



Human Resources

Resourcing Toolkit

This toolkit aims to guide staff and managers through the stages of the recruitment and selection process. It contains relevant information and links to other useful sources of help.

This is a working document and will be updated periodically in response to feedback and changes in best practice, legislation and policy.

The [HR Resource Team](#) is available to respond to enquiries about this guide, or any matter relating to the recruitment and selection process.

This toolkit has been designed to support all staff through every step of the recruitment and selection process for filling vacant posts. It contains relevant guidance and links to sources of assistance for HR, managers, candidates and staff as they navigate the recruitment process.



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Roles, Responsibilities and Time Frames

Responsibility	Action	Other Information	Action by: Working Days (WD)
Vacancy Holder (Manager/Head of Unit where vacancy arises)	Confirm need to fill vacancy	Head of Unit/ABM to approve	
Vacancy Holder	Consider methods to fill vacancy	Contact HR to check re reserves/compassionate transfer requests	
Vacancy Holder	Complete Advert Template and email to Adverts in-box	Template forms available from the Intranet	
Resource Team	Prepare Advert, open vacancy folder on HR shared drive	Adverts will not be accepted without interview date/location and board members	1 WD
Resource Team	Place advert on Intranet and SG Intranet only (if internal); Internet, Press and CS Vacs Site if external	On day vacancy notice is received	1 WD
Resource Team	Collate applications, confirm receipt	Applications will be electronically stored	1 WD from closing date
Resource Team	Log all applicants on Excel Spreadsheet		
Selection Board/Resource Team	Sift applications	Resource Team will sift for Band B recruitment	5 WDs from closing date
Resource Team	Notify successful/unsuccessful candidates		2 WDs from completion of sift
Resource Team	Invite candidates to interview		3 WDs
Resource Team	Prepare timetables, and all related forms for interview boards and email to board members	If required, Resource Team will also provide assistance with interview questions	5 WDs
Selection Board	Conduct interviews		
Selection Board	Notify Resource Team of results		2 WDs from last interview
Resource Team	Notify candidates (by email)	Successful candidates asked to confirm acceptance of offer within 7 days.	5 WDs from receipt of results
Selection Board	Chairperson to pass written feedback to HR Resource Team		10 WDs from last interview
Resource Team	Resource Team forwards written feedback to candidates		2 WDs from receipt



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Resource Team	Carry out pre-recruitment checks	For external appointments - Details held on excel spreadsheet on shared drive	Requests issued by 2 WDs
Resource Team	Notify office when all checks are complete	By email/telephone	2 WDs
Vacancy Holder	Arrange start date with new entrant and notify Resource Team		5 WDs from notification of complete checks
Vacancy Holder	Provide HR Advisor with Change Form	For internal appointments – Operations Teams For external appointments – Resource Team	
Resource Team	Prepare contract and issue to new entrant. Arrange system log in		5 WDs from notification of start date
Resource Team	Pass personnel file to HR advisor		

Contents

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2. Options to Fill a Vacancy
3. Creating a Job Profile
4. Advertising the Vacancy
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6. Vacancy Filling: General Principles for each Grade/Level
7. Communicating the Decision
8. Posting the Candidate
9. Recruitment Audit Process



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1. Establishing the Vacancy

Every vacancy provides an opportunity to review the existing staffing structure. The starting point is to confirm the need to fill the vacancy. This should be reviewed with the Head of Unit/ABM to gain approval. Questions to consider include:

- Is the post required at all?
- Can the duties of the post be undertaken by someone else or another work area?
- Should the post be part-time or full time?
- Is the post permanent or temporary? Could the post be offered as:
 - A development opportunity – there may be staff within the Area, in the grade who would benefit from performing the role on a temporary basis to enhance their skills base or prepare them for promotion at a later date.
 - [Detached duty](#) – staff from another geographical area may be available to carry out the work.
 - Secondment – the service may benefit from offering the post to staff in other government departments or organisations.
 - [Temporary Promotion](#) – the post could be filled as a temporary promotion opportunity, either for a member of staff within the area or advertised service wide
- How many potential candidates are there? (this may impact on the decision to advertise internally or externally)
- How many potential candidates may there be?
- Is there sufficient budget available currently and in the future?
- If the post is a promoted post, are reserve candidates available?
- Should the post be filled under the compassionate transfer policy (link to compassionate transfer policy)?

