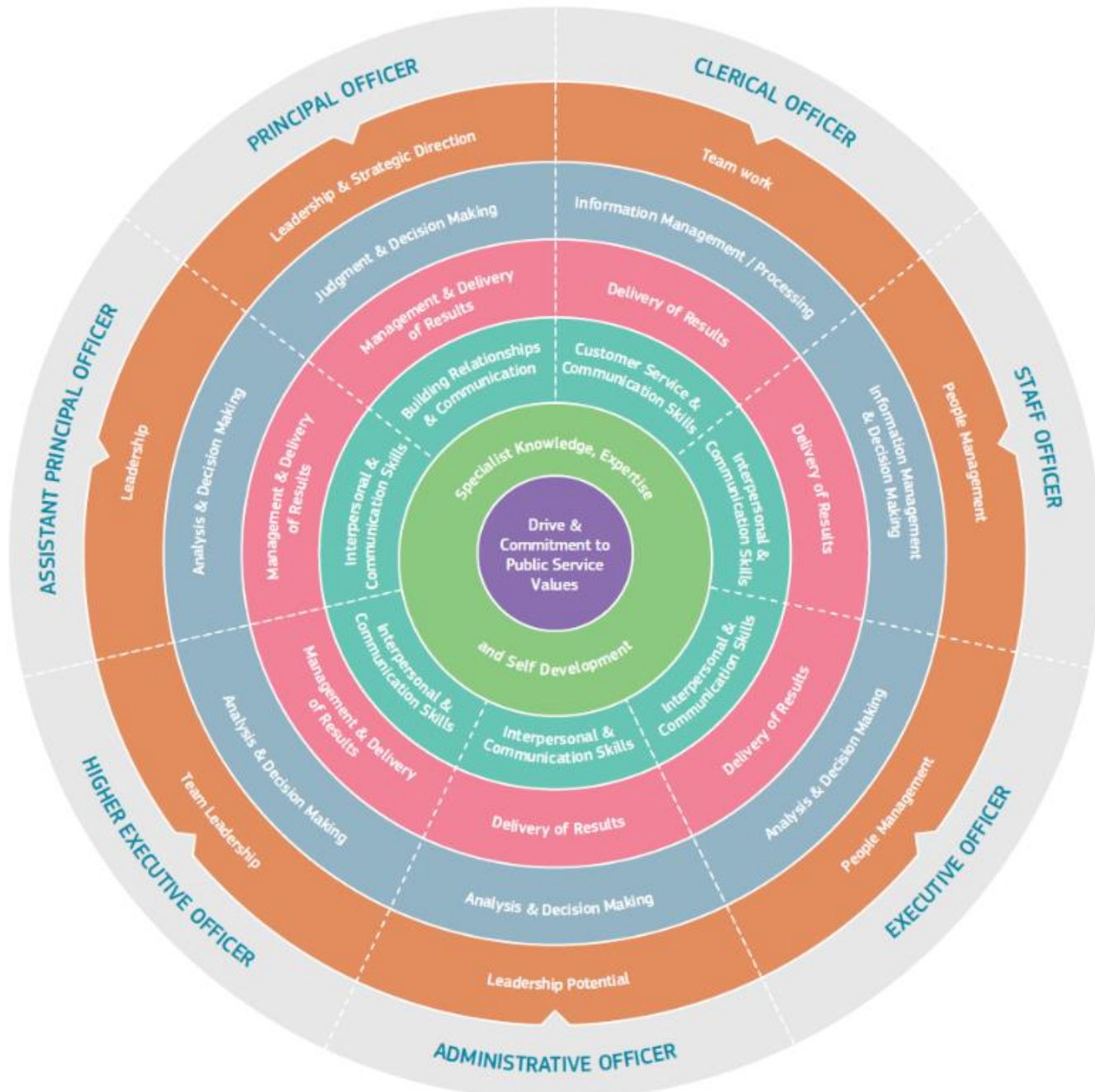
Year	Campaigns	Applications	Appointments	Staff
2009	333	27,178	1,666	109
2010	315	30,038	2,404	102
2011	347	35,080	1,746	89
2012	348	38,814	1,920	86
2013	233	35,400	2,354	87
2014	342	84,734	3,304	89
2015 to June	253	40,211	2,554	113

Competencies

Competencies

- ❖ All the PAS competency models were reviewed
- ❖ Benchmarking took place against other competency models – HSE, LA, Standard, Central Bank & Public Service Reform Report
- ❖ 3 Broad Job Categories were identified
 - Level 1 – Clerical Officer
 - Level 2 – Staff Officer, EO & HEO (AO)
 - Level 3 – (AO) AP, PO & Assistant Secretary
- ❖ Started with Principal Officer

This is a new page which presents information on the recently revised and updated competency frameworks for the range of grades & levels within the Civil Service.



