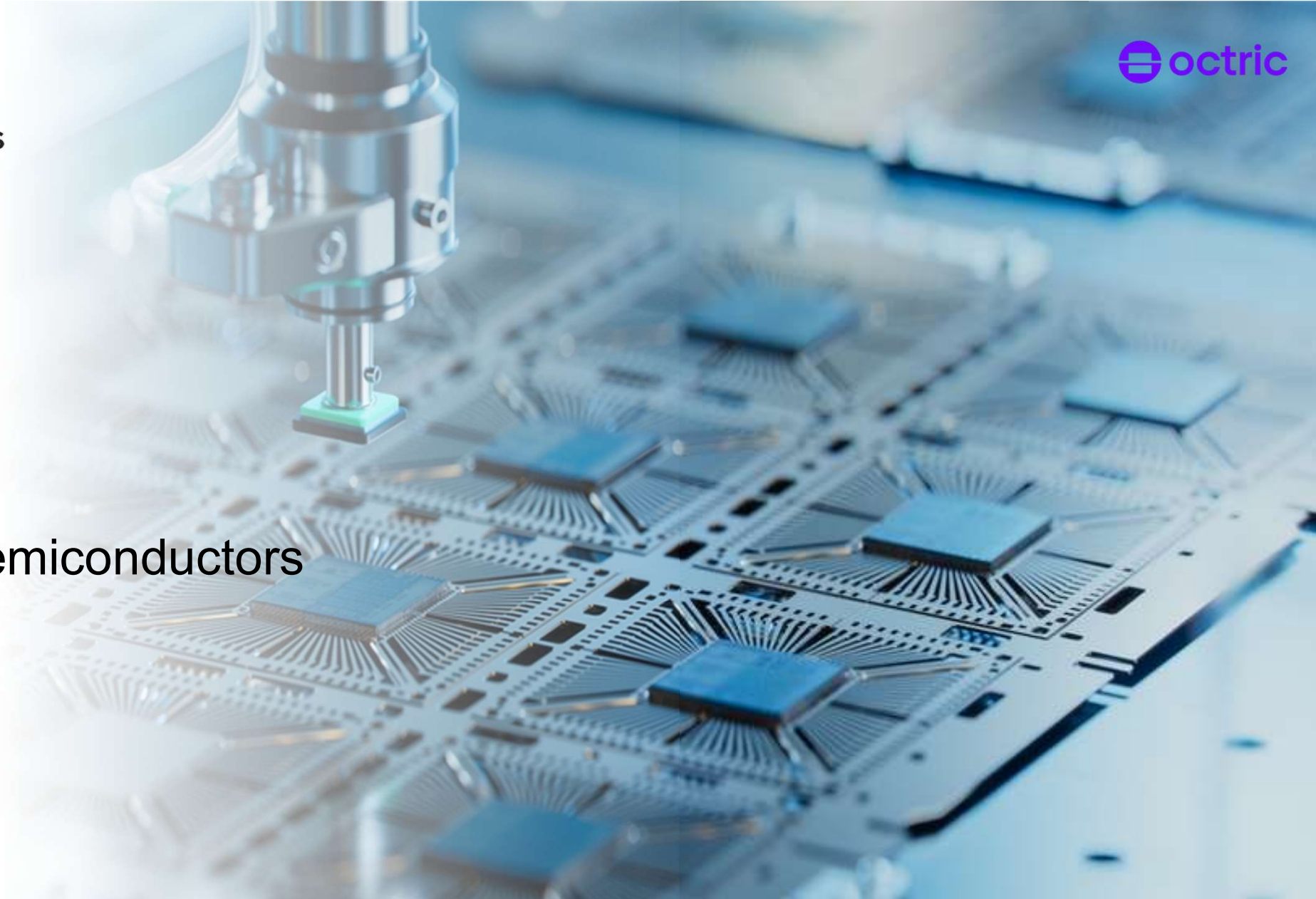




Chair

Octric Semiconductors

Candidate Pack





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Welcome Message



I am pleased to introduce this recruitment pack for the appointment of the Chair of Octric, a private limited company with a vital and growing role in the UK's strategic industrial base. Located in Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, Octric operates from a purpose-built manufacturing facility, equipped to produce state of the art compound semiconductor products. These technologies underpin a broad range of applications across defence, telecommunications, and other critical national capabilities.