If this is a new position or an existing post where the requirements have changed significantly, details of the post should be submitted to the HR Resource Team in order for them to assess whether the post requires to be evaluated using JEGS criteria.

Once approval is given to fill the vacancy, various options for filling the vacancy should be considered.

Contact the [HR Resource team](#) for support at any stage of the recruitment process.



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2. Options for filling a vacancy

In most cases, posts will be advertised enabling existing staff or external applicants an opportunity to apply for positions within COPFS. However, there may be some situations where a managed move is necessary in order to meet particular needs of the business, for example, posts which may be or have been historically difficult to fill.

2.1 Temporary Options

<p>Temporary Level Transfer</p>	<p>ABMs may move staff of the same grade on a temporary basis for career development purposes. Such a move should not normally last for more than 8 weeks.</p>
<p>Temporary Promotion or Deputising</p>	<p>Where it has been decided that a vacant post should be filled temporarily, but for less than 3 months, the vacancy holder should consider offering the post on a Deputising basis; or where the post is available for 3 months or more, Temporary Promotion may be considered up to a maximum period of 12 months. Refer to the Deputising/Temporary Promotion Policy for further guidance.</p>
<p>Fixed Term Appointments</p>	<p>Fixed term appointments should only be used where the work to be undertaken is time specific, for example to work on a specific project or to cover for long term leave of other staff, such as secondments or maternity leave.</p> <p>Fixed Term appointments, with fair and open competition</p> <p>If there is a prospect of permanency the advert should be headed "Fixed Term Appointment with a Possibility of Permanency". The maximum period of employment under this type of contract is 4 years, including any agency, or previous fixed term contracts held with COPFS. The contract can only be extended a maximum of 4 times during this period. Fixed term employees must be given specific start and end dates.</p> <p>Staff employed under this contract can apply for vacancies advertised internally or be confirmed as permanent employees during the time of their Fixed term Appointment without making a further application.</p> <p>Fixed Term appointment, without fair and open competition</p> <p>This type of Fixed Term Appointment should only be used where the work to be undertaken is time specific, for example to work on a specific project which has a completion date within a 50 week period.</p> <p>The maximum period of employment under a Fixed Term appointment (without Fair and Open Competition) is 50 weeks. This cannot be extended more than 4 times during the 50 week period. Fixed term employees must be given specific start and end dates.</p>



	Individuals employed on this type of contract are not eligible to apply for internal vacancies (unless they were named as a reserve from a fair and open recruitment campaign, and the reserve list remains current). Where an individual is still employed after 6 months a review should be undertaken by the Area Business Manager. The review should determine if work being performed by the individual will still require to be covered after the 50 week period. If so, consideration should be given to another option to fill the post on a longer term.
Agency Workers Please note that this option is suspended at present	<p>Agency workers should not be used to meet a long term staffing requirement, but may be engaged to meet short term needs (no longer than 2 months). Basic Disclosure certificates are required and agency workers should not be asked to work on sensitive casework.</p> <p>Agency workers should not be given any impression before their assignment ends that they will be re-engaged at a later date.</p> <p>When engaging an agency worker is the only practical solution to filling a post, the Central Government contract with Pertemps must be used.</p>
Detached Duty	For longer term temporary transfers – please see the Detached Duty Policy for full details.

2.2 Filling a Vacancy Permanently

Where the vacancy holder has identified that a permanent vacancy needs to be filled the steps are as follows:

Step 1

Contact the Resource Team to check whether there are any suitable candidates who need to be considered for [compassionate transfer](#) prior to open advertisement.

Step 2

Check whether there are any reserves from previous recruitment campaigns. [HR Resource Team](#) will provide this information.

Step 3

Complete the job advert template and email to the Resource Team (Recruitment@copfs.gov.uk)

3. Creating a Job Profile

The Job Profile combines the Job Description (the duties and specific outcomes) and the Person Specification (the key competencies required and any additional essential or desirable criteria). This information is detailed in the Job Advert Template. Dates for sift and interview are required on the form. The HR Resource Team will plan activities using the dates provided.