Indicators

- ❖ The majority of the behavioural indicators came from the Job Analysis;
- ❖ Some additional indicators were included:
 - ❖ Customer/Citizen to be at the heart of Services
 - ❖ Commitment to the Public Service standards
 - ❖ Resilience emphasised
 - ❖ Ensuring efficiencies / controls emphasised
 - ❖ Delivery of results / high levels of performance emphasised
 - ❖ Working in new ways – innovate service delivery
 - ❖ Encourage open and constructive discussions
 - ❖ Increased “multi-tasking” – managing large workloads

Specialist knowledge, Expertise & Skills

- ❖ Added as a potentially useful element for the PMDS discussion
- ❖ Includes indicators on:
 - ❖ Understanding your role, objectives and targets
 - ❖ Being able to carry out tasks to a high standard and
 - ❖ Being seen as having expertise / knowledge in your area
 - ❖ Understanding the context in which you work
 - ❖ Focus on Self Development

Large Volume Recruitment

Large Volume Recruitment

- ❖ Competitions for all Administrative Grades in the Civil Service from entry level to senior management
- ❖ Other Technical Civil Service Grades – Trainee Auditor, Statistician, ICT grades
- ❖ Competitions for Health Service – Emergency Medical Controllers,
- ❖ Competitions for Local Authorities – Senior Planners/Engineers, Senior Executive Officers, Firefighters
- ❖ Prison Officer, Nurses, Garda Trainee, Crime and Policing Analysts

Large Volume Recruitment

- ❖ Some sample figures
 - ❖ 2013 Garda Trainee – approximately 25,000 applicants
 - ❖ Clerical Officer 2014 – approximately 28,000 applicants
 - ❖ Temporary Clerical Officer – Approximately 10,500 applicants
 - ❖ Graduate campaigns 2015 – approximately 6,000 applicants
 - ❖ Executive Officer 2015 – approximately 13,000 applicants



Avoid employing unlucky people - throw half of the pile of CVs in the bin without reading them. David Brent



Online Testing

Strategy for online testing

- ❖ Strategic decision in 2012 that all large volume testing would be done on-line using the following model
 - ❖ Online unsupervised testing
 - ❖ Supervised verification testing at Chapter House
 - ❖ Assessment Centre (Interview, work-sample exercises etc)
- ❖ To further this model we have
 - ❖ Expanded our facilities for supervised testing – 2 testing suites that can assess 59 candidates in total at one sitting
 - ❖ Up-skilled staff in relation to computer and online testing

Range of Online Assessment

- ❖ Personality questionnaires in Senior Executive Assessment
- ❖ On-line tests through international test publishers (typically verbal, numerical or inductive reasoning)
- ❖ Bespoke on-line tests in partnership with external providers – e.g. Assessment Questionnaire designed with Creighton Hooper Ltd and Cassin Scott Ltd
- ❖ Assessment Questionnaires
- ❖ E-trays
- ❖ On-line Job Simulations e.g. situational judgment exercises
- ❖ Supervised testing using our own tests (ability, SJT, Questionnaires) in our own testing centre (The SMART Centre)



Site search

Check out our new site gradpublicjobs.ie



Job Search Applicants Advice Centre Who we recruit for Redeployment Employer Services

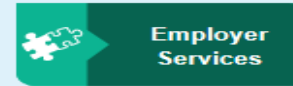
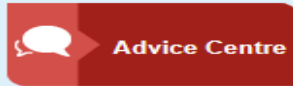
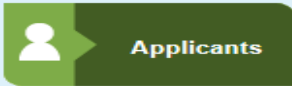
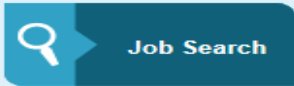
Choose a Job Category Choose a Subcategory Keywords Search

Username Password New User? Register Now! Sign in Forgotten Username / Password?