Following the acquisition by the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) in September 2024, Octric has entered a new and forward-looking phase. The organisation is now focused on developing the next generation of compound semiconductors, establishing its commercial resilience and building a platform for sustainable growth within a highly competitive global sector. The incoming Chair will be pivotal in shaping and delivering this future.

We are seeking an individual with the rigour, gravitas and strategic authority to guide Octric through its evolution. This role calls for a leader with a track record in turnaround or transformation, experience supporting or scaling SMEs, and the commercial acumen to win new business, particularly by building productive relationships with major Primes and multinational enterprises.

Beyond commercial capability, we are looking for a Chair who can serve as a compelling ambassador for the Board—representing Octric credibly to industry and government. While prior experience in government or national security is not essential, it will be valuable in navigating the complex operating environment in which Octric sits.

Candidates should bring substantial Board level experience, though not necessarily prior Chair experience, and the ability to draw on multisector insight, support diverse perspectives, and uphold high standards of governance. Above all, the successful candidate will help drive growth, resilience, and long-term value for an organisation whose work has both national significance and commercial potential.

Thank you for your interest in leading Octric at this important moment. If you share our ambition for a dynamic, commercially minded organisation advancing the UK's semiconductor capability, we look forward to hearing from you.



Ben White
Government
Sponsor, on
behalf of
Secretary of State
for Defence

Welcome Message



Almost every advanced defence platform across land, air and sea depends on semiconductors, including radar, communications, navigation, electronic warfare, and real-time analysis, guidance and control. Many of these applications require compound semiconductors, distinct from silicon-based semiconductors in their specialised properties well suited to high-performance, high-reliability applications.

Octric stands at the heart of the government's ambition of establishing a sovereign capability for compound semiconductor technology. With an over 30-year history of manufacturing under private ownership across multiple market segments, and successful delivery of 1.5+ billion semiconductor devices, the company was acquired by the MoD in September 2024 to secure the existing supply of compound semiconductors for British military jet platforms. Operating from a secure, 20-hectare site from its base in County Durham with a 10,000m² advanced manufacturing facility, Octric employs highly-skilled engineers, technicians and key support personnel.

In a world marked by fragile supply chains and rapidly evolving defence threats, the MoD has committed to a ten year-plus investment horizon for Octric to ensure that the compound semiconductors enabling critical radar, secure communications and electronic warfare systems now have a sovereign-first sourcing optionality. As a result, through targeted capex and opex investment, Octric is actively developing next-generation compound technologies to meet the MoD's future capability needs. Additionally, Octric is not limited to a defence-only remit, and diversification into adjacent markets also requiring high-performance capability and trusted supply - such as telecommunications, satellite communications and space - is a key goal to build a sustainably profitable, stand-alone business.

For an incoming Chair, this is an incredible opportunity to work in close partnership with a highly experienced and diverse Board to align the ambitions of government and the evolving needs of the MoD, leveraging deep partnerships with defence primes and international allies. The Chair will have a strong platform to build, govern and challenge a skilled leadership team and motivated workforce, while inspiring a culture of innovation, resilience and purpose across the wider defence and technology ecosystem. The company is currently developing its long-term strategic plan, and the incoming Chair will have an opportunity to guide, challenge and contribute to the developing future vision.

In an era where establishing ground-up semiconductor manufacturing capability necessitates multi-billion-pound capital investments, this is a unique opportunity for a motivated and skilled candidate to build on an existing foundation with committed patient capital, to help create a national semiconductor champion.



Chet Babla
CEO Octric

[linkedin.com/in/chetbabla/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/chetbabla/)



About Octric

Octric Semiconductors Ltd (Octric) is a producer of specialist, high performance, reliable compound semiconductors. Based at a single site in Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, Octric operates a purpose-built manufacturing facility and employs over 130 people. Octric is a private limited company, which is wholly owned by the Secretary of State for Defence, and is a public corporation. Formerly owned by Coherent Inc., Octric was acquired by the Ministry of Defence in September 2024 to secure a critical supply chain for UK defence for major military programmes and exports. It is the only secure facility in the UK with the skills and capability to manufacture gallium arsenide (GaAs) semiconductors. The business today is best viewed as a company in an early start-up phase. It is currently developing additional capability, including gallium nitride (GaN), to meet future requirements. While defence remains the core market, the company is also targeting opportunities in other high-reliability applications.

Octric's mission is to deliver innovative compound semiconductor platforms that enable our customers' high-performance and mission-critical applications. Its vision is to be the trusted global leader in compound semiconductor platforms.