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3.1 Job Advert Template

Key competencies for the post must be included on the job advert template. The competencies can be found in the [Competency Framework](#). Key competencies should be identified in the advert and tested throughout the selection process. It is important to be clear about what is expected of the post holder; identify main activities and results; nature of contacts, relationships and communications that the post holder will have with people inside and outside the service.

3.2 Essential criteria

Essential criteria are those which the post holder must hold to be able to perform the job effectively. Candidates who do not satisfy the essential criteria should be removed at the sift.

Skills and knowledge that can be learned within a reasonable time should not normally be considered to be essential criteria e.g. knowledge of Microsoft office, FOS, PROMIS, etc. However, these can be included for temporary posts where the candidate is expected to become effective in the role at an earlier stage.

3.3 Desirable criteria

Desirable criteria are those that may enable the post holder to perform better or require a shorter familiarisation period. Any criteria specified should be justified and specific.

Essential or desirable criteria may fall into one of the following categories:

- Previous experience and skills that are required of the applicant should be detailed. Skills required should be drawn from the competency framework. Specifying a minimum length of experience may be discriminatory and should not normally be used: quality of experience should be used instead. Where skills can be learnt care should be taken to not to restrict the field by insisting applicants have the skills already.
- Qualifications should not normally be specified for posts at Band D and below. For posts at Band E and above, qualifications may be specified if they are appropriate for the post and consistent with the band or range of the post. Specifying qualifications as essential or desirable is potentially discriminatory and may restrict the applicant field.

The content of the job profile must be non discriminatory – further details can be found in the [Board Member's Guide](#) and [Disability Rights Commission's website](#)

3.4 Notes for External Applicants

The HR Resourcing Team have prepared a template 'Note for External Applicants' which gives details of benefits for staff including pension information and salary details. Managers may be asked to provide job specific information with this template each time they advertise.



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4. Advertising Vacancies

COPFS appoints successful candidates on the basis of merit through 'fair and open' competition as outlined by the Civil Service Recruitment Commissioners [Recruitment Principles](#). These state that: "job opportunities must be advertised publicly and potential candidates given reasonable access to information about the job and its requirements, and about the selection process". For externally advertised posts this will usually mean advertising in newspapers or job centres, or on the Civil Service, departmental and other websites.

The HR Resource Team is responsible for placing all job adverts, internal and external – except for those posts which are not advertised with fair and open competition. Arrangements are in place through our Central Government contract with TMP for both print and electronic media to be utilised as appropriate.

4.1 Fixed Term Posts through fair and open competition

If there is a prospect of permanency the advert will be headed "Fixed Term Appointment with a Possibility of Permanency". This is because staff employed under this contract can apply for vacancies advertised internally or be confirmed as permanent employees during the time of their Fixed term Appointment without making a further application.

4.2 Fixed Term Posts without fair and open competition

Where fixed term staff are urgently required to fill a vacancy, the vacancy holder may fill the post *without* advertising through fair and open competition. However, staff recruited in this way are ineligible to apply for permanent posts unless the post applied for is advertised through a fair and open external recruitment process.

Areas/CO Units will retain responsibility for the recruitment of Fixed Term Staff (without fair and open competition) on the maximum 50 week contract. Fixed term positions would normally only be offered at entry level, band B (non-legal), Band E (legal). Temporary posts above this level should only be advertised on this basis after attempts have been made to fill them internally on deputising, temporary promotion, secondment or detached duty.

4.3 Permanent Posts

As a minimum, posts must be advertised:

- on the Vacancy page of COPFS Intranet site,
- highlighted in the Staff Notice
- offered to all Common Citizenship agencies via the Scottish Government Vacancy Board. As a member of the Common Citizenship provision we are obliged to offer our posts to all members. [Guidance on Common Citizenship](#) is available from the Intranet.

Options available to advertise vacancies include:

Level transfer only:

- Internal advert, including Common Citizenship partners
- Other Government Departments via Civil Service Gateway

As a Promotion Opportunity:



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- Internal advert, including Common Citizenship partners
- Other Government Departments via Civil Service Gateway

Full fair and open competition:

- Advertised externally and publicly in newspapers, job centre or online or a mix of these methods.

Any of the above options can be used to fill vacancies, but the preferred approach is to try and fill the vacancy internally in the first instance.

