

COPFS Application Pack

Principal Applications Developer

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# Introduction

This pack is to guide you through the COPFS recruitment process. It is vital that you read this carefully as hints and tips are contained.

If you have any further questions or require the application pack in an alternative format, you can contact:

Email - [Recruitment@copfs.gov.uk](mailto:Recruitment@copfs.gov.uk)

Telephone – 07786 538975

# About COPFS

This is an exciting opportunity to join the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), Scotland’s only prosecution service. We receive reports about crimes from the police and other reporting agencies and then decide what action to take, including whether to prosecute someone. We also look into deaths that need further explanation and investigate allegations of criminal conduct against police officers.

COPFS plays a pivotal part in the justice system, working with others to make Scotland safe from crime, disorder and danger. The public interest is at the heart of all we do as independent prosecutors. We take into account the diverse needs of victims, witnesses, communities and the rights of those accused of crime. We support the Strategy for Justice in Scotland and, in particular, its priorities of:

* Reducing crime, particularly violent and serious organised crime
* Tackling hate crime and sectarianism
* Supporting victims and witnesses
* Increasing public confidence and reducing fear of crime

For further information about COPFS please visit our website - <http://www.copfs.gov.uk/about-us/about-us>

Click here for information regarding COPFS Recruitment Privacy Notice

# Vacancy Information

**Principal Applications Developer  
Closing Date – 11th June 2023 at 11.55pm  
Sift Date – W/C 12th June 2023  
Interviews – W/C 19th June 2023**

**Whilst we will endeavour to meet the dates as specified there may be occasions when these dates will change.**

**Salary**

Starting salary would be £46,652 with the maximum salary on this scale being £55,860 which includes a £5,000 IT allowance and is subject to future COPFS pay awards.

Civil Service Pension employer contribution of 27.1% of your pay. This may amount to an employer contribution of £12,371 (based on the salary of £45,652) per annum pro rata depending on pension scheme.

**Location**

Crown Office, Edinburgh

There is the option for Home/Remote Working for this post. However, there will be a requirement to be in office at least one day a week or as and when required.

The role holder may be asked to attend other locations as part of general business activities with COPFS justice sector partners or other COPFS locations.

**Contract terms**

Permanent

Full Time

**Job Description**

**General Responsibilities, Activities and Duties**

COPFS ISD Development team develops and delivers a host of case management systems, ranging through a broad range of technologies including .NET, Java, iOS and Visual Basic and recently developing Cloud based applications. However, this specific role would be looking for a skilled Software Developer with experience primarily in either JAVA or.NET/C#.

As the Principal Applications Developer within ISD’s Enterprise Applications team, you will be a key “go to” developer. The successful candidate would have an opportunity to work on cutting edge technologies. You will report to Head of Application Development. You will work jointly with the Applications Solutions Team and Applications Test team in an agile environment to deliver digital applications.

**Role Specific Responsibilities, Activities and Duties**

* Working closely with a team of developers to create innovative, high quality and secure software applications.
* Peer review and testing conformance with acceptance criteria, ensuring timely delivery of digital applications.
* Principal technical point of contact for one or more of COPFS’ innovative software projects and will mentor junior developers within the team.
* Utilise experience working within an Agile Software Development environment to:
* Provide estimates, system analysis, translate business requirements into technical specifications, draft technical proposals, research and evaluate solution options
* Provide conceptual, deployment and operational documentation, develop on-boarding guides and input into technical risk assessment and software security compliance assessments.
* Respond to 3rd line support incidents to ensure smooth operation of critical case management applications within normal business service delivery hours.

**Please note this is not an exhaustive list and other duties may be required as appropriate to the role**

**Essential Criteria**

The two lead competencies listed in this pack form the key essential criteria for the role. As well as the below, candidates will also be required to demonstrate their technical knowledge at interview:

* Demonstrable hands on experience in full stack web development
* Ability to develop quality applications adhering to industry best practices
* Demonstrable experience leading to a strong understanding of working with ONE of the following technologies: Java, .NET Core/Framework, C# and Angular or iOS.
* Ability to Build/Maintain CI/CD Pipelines

**Desirable Criteria**

* Other technologies you would likely encounter include: Oracle PL/SQL, Azure and JavaScript

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Recruitment Activity | Anticipated Dates |
| Closing Date | 11th June 2023 at 11.55pm |
| Sift | W/C 12th June 2023 |
| Interviews | W/C 19th June 2023 |

Please note that these dates may be subject to change

# Application and Selection

**Completing your Application**

If you are interested in applying, please submit your CV and a completed Personal Information form to [Recruitment@copfs.gov.uk](mailto:Recruitment@copfs.gov.uk) ahead of the deadline.