About the Board

The board is a fiduciary board which is a fundamental part of MOD's corporate governance of Octric. Internally its role supports the Executive Committee in effectively leading the organisation. It scrutinises performance, provides constructive challenge and advice on strategy, maintains high standards of corporate governance, and ensures that appropriate controls are in place to manage risk.

The Octric Board is comprised of:

- Graham Love (Interim Chair)
- Andy Fairweather (NED)
- Anna Floyer-Lea (NED)
- Brett Holtom (NED)
- Evelyn Dickey (NED)
- Sir Chris Snowden (NED)
- Chet Babla (CEO)

The Role

The Chair of Octric Semiconductors Ltd will provide strategic oversight, leadership, and governance to Octric and is responsible for leading the Board in setting direction, overseeing business performance, upholding corporate governance and maintaining effective relationships with both internal and external stakeholders. The Ministry of Defence is Octric's primary shareholder, and this is a Ministerial appointment.

The Chair's main responsibilities will be:

Board Leadership

- Provide strategic leadership to the Octric Board, ensuring it fulfils its responsibilities as directed by its governance documents.
- Developing the Board: increasing its breadth of skills and overall effectiveness; ensuring its composition reflects the needs of the company and provides for diversity of perspectives and experience; and assessing skills against requirements.
- Pursue the highest standards of corporate governance in accordance with the Government Code of Good Practice for Corporate Governance and the Cabinet Office Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies.
- Set board agendas, direct the frequency and content of meetings, and ensure that members receive timely, high-quality information to support effective decision-making.
- Foster an open and inclusive culture on the Board, promoting constructive debate and the full participation of all members.
- Ensure robust evaluation of the Board's performance, including annual appraisals of individual Board members.

Strategic Direction and Organisational Development

- Provide clear direction and focus for Octric, ensuring the organisation's strategy and priorities align with its strategic objectives as agreed with the shareholder.
- Work in close partnership with the Chief Executive and the Executive Team, balancing appropriate support and challenge to drive business performance and commercial growth.
- Lead and oversee Octric's engagement with key stakeholders to support growth, innovation, and the delivery of organisational objectives.
- Promote a diverse, inclusive, and high-performing culture across Octric, emphasising excellence and collaboration.

Advice and Accountability to the Shareholder

- Provide advice to the departmental sponsor on Octric's strategic direction, risks, performance, and governance.
- Lead on the Board's composition and succession planning, ensuring the Board maintains the right balance of skills and perspectives to meet current future needs.
- Advising MoD on the performance of the Chief Executive and the Board, reinforcing the principles of accountability which apply to organisations within the public sector.
- Escalate to the shareholder material matters where agreement between the Octric Chief Executive and a majority of the Board's Non-Executive Directors cannot be reached.

Person Specification

The Chair will be a respected business leader with strong experience in governing complex commercial organisations, and a proven track record in leading transformations and/or high growth businesses.