- Initially the vacancy will be advertised as a level transfer opportunity on the COPFS Intranet and Common Citizenship site for a period of **one week** to give those staff looking to transfer the opportunity to apply prior to offering the post as a promotion opportunity.
- Candidates applying on level transfer should be considered in the first instance.
- If there are no applications on level transfer, the post should immediately be re-advertised on promotion on the COPFS Intranet, and Common Citizenship site with a **two week** closing date.
- Band B recruitment will be advertised as a level transfer opportunity on the COPFS Intranet and Common Citizenship site for a period of **one week** prior to advertising the vacancies externally.

If there are concerns about the number or quality of potential internal candidates the post should be advertised externally. Examples where this might be appropriate include where a post is specialised and a limited number of people with relevant skills apply, or where a post is historically difficult to fill. In these instances the vacancy holder should discuss the most suitable advertising options with the HR Resource Team.



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5. The Selection Process – an Overview

5.1 The Sift

Applications submitted for each vacancy should be sifted to assess candidates' suitability to carry out the role. This involves considering and scoring the content of each application form against criteria/key competencies in order to identify the best candidates, and remove any unsuitable or poor applications. An overall pass score should be pre-agreed between the Chair and the other panel member(s).

The sift and selection interview may be undertaken by different panel members, but it is desirable that at least one member of the selection panel is involved in both. The Resource Team will conduct the sift for Band B recruitment.

5.1.1 Setting Sift Criteria

Sift criteria should be determined by the vacancy holder at the outset of the recruitment process in order that candidates can detail their suitability in relation to both the key competencies detailed in the advert and any other essential skills, qualifications or experience that are deemed essential or desirable for the post.

It is important to consider carefully whether particular requirements may discriminate unfairly. For example, requirements may be held by a tribunal to be discriminatory if a considerably smaller proportion of one sex or ethnic group than others can comply with them, or if they are more difficult in practice for a minority group to comply with and cannot be justified by reference to the needs of the work.

Arbitrary distinctions between similarly qualified candidates made simply to arrive at the desired numbers for interviews are unfair and may be discriminatory. For example, if the decision taken prior to the sift was to interview 50 candidates and 52 candidates reach the agreed sift score, all 52 candidates should be interviewed.

A number of complaints to Employment Tribunals have challenged sift criteria e.g. where too much emphasis has been placed on a single criterion such as the standard of the completion of the application form. If correct or full completion of the application form is a criterion, it should not be the sole or main criterion. Application forms which are badly or incorrectly completed should not be returned to applicants to be amended, only to be sifted out later.

At least one member of the sift panel should have received competency based selection training.

5.1.2 Eligibility for Employment Criteria

The first stage of the sift process is checking whether applicants are eligible for appointment. The HR Resource Team will check applications submitted to ensure they meet COPFS' eligibility for employment criteria:

- COPFS is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) and will not usually accept applications from external candidates who have previous convictions relating to violence, dishonesty or drugs. Any queries regarding a candidate's suitability in reference to this should be directed to the HR Resource Team.
- COPFS must adhere to strict Civil Service Nationality rules – further details can be found on the [Cabinet Office](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk) website



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Applicants who do not meet the eligibility for employment criteria will be sifted out by the HR Resource Team before competencies are scored.

5.1.3 Scoring Method

Examples provided on the Application Form must be relevant to a key competency and drawn from personal experiences. Candidates can access the [COPFS Competency Framework](#) and [Candidates Guide to Competency Based Selection](#), so that they are clear about what is required. A textbook style answer is not a candidate's own experience and does not demonstrate competence. The example provided must demonstrate behaviours (descriptors) relevant to the particular competency.

The same 3 point scale is used to score applications at the sift stage and candidates at the interview stage.

Point	Evidence
3	The candidate provided evidence that demonstrated they exceed the level of competence required.
2	The candidate provided evidence that demonstrated they fully meet the level of competence required.
1	The candidate provided evidence that demonstrated they partially meet the level of competence required but there are a few minor gaps that can be investigated at interview or developed on the job.
0	The candidate failed to demonstrate that they meet the level of competence required.

Applicants who score zero in any of the competences or essential skills/experience/qualifications must not be selected for interview or appointment.