Featured Jobs

- Solicitor Positions in the Public Service
- Chief Executive Officer, TUSLA - Child and Family Agency
- Garda Trainee 2016





Home > Applicants > My Personal Details

My Personal Details



- ▶ **My Personal Details**
- ▶ Decentralisation Application
- ▶ My Applications
- ▶ My Messages
- ▶ My Job Alerts
- ▶ My Saved Searches

- ▶ You must complete any field that has an asterisk beside it (*).
- ▶ Please note that this information will be retained. You should update this information whenever your details change.

VIEW/UPDATE PERSONAL DETAILS

Candidate Id:	030101503
Title	Ms <input type="text" value="Ms"/>
First Name	Aoife *
Surname	Lyons *
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	17/03/1999
Gender	<input type="radio"/> Male <input checked="" type="radio"/> Female
Personal Public Service (PPS) Number	<input type="text"/>

▶ Your PPS Number must consist of 7 numbers followed by 1 or 2 letters e.g. 111111A.

If you indicate that you have Special Needs, you will need to fill in the special needs section of your profile once you have registered.

I have Special Needs

Contact Details

Address Line 1	Public Appointments Service, Dublin *
Address Line 2	<input type="text"/>

= Mandatory Field.

Candidate ID Number: 030101503

Chief Prosecution SolicitorThe Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Personal Details

Title First Name(s) Surname
Ms Aoife Lyons

ADDRESS - For correspondence purposes:

Address Line 1: # Public Appointments Service, Dublin
Address Line 2:
Address Line 3:
Country: # IRELAND

CONTACT DETAILS:

Daytime Phone Number: # 0877545934 Mobile Number: 0877545934
eMail Address: aoife.lyons29@mail.dcu.ie

LOCATION: (Where you currently live) #

Dublin City or County Outside Dublin but within Ireland Abroad

FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY:

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy): 17 / 03 / 1986 Gender: (Optional) Male Female
PPS Number: (Formerly known as RSI / Insurance Number)

CITIZENSHIP:

Are You A Citizen Of: Ireland EEA/EU (Excl. Ireland) Other - Please Select
Other Country: Please Select

SPECIAL NEEDS:

Do you have special needs? # YES NO



Job Search

Applicants

Advice Centre

Who we recruit for

Redeployment

Employer Services

My Messages



- ▶ My Personal Details
- ▶ Decentralisation Application
- ▶ My Applications
- ▶ **My Messages**
- ▶ My Job Alerts
- ▶ My Saved Searches

- ▶ Your message board will display information sent to you by the Website Administrator. For example, if the closing date of a competition has been extended, you will receive notification through this message board.
- ▶ To delete a message, select the box next to the message and click the delete button at the bottom of the page
- ▶ **Please note:** Candidates should keep a regular check on their message board. The onus is on the candidate to ensure that they keep themselves informed of current and future recruitment campaign information as the Public Appointments Service cannot accept liability should a candidate fail to view messages on their message board. Candidates may need to check their junk or spam email folders for their message alert email. They should ensure that their email account is valid and open to receive important information updates and notifications from publicjobs.ie.

Select	Sort list by Subject	Sort list by Date	Sort list by Read	Attachment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Garda Trainee 2013	30/01/2015 17:34	Read	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Garda Trainee - Stage 2 Band 1	10/03/2014 00:00	Read	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Garda Trainee 2013	12/02/2014 00:00	Read	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Garda Trainee 2013	28/01/2014 00:00	Read	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Garda Trainee 2013	22/01/2014 00:00	Read	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Garda Trainee 2013	21/01/2014 00:00	Read	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Garda Trainee 2013	14/01/2014 00:00	Read	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Garda Trainee 2013	10/01/2014 00:00	Read	N/A

1 2 Next

Delete



Online Assessment Security

- ❖ Verification Tests
- ❖ Test Publishers provide information on the security of the test content and how it will be protected and a detailed summary of network infrastructure that hosts the tests with an emphasis on the measures implemented to ensure no single point of failure
- ❖ Item banking and Item Response Theory
- ❖ PAS and Test Publishers pay security companies to test the security of our site
- ❖ Honesty contract and confidentiality agreements
- ❖ Increased security at assessment centre