COPFS follow the Civil Service approach to competency based recruitment. This means the panel will be looking for specific examples of how you have met the competencies that you will be assessed against.

The [COPFS Competency Framework](https://www.copfs.gov.uk/about-copfs/careers/how-your-application-is-assessed/) details the level of competence required for each Grade, a description for each competency and what behaviours are expected at each level. You should refer to the Framework to gain an understanding of role; however for the purposes of this exercise we have detailed the key competencies within this pack.

Candidates must remember that the Competency Framework is not exhaustive and provides an indication of the general level of working. Your evidence should also take account of your skills, the job role and its accountabilities.

The recruitment panel expect you to ensure that the examples given in your application form are concise and meet with the recommended word count of 250 words per competency. Answers in excess of 300 words will not be assessed beyond this count which will likely affect your score.

The examples you provide will ideally be from a recent work-related context but might equally well be derived from other activities away from the workplace (e.g. voluntary work, outside interests) provided they are relevant to the job role. The Selection Panel will consider the suitability of the example used (i.e. relevance and complexity) in assessing your application and/or performance at interview.

**Part B**, **section 4** of the application form is where you must provide specific and job relevant evidence of competency related behaviours in each of the key competencies detailed on pages 12-15.

In order to do this, we recommend you adhere to the ‘STAR’ (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method to present your answers:

**S – Situation**

This part of your answer is to describe the scenario you are going to use. A brief overview is all that is necessary.

**T – Task**

Again, a brief sentence or two is all that is needed. The task will be your objective or goal, it may also be relevant to note any consequences to you not achieving it.

**A – Actions.**

This is the most important part of your example in terms of assessment. You should explain what you did within your described situation and task.

It is important to note what YOU did, so actions should start with **“I”** and contain a specific action word (e.g. organised, presented, researched, etc). You should also note how you carried out actions (e.g. face to face, over the phone, etc).

When preparing your answers at home, actions should read like bullet points.

**R – Result**

Like the situation and task, this should be kept brief and describe the outcome of your situation. You may also consider some reflection points (e.g. would you do anything differently, has there been an evaluation).

Following the STAR method helps present your example in a chronological order which focuses on what you have done.

# Understanding the sift procedure

Where there are specific essential criteria or a post attracts more applicants than can reasonably be handled at interview, applications may be “sifted” and a shortlist produced. This formal action will be conducted by a Sift Panel who will usually (but not always) be the same as the Selection Panel. The information you provide in part 4 of the application will form the basis for the sift.

## Further Assessment of Suitability

The board in advance of the interviews may require further evidence to assess candidates for specific posts.  This may be used as a method to further sift candidates or as part of their overall assessment.

Should this be the case you will be advised directly.

# The Interview

When at interview, the Selection Panel will try to put you at ease. The Chairperson will explain what is going to happen and who will ask the questions. You can also ask questions, seek clarification or add extra information at any time and will be given a specific opportunity to do so at the end.

The selection panel will comprise at least two members. If you find that your line manager (or someone with whom you are familiar) is interviewing you do not be surprised if they treat you formally, they must treat all candidates equitably and must not give you an unfair advantage through over-familiarity.

For any particular post, everyone’s interview will be similar in that all candidates will be asked the same core questions. Any follow-up questions will depend on the answers you give and won’t necessarily be the same as those for other candidates.

Interview Questions

Competency Based Selection is based on the underlying principle that past behaviors are the best predictor of future behavior. 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 will be designed to test suitability based on the knowledge, skills and understanding of the candidate in relation to 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.

You will be asked competency based questions and you will be expected to talk about how you actually tackled a real problem. The questions will relate to competencies and essential criteria stated in the advert, therefore the key is to prepare examples from your career that highlight the various skills that you would be required to show in your new job. You should also be prepared to answer questions about any desirable criteria which is stated within the advert.

