



Cabinet Office



# Candidate Pack

## Civil Service Commission

### Civil Service Commissioner

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**Closing Date:** 3 February 2026 at 16.00

# Contents

<b>A Message from the First Civil Service Commissioner</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Background to the Organisation and Information about the Role</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Person specification and eligibility criteria</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Time commitment and term of office</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Recruitment process</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>How to apply and submit your application</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Diversity and Equality of Opportunity</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>How we will handle your application</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Conflicts of interest and due diligence</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Complaints</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Use of your personal information</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Annex A – The seven principles of public life</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Annex B – Privacy Notice</b>	<b>14</b>



## A Message from Rt Hon Baroness Gisela Stuart of Edgbaston

Dear Candidate

Why would you want to be a Commissioner? First, you will be strongly committed to the principle of appointment on merit to the Civil Service and, as chair of appointment panels, your priority will be to help get the best people into the top Civil Service jobs.

Secondly, you will be interested in what makes good regulation and how a regulator (which is, in effect, what the Civil Service Commission is) can act as a spur to improving practice and influencing change in Government Departments and agencies.

Thirdly, you will be motivated by the importance of preserving the highest standards of conduct in public life and by playing a role in promoting and upholding the enduring Civil Service values of honesty, integrity, objectivity and impartiality.

We are seeking to appoint four new Commissioners. I would like to encourage applications from across the regions of the United Kingdom and in particular from Scotland, where we are looking to fill the post of Scottish Link Commissioner. We are also looking for a new Commissioner to serve as Chair of our Audit and Risk Committee.

The present Commission is made up of individuals from the public, private and third sectors, and from across the United Kingdom. I have greatly valued the broad range of expertise that the current Commissioners bring to our Board and want to preserve the diversity and depth of expertise in the new appointments we make. Thank you for taking the time to consider contributing to our work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gisela Stuart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Rt Hon Baroness Gisela Stuart of Edgbaston, First Civil Commissioner**

## Background to the Civil Service Commission

## Description of the Civil Service Commission

The Civil Service Commission is a statutory body which exists to provide assurance that Civil Service recruitment is made on merit on the basis of fair and open to all competition; to act as an effective appeal body, and build awareness of, the Civil Service Code; and to provide advice on applications from senior civil servants and special advisers under the Business Appointment Rules (BARs).

The Commission strongly believes that the country is best served by a Civil Service which recruits and develops the best and most diverse talent, free of personal and political patronage, and remains true to its core values of Impartiality, Objectivity, Integrity and Honesty in the Civil Service Code.

Commissioners are appointed through open competition and are independent of the Government and the Civil Service. As senior managers from the private, public and voluntary sectors, Commissioners seek to be firm on principles but pragmatic about process.

## Size and composition of the Board

The Commission currently comprises the First Civil Service Commissioner and 11 Commissioners. Further information can be found on the [Civil Service Commission website](#).

## Information about the role

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by His Majesty the King on the recommendation of the Minister for the Civil Service. They are recruited on merit following a fair and open competition and are independent of the Government. Their different careers and interests, bring experience of public, private and voluntary sectors and a clear and independent perspective. This helps us to support a Civil Service that is effective, politically impartial, and that builds upon its core values to meet the challenges of today and of tomorrow.

# Person specification and eligibility criteria

All candidates must demonstrate, in their CV and supporting letter, how they meet the following criteria, through their knowledge, attributes and skills.

## Essential Criteria

- **Experience:** A strong track record of leadership in identifying, recruiting, and evaluating individuals. This includes building effective processes to ensure that an organisation has the right talent to achieve its goals and meet future capability needs. The ideal candidate should have senior-level experience which includes experience of recruitment across the private, public, or voluntary sectors.
- **Judgement:** Effective decision-making skills with the ability to critically analyse a wide range of information to make clear and objective evidence-based recommendations and decisions to support the delivery of the organisation's objectives.
- **Relationship building:** The ability to build strong stakeholder relationships, including with Ministers and senior government officials and external stakeholders, while demonstrating a commitment to the highest ethical standards and good governance.
- **Communication:** Strong communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to listen, accept challenge and constructively challenge others in discussions with clarity and respect.
- **Collaboration:** The ability to work with vacancy holders to interpret what leadership capability is required for the given context and how to assess that leadership capability.