Psychometric Tests - important things to consider

- ❖ Reliability and validity
- ❖ Length of time it takes to complete the tests
- ❖ Size of item bank
- ❖ Fairness of each test for different groups of people e.g. age, gender, ethnic group
- ❖ Practice material for candidates in advance of taking the tests

1

Perfect Prediction

- .63
- .60
- *Cognitive Ability Test and Work Sample Test*
- *Work Sample Test*
- .54
- .53
- *Assessment Centres (Criteria Promotion)*
- *Cognitive Ability Tests/ Structured Interview*
- .51
- *Personality Questionnaires*
- .40
- .37
- *Assessment Centres (Criteria – Overall job performance)*
- .35
- *Biodata*
- .26
- .20
- *References*
- .18
- *Unstructured Interviews*
- *Years' Job Experience*
- .02
- 0
- *Graphology*

Chance Prediction

Robertson and Smith (2001)

Example Campaign – Police Officer

High stakes recruitment – A Case Study of the Trainee Police Officer campaign

- ❖ Methodology of the campaign
- ❖ Measures used to ensure the success of the selection process
- ❖ Interesting and unexpected issues

High stakes recruitment – A Case Study of the Trainee Police Officer campaign

- ❖ An Garda Síochána is the National Police Force for the whole country
- ❖ Very high profile organisation
- ❖ Desirable job – “job for life”
- ❖ Parents apply for their children!

Trainee Police Officer Recruitment and Selection Process – the context

- ❖ No Police Officer recruitment had been conducted for 7 years – great media, public and candidate interest
- ❖ The re-launch of Police Officer recruitment was announced by the Minister over 20 times!
- ❖ Requirement for an initial batch of “300” police officer trainees for appointment in 2014 and subsequent appointments in 2015 and 2016
- ❖ Go ahead for the competition was received in the fourth quarter of 2013 and the first batch of successful candidates was forwarded to the client in early June 2014 for them to conduct medicals, fitness test and police vetting
- ❖ First item on the radio and TV news
- ❖ Approximately 25,000 applications received

Trainee Police Officer Recruitment and Selection Process - the context

- ❖ Such large scale online recruitment in Ireland is rare and there was little research to inform the process
- ❖ Testing in the public sector presents its own challenges that would not be an issue in the private sector or in the UK.
- ❖ Very high profile campaign with great reputational risk
- ❖ Informed by Public Appointments Service's previous experience of online testing
 - ❖ Nature of Candidate queries
 - ❖ Technical problems previously encountered
 - ❖ Patterns of test taking by candidates
- ❖ Informed by ITC guidelines
- ❖ Preparation courses

Methodology

5 stage selection process as follows:

Stage 1 – Unsupervised Online tests – verbal and abstract reasoning and bespoke assessment questionnaire

Stage 2 – Unsupervised Online tests – verbal and abstract reasoning (higher level than stage 1)

Stage 3 – Assessment Centre including supervised verification tests, video based written exercise and situational judgment exercise

Stage 4 – Competency Based Interview

Stage 5 – Reference checks, Security clearance, medical and fitness test (This stage carried out by the Gardaí)

Methodology

- ❖ Approximately 25,000 applied.
- ❖ Candidates scheduled to take questionnaire and tests in batches
- ❖ 17,048 completed the questionnaire and the tests and 12,602 passed
- ❖ Candidates scored and ranked at stage 1 – an initial group of 5004 candidates called to stage 2 and subsequent groups called in August 2015
- ❖ Banding system used throughout the process
- ❖ Stage 2 comprised more difficult versions of stage 1 tests and were supplied by a different test publisher
- ❖ To date all candidates who passed stages 1, 2 and 3 have been called to interview

Methodology

- ❖ Candidates were then called to an Assessment Centre (AC) where they sat the verbal and inductive reasoning tests again as well as video-based written exercise and Job Simulation Exercise.
- ❖ All candidates who passed stages 1, 2 and 3 have now all gone for interview – 1035 successful candidates – however quite a large percentage did not meet the standard at the fitness test, or medical and also Garda clearance.