In answering these questions, you should respond by giving a real specific example, ideally using the STAR method. Candidates are reminder to use ‘I’ not ‘WE’ so that the Selection Panel obtains a full understanding of what you did within a specific example.

Candidates should be prepared to talk about their example in a lot of detail. The Selection Panel will ask you probing questions to ensure they fully understand the situation you are describing. The Panel will also be interested in the outcome of the situation and whether there was anything you learned from the experience.

**There are things you can do to help yourself prepare for the competency interview:**

Read and understand the “STAR” method, this will help you to answer the question correctly, and maximise your score.

Prepare examples for each of the competencies. The perfect competency answer may be one element of a bigger picture - if you use too big an example you will just skim over the surface of the actions rather than providing the detailed answers they need to hear. It may be helpful to have an example of the following sorts of situations to hand:

* A situation where you resolved conflict with a colleague
* A time you worked to a pressured deadline
* The performance or project you are most proud of
* A time when something went wrong and what you did to resolve it
* An example of working as a team to achieve a common goal
* An example of motivating others, if relevant
* Examples of showing specific skills relevant for the job you're going for

Rehearse your answers in front of a friend or family member.

We would advise that you don’t use jargon unless you are absolutely sure all the members of the selection panel will understand.

By preparing in this way you will feel more comfortable with being able to perform at your best at interview. Focus and hone in on your own contribution and ensure that you show yourself in a good light, whilst of course being honest.

Candidate Notes  
Candidates are advised that they may bring personal notes to their interview, however these should be used as reference material only.

**The Scoring System**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Evidence** |
| 3 | The candidate provided evidence that **demonstrated highly effective behaviour** against the requirements of the role and level of competence required. |
| 2 | The candidate provided evidence that **demonstrated effective behaviour** against the requirements of the role and level of competence required. |
| 1 | The candidate provided evidence that **partially demonstrated effective behaviour** against the requirements of the role and 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. |

Board members set the sift pass mark for each individual campaign however candidates will usually be required to obtain a score of at least ‘2’ at each stage, although a score of ‘1’ for a single essential competency should not rule a candidate out if scores are high for all other competencies.

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

**Guaranteed Interview Scheme**

COPFS is committed to valuing diversity and equality of opportunity and participates in the Disability Confident scheme as awarded by Job Centre Plus.

Under this scheme, all candidates who consider them to be disabled in terms of the Equality Act 2010, and who meet the essential minimum criteria for the post, will be guaranteed an interview.

For the purposes of the scheme, the minimum criterion to quality for interview requires adequate demonstration of all competences tested and to meet the essential criteria.

This will be applicable at all stages of recruitment, i.e. if you do not pass the standard required at sift or technical assessment (if applicable), you will not proceed to interview.

**Selection Information**

The selection panel will recommend the candidate(s) for appointment in order of merit.

You may ask for feedback on your performance however this may not be available. However candidate rating forms will be available.

Please note that we will not meet any expenses you may incur in association with this recruitment exercise (tests or interview), nor if you have to relocate to take up appointment (this is also applicable to any current COPFS staff who may make an application for an externally advertised post).

**Appeal**

All candidates are entitled to the right of appeal against any selection decision (i.e. at sift or interview).

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 COPFS’ equal opportunities policy causing actual disadvantage

Appeals out with these grounds will not be considered. The appeal must be submitted in writing, justifying the grounds, to the HR Resource Team within five working days of receiving the results or feedback (if available). Where an appeal is upheld, COPFS will take steps to remove disadvantage or compensate for actual loss.

**Equality & Diversity**

COPFS is proud to maintain an inclusive workplace and we encourage applicants from all backgrounds.

COPFS have set out a strategy to ensure we continue to promote equality of opportunity and treatment and to eliminate unfair discrimination in its employment practises.

Our policy is to provide equal opportunities for employment, career development and promotion to all where eligible, based on ability, qualifications and suitability for the work.

No job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment than others because of their gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital or family status, part-time status (unless such treatment is objectively justified), socioeconomic background (or is perceived as belonging to), racial group (includes colour, race, nationality, national or ethnic origin), religion, disability (unless such treatment is objectively justified), age (subject to the operation of a retirement age policy) or trade union membership/non-membership/activities.

COPFS has several staff network groups which include:

### **Equality Ambassadors**

As part of our commitment to equality for all staff we have a number of Equality Ambassadors who are responsible for promoting their characteristic across the service and beyond.