**In addition, we are seeking a Commissioner to serve as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee who will need to demonstrate as essential:**

- **Financial Expertise:** proven experience in assurance, risk management and working on audit committees.

**We are also recruiting for a Scottish Link Commissioner, who will need to demonstrate as essential:**

- **Devolved experience:** experience of working with, or understanding the challenges facing, the Scottish Government.

## **Assessment process**

During the sift, the Advisory Assessment Panel (AAP) will score each application based on how well candidates meet the essential criteria. Depending on how strong the applications are, the panel will decide on a minimum score. Only candidates who meet or exceed this score will be eligible for an interview.

## **Disability Confident - minimum criteria**

Candidates applying under the Disability Confident scheme will be eligible for an interview if they provide enough evidence that they meet all the essential criteria. From this group, we'll ensure a proportionate number are invited to interview, taking into account the total number of interview slots available.

# Time commitment and term of office

## Remuneration, allowances and abatement

- The time commitment for Board members is **40 days per year** at the lower end, with an **average of 72 days** and at the higher end 91 days, depending on the number of competitions Commissioners want to chair. This includes time spent at Board meetings; Commissioners receive a non-pensionable honorarium of **£400.00 per day** to cover this. The additional time commitment for the Audit and Risk Committee is 22 hours per year with ARC members receiving £1,100 per year for this work. The Chair of ARC would also receive an additional £200 per year.
- Remuneration is taxable under Schedule E of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 (as amended) and subject to Class I National Insurance contributions.
- Reasonable standard travel expenses will be payable.
- The post is not pensionable.

## Appointment and tenure of office

- Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by His Majesty The King on the recommendation of the Minister for the Civil Service.
- Appointments are for a non-renewable term of **5 years**.
- It will be important that a Commissioner's other commitments do not cast any doubt on their ability to act independently and impartially in discharging the role; any potential conflict of interest must be declared and will be discussed at interview (more detail below).

All Commissioners are required to adhere to:

- The Cabinet Office [Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies](#).
- The Seven Principles of Public Life (see [Annex A](#))

## Performance appraisal

Commissioners will be assessed at least once a year against their performance for each year of their appointment, which will be carried out by the First Commissioner as part of the review of all Commissioners.

## Security Clearance

The successful candidate will be required to undertake Counter Terrorist Check (CTC) security vetting checks in line with the Civil Service guidelines. Further information on National Security Vetting can be found on the Gov.uk website [here](#).

# Recruitment process

## Timetable for recruitment

- **Closing date:** 3rd February 2026
- **Shortlisting:** week commencing 16th February 2026
- **Interviews held:** week commencing 2nd March 2026

We will be holding prospective candidate open sessions on the following dates: **15 January 2026 2:00pm and 5:00pm; and 20 January 2026 11:am**. If you are interested in attending these sessions please contact the Cabinet Office Public Appointments Team at [copa.partnerships@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:copa.partnerships@cabinetoffice.gov.uk) to register your interest and please state your preference/s for the dates of the sessions.

It is essential that your statement of suitability gives full but concise information relevant to the appointment, clearly demonstrating how you meet each of the eligibility criteria.

The AAP will consist of:

- **Panel Chair:** Simon Madden, Director of Propriety & Ethics, Cabinet Office
- **Panel Member:** Baroness Stuart, First Civil Service Commissioner
- **Independent Panel Member:** TBC

You will be able to claim reasonable travel expenses incurred travelling to and from the interview (please note you may be asked to justify travelling costs if Cabinet Office considers the claims excessive). Please let **the Cabinet Office Public Appointments Team** know beforehand if you are likely to claim, along with the approximate costs by contacting [coappointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:coappointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk).

As a Disability Confident employer we are committed to ensuring that candidates with disabilities are provided with the adjustments that they require as part of the recruitment process. We are able to facilitate a range of different reasonable adjustments; for example, large print recruitment documents or British Sign Language interpretation at interview.