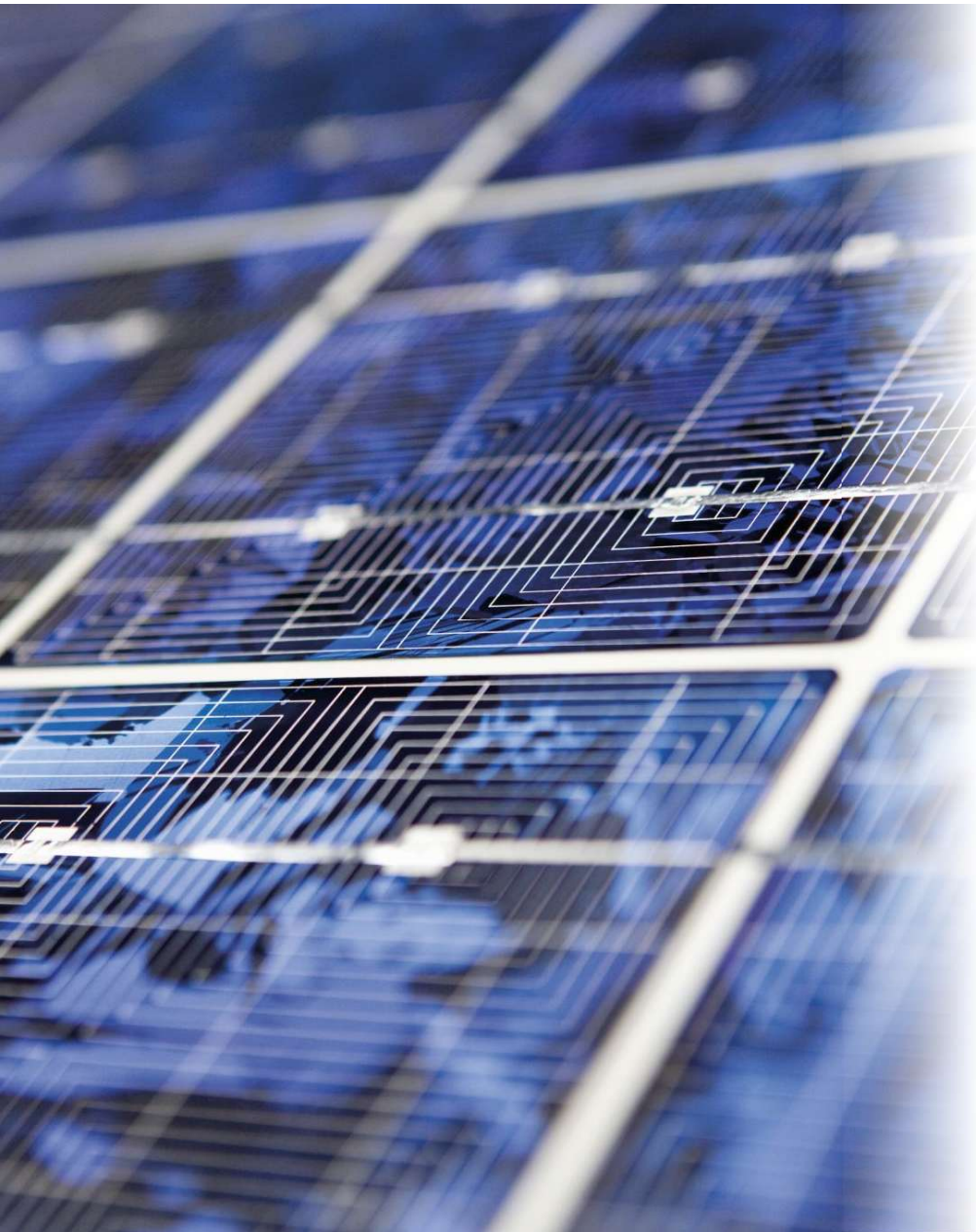
Candidates' suitability for the role will be assessed against criteria below.

Essential Criteria

- **Knowledge:** a clear understanding of the work, priorities and challenges of Octric and the context within which it operates.
- **Experience:** a strong track record of delivery on significant business transformation issues within the private or public sectors.
- **Relationship building:** ability to build strong stakeholder relationships, including with Ministers and Senior Government officials and external stakeholders.
- **Communication:** strong communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to listen, accept challenge and constructively challenge others in discussions with clarity and respect.
- **Judgement:** effective decision-making skills with the ability to critically analyse a wide range of information to make clear and objective evidence-based recommendations to support the delivery of the organisation's objectives.
- **Collaboration:** ability to work closely with the executive board and other key stakeholders, providing support, constructive challenge and assurance as appropriate.
- **Leadership:** the ability to set strategic vision and drive forward Octric and MoD priorities.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to effectively lead the Board and to provide support and constructively challenge the Executive. You should be able to demonstrate excellent communication skills, an empathetic approach, and the ability to listen and work as part of the team. Able to demonstrate experience of fostering a positive and inclusive culture within the workplace and boardroom.
- A strong track record in **relevant senior leadership roles.**

Desirable Criteria

- A record of commercial business leadership at Board level or equivalent, preferably in a turnaround or high growth context, and in comparable sectors to Octric.
- Significant senior executive and non-executive experience, including experience of the public and private sectors and as a chair.
- Experience of technology and R&D intensive sectors and development of effective corporate strategies in these sectors.
- Experience in building effective boards and management teams from "ground up".



Detailed Terms



Time commitment: 72 days per annum. The Board currently meet in full at least ten times per year and operates additionally in Committee (as required) to support Octric's outputs.

Remuneration: £90,000 per annum.

Appointment and tenure of office: Three-year initial term with the potential to be reappointed or extended with the agreement of the shareholder. The appointee may be reappointed at the end of each three-year term, in compliance with the MOD's Public Appointments Policy, up to a maximum of two terms or ten-years. There is no presumption of reappointment. Any reappointment or extension of the appointment will only be made with agreement by the relevant Approving Authority.