### **Sheriffdom Equality Networks (ShEN)**

Each Sheriffdom has their own equality network, which supports internal and external engagement and awareness of equality issues. The groups advise on policy issues and some run events, like autism awareness sessions, Pride attendance and the Schools’ Public Speaking Competition. Each ShEN has a leader, responsible for the work of the network, and an administrative contact.

#### **Proud in COPFS**

The Proud in COPFS network supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) staff. They also provide support and guidance for parents and carers of LGBTI children.

#### **Staff Disability Advisory Group**

The Staff Disability Advisory[Group](https://glwweb02/my-workplace/equalities-inclusion?title=Staff_Disability_Advisory_Group&layout=article&id=9518)comprises of disabled staff, carers and staff with a special interest in disability equality. It was established to meet the specific requirement in disability equality legislation that disabled people be directly involved in improving policy and practice. The Group acts as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas on disability equality, and to advise and influence the development, assessment and implementation of policies relating to disabled staff.

#### **Believe...in COPFS**

The Believe…in COPFS group is for everyone, all staff are welcome to join the network to discuss and consider faith and belief issues. The only requirement is respect for the religion or belief of all members. You can be an active contributor or just sit quietly and reflect.

#### **Carers Network**

The Carers Network group supports colleagues across the organisation who have caring responsibilities.

#### **Mental Health Network**

The Mental Health Network group supports staff with mental health conditions by raising awareness of and signposting appropriate support mechanisms.

#### **Inclusion in COPFS**

Inclusion in COPFS is a BAME staff network which aims to provide support and information to colleagues across the service on equalities issues related to race and ethnicity.

Gender Equality Network (GEN)

The Gender Equality Network (GEN) is your employee network for support on gender-based issues.

The Neurodiversity Support Network (NSN)

The NSN is a resource for all staff to access advice and guidance on all aspects of neurodiversity including autism, ADHD, epilepsy, migraines, and dyslexia and other learning difficulties.

We have created information pages for Autism and Epilepsy that can be found under guidance above. We are working on pages for other areas too.

If you are interested in joining the NSN, contact Sarah McCall, SPFD at SOCU West and Equality Ambassador for Autism and Epilepsy.

# Competencies

**COPFS Competency Framework**

The COPFS Competency Framework applies to all staff. The Competency Framework has been developed to recognise the general range of skills and behaviours expected across all job roles within COPFS. It is based on the same competency framework used by nearly all other Civil Service organisations. The COPFS Competency Framework is central in understanding how best to use the considerable resources available in Civil Service Learning. This includes access to National Occupational Standards (NOS), recognised nationally in industry and Government as indicators of how professionals should be performing. COPFS Learning & Development can provide advice about management development in particular to a level 7 of the Chartered Management Institute standard.

The Competency Framework enables COPFS to recruit and select staff by considering evidence on how an individual achieved an objective or completed a task. It further allows selection based on specific past occurrences which can be indicators of future behaviours or performance.

The Competency Framework should give all candidates an equal opportunity to describe their behaviours when working towards an objective or performing a task.

**Competency Levels**

Competency levels determine the level that someone would be expected to demonstrate indicative behaviours in their day to day work and interaction with others, these differ by grade. The levels go from level one up to level six. It would be assumed that someone performing at level six would be aware of and routinely performing at levels one to five.  
  
For the purposes of this exercise, you are asked to provide examples and evidence against the following key competencies.

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# Delivering at Pace

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Effectiveness in this area means focusing on delivering timely performance with energy and taking responsibility and accountability for quality outcomes. For all staff, it’s about working to agreed goals and activities and dealing with challenges in a responsive and constructive way. At senior levels, it is about building a performance culture to deliver outcomes with a firm focus on prioritisation and addressing performance issues resolutely, fairly and promptly. It is also about leaders providing the focus and energy to drive activities forward through others and encourage staff to perform effectively during challenging and changing times. | |
|  | ***Effective Behaviour People who are effective are likely to…*** | ***Ineffective Behaviour People who are less effective are likely to…*** |
| Level 3 | * Successfully manage, support and stretch self and team to deliver agreed goals and objectives * Show a positive approach in keeping their own and the team’s efforts focused on the goals that really matter * Take responsibility for delivering expected outcomes on time and to standard, giving credit to teams and individuals as appropriate * Plan ahead but reassess workloads and priorities if situations change or people are facing conflicting demands * Regularly monitor own and team’s work against milestones or targets and act promptly to keep work on track and maintain performance * Coach and support others to set and achieve challenging goals for themselves | * Give people work to do without supporting them to develop the skills and knowledge they need for the job * Allow work flow to lose momentum or drift away from priorities * Give little or no support to others in managing poor performance, allow others’ problems and obstacles to hamper progress * Show no consideration for diversity-related needs of the team when organising the workload * Allow poor performance to go unchallenged, causing workload issues for other team members * Allow organisational and other obstacles, including a lack of support, to stand in the way of own and others’ aspirations |