If you require any reasonable adjustments as part of the recruitment process, please contact the Cabinet Office Public Appointments Team via [coappointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:coappointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk) to discuss your requirements in more detail.

# How to apply and submit your application

In order for us to progress your application please upload your completed application onto your candidate portal on the [Public Appointments website](#). Your application must contain the following documents:

- A **Curriculum Vitae** (maximum two sides of A4) with your education, professional qualifications and full employment history.
- A **supporting statement** (maximum two sides of A4), setting out how you meet the [eligibility criteria](#) – make sure you refer to the contents of this document; please ensure your full name is clearly noted at the top of your letter.

Shortlisted candidates will need to provide contact details, including email addresses, for two referees.

If you have any questions about the appointments process please contact the Cabinet Office Public Appointments Team via [copa.partnerships@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:copa.partnerships@cabinetoffice.gov.uk).

The AAP reserves the right to only consider applications that contain all of the elements listed above, and that arrive before the deadline for applications listed below.

## Ineligibility criteria

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you become bankrupt or make an arrangement with creditors;
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors;
- you are disqualified from acting as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- you have been convicted of a criminal offence, the conviction not being spent for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (c. 53);
- you become subject to a debt relief order or a bankruptcy restrictions order; or
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

# Diversity and Equality of Opportunity

Public Appointees play an important role in public life on the board of public bodies and in statutory offices. For this reason, it is of great importance that these boards reflect the diversity of the UK as a whole. We welcome applications from all candidates regardless of ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender identity.

We ask all applicants to public appointments to complete a diversity monitoring form. This is not provided to the AAP and plays no role in the appointment decision. We hope you will help us by providing this information. This will allow us to see if there are any unfair barriers to becoming a public appointee and whether there are any changes we could make to encourage a more diverse field to apply. Please find the link in the how to apply section below.

## Disability Confident

Disability Confident is a voluntary scheme which replaced the Guaranteed Interview Scheme or Two Ticks Scheme that was widely used in Britain. Disability Confident supports the Government's commitment to halve the employment gap between candidates who have disabilities and those who do not by encouraging employers to think about disability and to take positive action to improve how they attract, recruit and retain workers with disabilities.

As a Disability Confident employer, we are committed to ensuring that candidates with disabilities are provided with the adjustments that they require as part of the recruitment process. If you require any reasonable adjustments, please contact the [Cabinet Office Public Appointments Team](#) to discuss your requirements.

We will also offer an interview to a fair and proportionate number of disabled applicants that meet the minimum criteria for the job - by minimum criteria you must be able to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate relevant skills and experience for each of the selection criteria set out in the [Person Specification](#) section. This does not mean that all candidates who have a disability are entitled to an interview.

The aim of this commitment is to encourage positive action for candidates with disabilities, encouraging them to apply for positions in public life by offering them the assurance that, should they meet the minimum criteria as advertised for the position, they will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their skills, talent and abilities at the interview stage.

It is important to note that if we receive a higher volume of applications that far exceeds the number of those expected then we may need to limit the overall numbers of interviews offered. This will include the number of interviews offered to Disability Confident candidates that meet the minimum criteria for the role.

# How we will handle your application

Appointments are made on merit following a fair and open competition process which mirrors the Governance Code for Public Appointments. The public appointments process can be lengthy. However, we aim to conclude the appointment process within three months of the deadline for applications – this is in accordance with the Governance Code.

Ministers are responsible and accountable to Parliament for the public appointments made within their department. As a result, they are consulted at every stage of the appointments process. To assist them in their decision-making, an AAP is appointed, whose role is to objectively determine which candidates meet the eligibility criteria for the role.

The assessment process for a public appointment is set out below:

## 1. Shortlisting

At the shortlisting meeting, the AAP will assess applications against the eligibility criteria and decide which candidates should be recommended for interview. Ministers will then be consulted on and agree to the final shortlist.

## 2. Shortlist outcome

Once the shortlist has been agreed by Ministers, you will be advised (by email) whether you have been shortlisted. Those shortlisted will then be invited to an interview in London.