Status of appointment: This is a ministerial appointment and not an offer of employment. Such appointments are not normally subject to the provisions of employment law.

Location: Board and Committee meetings will be held monthly, generally in Newton Aycliffe, Co Durham (15 minutes from Darlington train station). Visits or meetings in other locations may be required.

Confidentiality: You will be subject to the provisions of the Official Secrets Act and required to exercise care in the use of official information acquired in the course of official duties, and not to disclose information which is held in confidence.

Eligibility: You must be a sole UK national or dual national. **Security Check (SC) clearance is required.** You will be required to receive and maintain this in order to carry out your role.

How To Apply

Public appointments are made on merit following a fair and open competition process which is conducted in accordance with the Governance Code for Public Appointments. We will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will keep you informed at key stages.

To apply, please submit your application to responses@russellreynolds.com. Please send the following information by **no later than 10:00 on 6 April 2026**:

- **Your CV**, with educational and professional qualifications, and full employment history, including an explanation of any gaps in your employment history.
- A short supporting statement **of no more than two A4 sized pages (1000 words)** explaining why this appointment interests you and how you can evidence your suitability for the role, with direct reference to the criteria in the 'Experience Required' section.
- All applicants are required to create an account on the central [Public Appointments application system](#), and complete the diversity monitoring form on their profile to be considered for this position. RRA will be happy to support you with any questions you have around this process.
- In your supporting statement you should provide contact details for two referees, including their names and email addresses. By providing their details you are giving consent for us to contact them should you be successful at the shortlisting stage.

Please note that references and open-source due diligence checks (including into social media accounts) will be undertaken for all short-listed candidates.

Once the competition closes, the Panel will identify a subset of candidates who best match the criteria for an initial interview with RRA to further explore their skills and experience with reference to all the criteria in the person specification.

The Panel will then have a further meeting to review interview reports on these candidates alongside CVs and statements of suitability in order to select the shortlist. At this stage they may choose to take into account the desirable criteria. Shortlisted candidates will be advised on the outcome as soon as possible thereafter.

If you are shortlisted, you will be asked to attend a panel interview in order to have a more in-depth discussion of your previous experience and professional competence. This could be in relation to any of the criteria set out in the vacancy description, key responsibilities and accountabilities and person specification.

Prior to interview, you may have the opportunity for informal conversations with key personnel and/or a site visit in order to improve your understanding of the organisation. Full details of the assessment process will be made available to shortlisted candidates.

Process



Indicative Dates: Please note that these dates may be subject to change. If you anticipate any difficulty attending, please advise of this in your application.

- **Closing date: 6th April 2026**
- **First round interviews** **w/c 20th April 2026**
- **Final Panel interviews** **w/c 11th May 2026**

Panel

- **Ben White (Panel Chair): Director Industry and Strategy (MOD)**
- **Brett Holtom (HMG Representative): Director, Complex Transactions & Commercial Models (CO)**
- **Wanda Goldwag OBE (Independent Panel Member): Chair of Nuclear Transport Solutions**

Disclosure: As a public appointee, you are required to follow the “Seven Principles of Public Life” set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Annex A) and the Code of conduct for board members of public bodies . The Code forms part of these terms and conditions of appointment. You must ensure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between your public duties and your private interests – financial or otherwise. You must comply with the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies on handling conflicts of interest. As a minimum, these will require you to declare publicly all political activity and any private interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with your public duties. In general, all financial interests should be declared.

Disability Confident Scheme: We are committed to actively encouraging applications from people with disabilities You will have the opportunity to make a reasonable adjustment request or apply under the disability confident scheme before you submit your application.

Complaints: We aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you feel that you have a complaint about the way in which your application has been handled, please contact the Defence Business Service (DBS) Civilian Personnel Public Appointments Team DBSCivPers-ResPublicAppts@mod.gov.uk

Data protection: The Cabinet Office will use your data in line with their privacy policy. The Ministry of Defence Public Appointments Supplementary Privacy Notice can be found at GOV.UK.

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life



The Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles) apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the Civil Service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), and in the health, education, social and care services. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles also apply to all those in other sectors delivering public services. The custodians of the Principles of Public Life are the [Ethics and Integrity Commission](#).

1.1 Selflessness

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

1.2 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.

1.3 Objectivity

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

1.4 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.

1.5 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.

1.6 Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

1.7 Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.