# Collaborating and Partnering

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | People skilled in this area create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people within and outside the Civil Service to help get business done. At all levels, it requires working collaboratively, sharing information and building supportive, responsive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, whilst having the confidence to challenge assumptions. At senior levels, it’s about delivering business objectives through creating an inclusive environment, encouraging collaboration and building effective partnerships including relationships with Ministers. | |
|  | ***Effective Behaviour People who are effective are likely to…*** | ***Ineffective Behaviour People who are less effective are likely to…*** |
| Level 3 | * Establish relationships with a range of stakeholders to support delivery of business outcomes * Invest time to generate a common focus and genuine team spirit * Actively seek input from a diverse range of people * Readily share resources to support higher priority work, showing pragmatism and support for the shared goals of the organisation * Deal with conflict in a prompt, calm and constructive manner * Encourage collaborative team working within own team and across the Department | * Devote little or no time to networking or engaging with immediate stakeholders, preferring to work in isolation * Demonstrate limited capability to get the best from people and create barriers or negative feelings between and within teams * Display little appreciation of the value of different contributions and perspectives * Create reasons why resources and support cannot be shared * Show a lack of concern for others’ perspectives * Support individual or silo ways of working |

# Additional Information

**General Pre Employment Requirements**

Should you be successful in your application you will be recommended for appointment subject to our standard pre recruitment checks. These include:

* **Identity** – you will be asked to provide evidence of your identity if invited to interview and potentially at another time during the recruitment process.
* **Nationality and Immigration Status** – you will be asked to provide proof of your eligibility to work and remain in the UK. Successful candidates will also be required to satisfy the Civil Service Nationality requirements. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationality-rules>
* **Employment/ Academic History Verification** – if you are successful, we will conduct a verification of your 3 year history
* **Criminal History** – COPFS has exemptions from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974). This check will be undertaken through an Enhanced Disclosure check (of which, COPFS will meet the expense)
* **Health** – prior to appointment, candidates will also undergo a pre-employment health assessment through our Occupational Health provider.

When full checks are satisfactorily completed, a formal offer of employment will be made.

**Terms of Appointment**

Salary is paid monthly by credit transfer to your nominated bank account.

Successful candidates will be expected to complete a 9 month probation period.

Successful applicants will be expected to work a five day week of 37 hours excluding lunch breaks. You will have an annual leave allowance of 25 days per year (rising to 30 days after 4 years’ service) and will also benefit from an additional 11.5 public and privilege holidays per year.

Part time allowances will be calculated as a pro rata amount and confirmed within the contract of employment.

On joining COPFS, employees will be automatically enrolled in the Civil Service pension arrangements. You can find further information on Civil Service Pensions via the [Cabinet Office](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/pensions/) ([www.civilservice.gov.uk/pensions](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/pensions)).

# Civil Service Code

As a Civil Servant, you will be expected to carry out your role with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values. The Civil Service Code defines the core values that you, as a Civil Servant, are expected to work within and uphold. These core values are:

* Honesty
* Impartiality
* Integrity
* Objectivity

The Code forms part of the terms and conditions of every Civil Servant. Further information can be obtained from <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/values>.

# Civil Service Commission

The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service’s recruitment processes are underpinned by the principle of selection for appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles which can be found at <http://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/>

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Principles and you wish to make a complaint, you should contact The Recruitment Manager, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, Crown Office, 25 Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1LA in the first instance.  If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the Service you can contact the Office of the [Civil Service Commission](http://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/contact-us/) directly.

The Code forms part of the terms and conditions of every Civil Servant. Further information can be obtained from <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/values>.