In order to pass the sift and pass the interview candidates will usually be required a score of at least '2' in all essential competencies, although a score of '1' for a single essential competency should not rule a candidate out if scores are high for all other competencies.

5.1.4 Sifting Level Transfer Applicants

It is expected that candidates who apply on level transfer will usually be invited to interview as they should be able to meet the key competencies for the vacancy. However, the sift panel must still ensure that the applicant meets the essential criteria for the post; for example if a particular academic qualification is an essential criterion, any applicant without this qualification should be sifted out even if they are a level transfer candidate.

5.1.5 Informing Applicants of Sift Results

Applicants will be informed of the sift decision within 2 working days of the sift taking place. Applicants successful at the sift will be informed at the same time wherever possible and their interview date, time and location will be communicated by letter (normally emailed).



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5.1.6 Guaranteed Interview Scheme

As part of our commitment to equality of opportunity, COPFS guarantees an interview to any candidate who has declared a disability, as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act, provided that they meet the minimum criteria for a post as set out in the job advert.

This is referred to as the ["two ticks"](#) scheme. For the purposes of the scheme, the minimum criteria to qualify for interview will be a score of '1' or above in each of the key competencies as described in the advert.

5.1.7 Sift Forms and Guidance

The Resource Team can provide the sift form template with the competencies detailed. Blank forms are available from the Intranet. Applications are scored on the evidence provided against each competency and the essential/desirable criteria. At least one member of the selection panel should be trained in competency based selection.

Sift forms and guidance are available from the [Intranet](#)

5.2 The Interview and Other Selection Methods

5.2.1 The Selection Panel

Board members (to make up the selection panel) should be identified at the advertising stage on the Job Vacancy Template/Vacancy Form by the vacancy holder (the HR Resource Team can help identify suitable panel members). The Selection Panel is responsible for selecting the successful candidate(s).

There must be a minimum of two members on any interview panel. At least one panel member should have undergone competency based recruitment training - [Learning and Development Division](#) organise courses on a regular basis. The selection panel should have a gender balance wherever possible and be aware of the COPFS policies on equality and diversity.

5.2.2 Interview Questions

Competency Based Selection is based on the underlying principle that past behaviours are the best predictor of future behaviour. If a candidate can demonstrate how they have faced challenges and achieved success with similar issues in the past, they will be able to apply these to the challenges of the new job in the future.

All questions for candidates must be designed to test suitability based on the requirements of the role and the competencies associated with the vacancy. The candidates should then provide specific examples to demonstrate how they have met the competencies required.

Questions should be relevant and avoid discrimination. The Civil Service and COPFS specifically prohibits discrimination against staff on any of the following grounds: sex (including those who have had, are having, or are going to have gender reassignment) marital or civil partnership status, age, race, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, disability or religion/belief.



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5.2.3 Further Assessment of Suitability

The panel may decide in advance of the interviews that they require further evidence to assess candidates for specialist or senior positions in the Service. Further assessment may include presentation on a relevant topic at interview or the submission of a piece of written work prior to the interview.

The Chair of the panel should inform the HR Resource Team of any further assessment and full details in order that they can instruct candidates properly. A separate rating form is available for these circumstances and includes guidance on scoring of presentations/written work.

5.2.4 Assessment Centres

In addition to a competency based interview, candidates for senior management posts may also be invited to an assessment centre.

Assessment centres will be post specific, and designed and run by assessment centre providers. They are designed to assess management and post specific skills and may include any of the following:

- Personality style and values questionnaires
- Ability reasoning tests
- Managerial judgement tests
- Case studies
- Role play exercises
- Group exercises

Candidates invited to assessment centres will be given 5 working days notice wherever possible. In some cases assessment centres and interviews will be held on the same day. Where this is not the case, the assessment centre will take place before the interviews. Feedback from the assessment centre will be offered to candidates by our assessment centre providers. This may be on the day of the assessment centre, or soon after depending how long it takes to compile the reports. The type of feedback is dependant on the assessment centre, for example where candidates undergo personality questionnaires it is necessary to book a psychologist to provide feedback

5.2.5 Making the Decision

The appointment should be based on all the evidence presented to the panel: job profile, performance at interview (and assessment centre results, if appropriate). Performance is scored against the competencies required for the role. Guidance for Board members is available from the [Intranet](#)

The Chairperson is responsible for completion of the [Candidate Rating Form](#) for each candidate and the [Recruitment Board Report](#). Where there is no consensus on scores or ranking, the Chairperson will make a final decision on the outcome of the selection process. Further [guidance for board members](#) is available from the Intranet.