## 3. Interviews & selection

The AAP will meet again to interview candidates and determine who is appointable to the role. Interviews are expected to take place in **London** and will last for approximately 45 minutes. The names of all appointable candidates, along with the panel's recommendations and a report detailing the assessment methods and interview outcomes, are provided to Ministers. It is then for Ministers and the Prime Minister to determine merit and make their recommendations to His Majesty The King on who should be appointed. In some circumstances, Ministers may choose not to recommend any candidates and re-run the competition.

## 4. Interview outcome

Once an appointment decision has been made, interviewed candidates will be advised of the outcome of their application.

## 6. Formal Appointment

Successful candidates will be issued with their Terms & Conditions and a letter of appointment upon accepting the position.

## 7. Feedback

Candidates who are unsuccessful at the interview stage will receive feedback from the Cabinet Office Partnerships & Appointments Team. Please note that feedback is only available for interviewed candidates.

## Conflicts of interest and due diligence

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the AAP and provide details of the issue(s) in your application. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media.

As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs, public registers (e.g. Individual Insolvency Register, Removed Trustee Register, Financial Services Prohibited Individual Register and Disqualified Directors Register) or any other publicly available information.

The AAP must satisfy itself that all candidates for appointment can meet the standards set out in the Seven Principles of Public Life and have no outside interests which present a conflict of interest or otherwise call into question their ability to perform the role. Any actual, reasonably perceived or potential conflicts of interest identified during the appointment process and potential mitigations will be explored with the candidate at interview. This information will also be included in the final advice to Ministers at the end of the appointment process.

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the Civil Service Commission, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your application. If you have queries about this and would like to discuss further please contact the [Cabinet Office Public Appointments Team](#). A potential conflict will not preclude you from being shortlisted or appointed. However, arrangements may need to be put in place to manage the real or perceived conflict.

## Complaints

If you are not completely satisfied with the recruitment process, please contact the Cabinet Office Public Appointments Team. They will investigate your complaint and issue you with a response within 10 working days which addresses your concerns and recommends remedial action if required.

If you are not content with this response your complaint can be escalated to a Deputy Director in Cabinet Office and Civil Service Governance Team. They will review your complaint in relation to the recruitment process and issue you with a response within 20 working days.

# Use of your personal information

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail as a result of sending us any personal information. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes.

When you submit personal information to us when making an application, we promise we will:

- only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information;
- ensure you know why we need it;
- protect it and insofar as is possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn't;
- ensure you know what choice you have about giving us information;
- make sure we don't keep it longer than necessary; and
- only use your information for the purposes you have authorised.

We ask that you:

- give us accurate information;
- tell us as soon as possible of any changes; and
- tell us as soon as possible if you notice mistakes in the information we hold about you.

If you apply for a post, the manner in which we share information with the interview panel is described above.

Our data protection policy is in line with the General Data Protection Regulations and there is more detail in [Annex B](#).

If you would like these details to be removed from our records as soon as this recruitment exercise is complete, please inform the [Cabinet Office Public Appointments Team](#). The Privacy Notice for Cabinet Office Public Appointments is at Annex B.

# Annex A – The seven principles of public life

All candidates for public appointments are expected to demonstrate a commitment to, and an understanding of, the value and importance of the principles of public service. The seven principles of public life are:

**Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

**Integrity:** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**Objectivity:** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

**Openness:** Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

**Honesty:** Holders of public office should be truthful.

**Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

# Annex B – Privacy Notice

This notice sets out how we will use your personal data, and your rights. It is made under Articles 13 and/or 14 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

## Purpose

Our purposes for processing your personal data are:

- to recruit for public appointments for the Cabinet Office or one of its sponsored bodies including dealing with applications, selection, appointment, and vetting
- to monitor and promote diversity in appointments, and
- to produce statistics

## The data

We will process the following personal data: your application, including name, contact details, location, employment history, qualifications, CV and other background information relevant to your application; sift and interview assessments; and conflicts of interest and political activity.

Diversity data will also be requested if you make an application via the Public Appointments Website, although you may decline to provide this if you wish. This includes age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, recorded disability, and faith.