Measures used to ensure success of the selection process

- ❖ Move to unsupervised online tests
- ❖ Bespoke, face valid measures developed in partnership with the Gardaí
- ❖ Bespoke video-based report writing exercise and situational judgment
- ❖ Confidentiality and honesty contracts
- ❖ Load testing of our candidate management system
- ❖ Call centre to deal with generic candidate queries and FAQs
- ❖ High quality candidate support systems
- ❖ Particular attention was paid to crafting of candidate information material
- ❖ Bespoke practice site for the tests

Measures used to ensure success of the selection process

- ❖ Scheduling of candidates sitting the online tests
- ❖ Communication links through Twitter and Facebook and monitoring of the different discussion forums
- ❖ Verification testing
- ❖ Increased security at assessment centre
- ❖ Confidentiality agreement

Interesting and unexpected issues emerged such as

- ❖ Date of birth issues
- ❖ Significant proportion of candidates did not complete all three measures
- ❖ Junk and spam.
- ❖ The weather!
- ❖ Family members getting involved in the process!
- ❖ Duplicate applications

Principal Officer

Online Application Process – Advertised 20th February 2015

1,454 applications

Closing Date 12th March 2015

Online Testing –w/c 23rd March

Bespoke Analysis Exercise & SJT

1,400 completed Tests, 947 passed

Sift

Assessment Centre -- month of May

Supervised
Tests

Strategic Ex.-
Presentation + Written

Interview

Top 334 candidates
invited- 319 attended

4 Interview and 4 Strategic Ex. Boards

Results Issued 17th June – 164 people passed 51.4%

Recruitment and Selection Toolkit

- ❖ Covers all aspects of Recruitment / Selection / Promotion
- ❖ Public Service Focus
- ❖ Reflects latest best practice
- ❖ Packed with practical examples

- ❖ Developed with HR Managers & experts
- ❖ Available in full colour high quality folder or on-line at www.public.jobs.ie
- ❖ Currently being reviewed and updated

Introduction & Overview

Understanding the job and profiling the ideal person

Selection Options

Attracting the Right Person

Application and Shortlisting

The Interview

References, Medicals & Other checks

Appendices

Useful References and Links



SECTION 1

Introduction & Overview

This is the first edition of the Public Appointments Service Recruitment and Selection Toolkit. It has been designed to assist HR personnel and line managers across the Civil and Public Service (s) in recruiting and promoting the best people to serve the current and future needs of their respective Departments / Offices. It provides practical advice on implementing transparent and effective merit based selection systems and includes guidance on interviewing.

This Toolkit has been developed in association with the Personnel Officers Network and with the help of experienced and highly skilled people throughout the public service. It brings together tried and tested public service recruitment values and best practices.

It is, above all, highly practical and provides:

- ▶ advice on how to develop thorough job descriptions and person specifications;
- ▶ guidelines on organising and conducting shortlisting and interviewing processes;
- ▶ cross-checks with the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) Codes of Practice on each of the key activity areas in recruitment and selection;
- ▶ advice on good practice in documenting different aspects of the process;
- ▶ a range of case studies and examples;

Candidate Feedback

Quality & Timeliness	Positive Response Rate	Negative Response Rate
Satisfaction with advance notice in relation to interview	87 - 88%	12 - 13%
Satisfaction with time taken to issue interview result	84 - 89%	11 - 16%
Satisfaction with language used in correspondence	87 - 95%	5 - 13%
Satisfaction with the quality of questioning at interview	78 - 89%	11 - 22%
Satisfaction with fairness of the interview	75 - 90%	10 - 25%
Satisfaction with the quality of feedback provided	47 - 70%	30 - 53%
Satisfaction with the timeliness of feedback	80 - 85%	15 - 20%
Dealings with Staff		
Satisfaction with level and quality of information provided by staff	85 - 90%	10 - 15%
Satisfaction with helpfulness of staff	90 - 93%	7 - 10%

Order of Merit – what does it mean

- ❖ Eliminates the “recruitment” stage at the end of the assessment process;
- ❖ Clients must work closely with us to ensure they are happy with the staff that they are assigned;
- ❖ We use a batching model: bring forward groups from the initial tests when required, means 1st group of candidates can go through the process quite quickly;

Questions?