The Chairperson is responsible for returning all Job Vacancy forms, Candidate Rating forms and Recruitment Report to the HR Resource Team.

The Candidate Rating Form will be emailed to candidates so it is important to give as much helpful information as possible.



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6. Vacancy Filling: General Principles for Each Grade/Level

COPFS recruits for a wide range of grades and jobs each year. Different recruitment methods are used for different grades in order that the most appropriate selection method is used for appointments to the Service.

6.1 Vacancies at Band B Level

The HR Resource team will conduct the administrative processes for recruitment of staff at Band B (Permanent and Fixed Term with Fair and Open Competition), including:

- Advertise post for level transfer (internally and to Common Citizenship partners). Closing date will be 5 working days from publish date.
- If no applications are submitted for level transfer the post will be advertised externally. A 2 week closing date will be set.
- Issuing application pack to candidates
- Recording applications received
- Communication to candidates (at all stages of the process)
- Sift/Shortlist of applications
- Preparation of interview board paperwork
- Provision of interview board forms
- Sending Chairperson's written feedback to candidates
- Issuing result letters
- Carrying out pre-recruitment checks for successful candidates
- Recording reserve candidate details

6.2 Vacancies at Band C, D, E, F and G (non legal grades)

The recruitment process for non-legal grades at Bands C-G is as follows:

- Advertise post for level transfer (internally and to Common Citizenship partners). Closing date will be 5 working days from publish date.
- Consider level transfer applicants. Where level transfer applicants appear to meet the essential criteria from their application form, a selection interview should be conducted. The selection panel should carry out a formal, competency based interview testing level transfer applicants against the key competencies for the role, using the Candidate Rating Form to score performance. Where more than one candidate meets the essential criteria at interview, desirable criteria can be considered in order to select the most suitable candidate.
- If no applications are submitted for level transfer the post will be advertised inviting candidates seeking promotion. A 2 week closing date will be set.
- If no applications are submitted for promotion, the post will be advertised externally.
- The selection process will include:
 - Sift of applications, and then
 - Selection interview

Promotion to non legal grades above Band E will initially be offered on level transfer on the same advertisement terms as described above. When offered on promotion, candidates may be invited to attend an assessment centre (see section 5 for more details).



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6.3 Trainee Solicitors

COPFS is committed to providing rewarding legal careers. Therefore, where resources permit and a business case supports it, COPFS will offer a number of traineeships to qualified graduates. Arrangements for recruitment will differ from year to year.

6.4 Procurator Fiscal Depute (PFD) Vacancies

PFD selections will normally be held once a year, depending on operational requirements. Vacancies may be advertised internally and externally. All candidates, including existing PFDs (recruited through fair and open competition) seeking transfers to other Areas/units, must complete and submit an application form. Individual preferences will be taken into account but a corporate view will be taken in relation to allocating candidates to vacant posts. PFDs applying on level transfer may require to be interviewed if there is competition for a particular post. External candidates will compete for remaining vacant posts.

6.5 Senior Procurator Fiscal Depute (SPFD) Vacancies

The Resource Team will write out to ABMs/Heads of Unit (normally on a quarterly basis) asking them to declare any SPFD vacancies prior to publication of the internal advert, which will also be open to members of Common Citizenship.

SPFDs applying on level transfer will be considered in the first instance, and may be invited to attend an interview where there is more than one applicant for an individual post. Any posts not filled by level transfer will be offered on promotion and a selection process will take place. Individual preferences will be taken into account, but a corporate view will be taken on how to allocate successful candidates to vacant posts.

6.6 Principal Depute Vacancies

Each year an Assessment Centre will be held to consider the suitability of candidates interested in the Principal Depute grade. Applications will be requested from candidates wishing to take part in the Assessment Centre, which may be sifted depending on the number of applications.

Success at the Assessment Centre will entitle candidates to apply for any specific vacancies that arise in the 12 months following the Assessment Centre. Principal Deputes applying on level transfer will be considered in the first instance, and may be invited to attend an interview where there is more than one applicant for an individual post. Individual preferences will be taken into account, but a corporate view will be taken on how to allocate successful candidates to vacant posts. Candidates already in the Principal Depute grade will not be required to attend the Assessment Centre.