We may also process other information gathered by the Cabinet Office as part of due diligence, including information obtained from public sources including social media.

Information relating to your nationality, address, family history and criminal convictions may be required in order to enable you to hold the necessary security clearance for your new role.

## Lawful basis

Our legal basis for receiving and using your information is that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller. In this case that is to ensure that high quality candidates are identified via robust recruitment processes in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointment published pursuant to Article 3(1) of the Public Appointments Order in Council 2016. We also have a public task to monitor and promote diversity under our public sector equality duty.

Where a contract of employment exists, we also process your data on the legal basis that it is necessary for the performance of a contract to which you are a party, and it is necessary in order to take steps at your request prior to entering into a contract.

Sensitive personal data is personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation.

We may process this data to make reasonable adjustments for applicants, and to conduct due diligence checks. Our lawful basis for processing your sensitive personal data is:

- It is necessary for the purposes of performing or exercising our obligations or rights as the controller, or your obligations or rights as the data subject, under employment law, social security law or the law relating to social protection (reasonable adjustments)
- processing is of data concerning ethnicity, religious or philosophical belief, health including disability or sexual orientation, it is necessary for the purposes of identifying or keeping under review the existence or absence of equality of opportunity or treatment between groups of people with a view to enabling such equality to be promoted or maintained (diversity monitoring)
- processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest for the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown, or a government department (diversity monitoring and due diligence)
- It relates to personal data which are manifestly made public by you (due diligence)

## Recipients

Information that you supply to the Cabinet Office as part of your application for a Public Appointment may be shared with members of the AAP for the purposes of sifting applications and conducting interviews. This may include your name, employment history, qualifications, CV and other background information relevant to your application including sift and interview assessments, conflicts of interest, and political activity. This may also include other information gathered by Departments as part of due diligence, including information obtained from public sources.

Diversity and other data will be shared with the Commissioner of Public Appointments (OCPA) for the exercise of their statutory functions. This may include age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, recorded disability, faith and geographical location, principal employment sector, number of government public appointments held, and declarable political activity. Your name will not be included in the information that is collected and shared with OCPA. You can see how OCPA handles personal data shared with it in its [privacy notice](#).

As your personal data will be stored on our IT infrastructure it will also be shared with our data processors who provide email, and document management and storage services.

## Retention

Cabinet Office will store your application and other data if you are successful for the duration of your appointment and for 2 years thereafter.

Cabinet Office will hold diversity data shared with OCPA in identifiable form for five years.

If your application is unsuccessful we will retain your data for one year.

## International transfers

As your personal data will be stored on our IT infrastructure, and shared with our data processors, it may be transferred and stored securely outside the European Union. Where that is the case it will be subject to equivalent legal protection through the use of Model Contract Clauses or the Privacy Shield scheme.

## Your Rights

You have the right to request information about how your personal data are processed, and to request a copy of that personal data.

- You have the right to request that any inaccuracies in your personal data are rectified without delay.
- You have the right to request that any incomplete personal data are completed, including by means of a supplementary statement.
- You have the right to request that your personal data are erased if there is no longer a justification for them to be processed.
- You have the right in certain circumstances (for example, where accuracy is contested) to request that the processing of your personal data is restricted.
- You may have the right to request a copy of any personal data you have provided, and for this to be provided in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable format.
- You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data.

## Complaints

If you consider that your personal data has been misused or mishandled, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner, who is an independent regulator. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF, or 0303 123 1113, or [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk).

Any complaint to the Information Commissioner is without prejudice to your right to seek redress through the courts.

## Contact details

The data controller for your personal data is the Cabinet Office.

In relation to equality and diversity data, the Cabinet Office and the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments are joint data controllers. The contact details for the Cabinet Office are: Cabinet Office, 70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS, or 0207 276 1234, or [publicappointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk).

The contact details for the Cabinet Office's Data Protection Officer (DPO) are: Stephen Jones, DPO, Cabinet Office, 70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS, or [dpo@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:dpo@cabinetoffice.gov.uk).

The Data Protection Officer provides independent advice and monitoring of Cabinet Office's use of personal information.



Cabinet Office