The Assessment Centre will be designed to identify and evaluate leadership skills and tests may include:

- Personality style and values questionnaires
- Abstract reasoning tests
- Case studies
- Role play exercises
- Presentation skills



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After the assessment centre, feedback will be provided to candidates on their performance. The Selection Board will be given full reports with recommendations.

Candidates unsuccessful at sift/assessment centre will be given individual feedback to inform their own individual development plans.

6.7 Band G (Legal) Vacancies

The recruitment process for Band G (Legal) Vacancies will be advertised as and when required and will follow the same format as non legal grades (see section 6.2 above).

7. Communicating the Decision

Applicants will normally be informed of board results within 7 working days of the last interview, but this will vary according to the type of exercise that has been carried out. For example, with an annual recruitment drive or promotion board it may take longer to place candidates into posts. Where this is the case either the interview board or the HR Resource Team will inform candidates of an expected date for results to be issued.

The HR Resource Team will issue results by email. Each candidate will also be provided with a copy of their rating form, which will be emailed separately as soon as board papers have been returned to HR.

7.1 Feedback

Applicants are entitled to feedback at every stage of the recruitment process. At the sift stage, candidates will be provided with their scores against sift criteria. After the interview, candidates will be provided with their rating form, and can contact the chairperson if they require further discussion. Feedback is designed to be constructive and identify areas for development and guidance on improving for career progression.

7.2 Appeals (Internal COPFS Staff)

Appeals against selection decisions can be made on the following grounds:

- There has been a procedural irregularity that can be seen to have materially disadvantaged the individual candidate; and/or
- There has been an infringement of the service's equal opportunities policy causing actual disadvantage.

Appeals outwith these grounds will not be considered. The appeal must be submitted in writing, justifying the grounds, to the HR Resource Team within 5 working days of the date of issue of the letter containing the result. Thereafter the timescales outlined in the [grievance procedure](#) will be followed. Where an appeal is upheld, COPFS will take steps to remove disadvantage or compensate for actual loss.



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8. Posting the Candidate

8.1 Release dates for internal appointments

Staff moving to a new post in COPFS will normally be expected to take up the new post within 6 weeks of the selection decision. Where a manager believes a candidate cannot be released within this timescale, then permission to delay the release must be sought from the Chief of Strategic Delivery.

8.2 Pre-employment checks for external appointments

The HR Resource Team will endeavour to start new entrants within 6 weeks but this is reliant on pre-recruitment checks being returned timeously. The HR Resource Team will keep managers informed of reasons for any delay and give estimated times of checks being returned where possible.

8.3 All new entrants

Disclosure checks must be completed for all new entrants to the Service; this includes those new entrants who have been employed on a Fixed Term contract without fair and open competition. Managers should advise the HR Resource Team of contact details, so that a Disclosure application can be issued. The Resource Team will advise when the Disclosure is clear and a start date can be arranged.

8.4 New entrants on permanent or fixed term (with fair and open competition) contracts

In addition to the Disclosure checks, successful applicants on these contracts will be health checked and references will be sought before they begin employment.



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9. Recruitment Audit Process

In order to assess our recruitment activity, the HR system is audited regularly to ensure it meets the requirements of the organisation. Accordingly recruitment competitions should be fully documented and the papers retained for 12 months from the end of the competition (this includes the advertisement, application forms, sift criteria, board reports, campaign summary and other relevant papers relating to the competition). For fixed term appointment/short term contracts the advertisement and supporting literature must be retained for the duration of the appointment so that the basis on which the post was publicised is known in the event of extension or wider deployment being considered.

The department is required to publish information on recruitment, including the use of specified exceptions to the recruitment principles. In addition, the HR Resourcing Team compiles and monitors equal opportunity data taken from all internal and external recruitment.

As a further review of processes and procedures, the HR Resourcing Team conducts an annual survey asking a proportion of users to feedback on resourcing arrangements.

Each year, the Civil Service Commissioners undertake an audit of our recruitment policies and practices to ensure we adhere to the principles of appointment on merit through fair and open competition.



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