



Quality Customer Service Action Plan

2021-2023



An tSeirbhís um Cheapacháin Phoiblí
Public Appointments Service

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Introduction

I am pleased to present this Customer Action Plan for the period 2021-2023, which sets out our commitment to deliver a recruitment, assessment and advisory service of the highest standard for our clients and candidates and aims to provide a supportive and learning environment for all staff members. We are committed to ensuring that a customer service ethos is embedded in everything we do and is embraced by everyone in our organisation.

The office employs a range of mechanisms to ensure that we can continue the process of strengthening the overall quality of our service. Our Action Plan details how our commitments and service standards will be delivered and evaluated over the 2021 – 2023 period, in both an office and remote working environment.

The Action Plan sets out to build on the Public Appointments Service's strengths in the quality of services we deliver to our existing and potential clients and customers. The Action Plan is predicated on our vision, to be recognised as a centre of excellence in recruitment, trusted by those we serve. Our mission requires engagement with all our customers to recruit a diversity of people for the public service, with the talent, character and commitment to deliver for Ireland.

This Action Plan, in conjunction with our Strategy Statement 2020-2023, provides a clear framework for PAS to achieve new standards of excellence in the sourcing, assessment and delivery of quality people to an increasingly complex array of roles across a diverse range of clients in an integrated public service.

The Action Plan is underpinned by a set of important and meaningful core values. It sets out a framework of performance and outcome targets to ensure we continue to achieve a high level of client and customer satisfaction in all areas of service.

Our future success will be built on further strengthening our commitment to innovation and learning, on valuing and strengthening our culture of agility, responsiveness and professionalism, and will be marked by a particular focus and drive towards excellence and efficiency in everything we do.

I look forward to working with the management team, and the Board of PAS, all of the staff of PAS, and importantly our clients, to deliver on the key objectives of our Strategy Statement (NUA 23) and Customer Action Plan.

Shirley Comerford
Chief Executive

The Role of the Public Appointments Service

Our Mission

Recruiting a diversity of people for the public service with the talent, character & commitment to deliver for Ireland

Our Vision

Recognised as the centre of excellence in recruitment, trusted by those we serve

About the Public Appointments Service

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) was established in October 2004. The Public Service Management (Recruitment & Appointments) Act 2004 dissolved the Office of the Civil Service and Local Appointments Commissioners. This Office was replaced with two separate organisations: the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) and PAS.

PAS is the recruitment and resourcing service provider for client organisations in the civil and public service and is responsible for the sourcing, assessment and delivery of quality candidates to public service clients. We run a wide range of 'openly advertised' recruitment competitions and 'interdepartmental' promotion competitions within the Civil Service. Our activities are primarily focused on the sourcing of candidates for roles in the Civil Service; the most senior roles in Local Authorities; trainee Garda, and internal promotion competitions for An Garda Síochána; and a range of management, executive and specialist roles across the civil and public service. PAS also has a key role in the identification of suitable members for State Boards.

Amongst our programme of activities we:

- fill key sanctioned positions through recruitment and promotion;
- recruit openly for essential positions in the public service;
- select candidates for promotion within the Civil Service by means of competitive inter-departmental selection tests and interviews;
- assist other public sector organisations in meeting their essential recruitment needs;

- assist clients in promoting and advertising the positions they require to be filled, by increased usage of social media and executive search.

Our role also includes training, advisory and other consultancy services which complement our recruitment and selection services. These additional services will be developed further over the next three years, in our role as Trusted Advisor, which is one of the key pillars of our new Strategy.

Quality Customer Service Action Plan

Development of the Quality Customer Service Action Plan

This Action Plan has been developed to coincide with our new Statement of Strategy 2020-2023, and our commitment to customers and service delivery set out in that document. It reflects our commitment to quality service delivery to both external and internal customers. Arrangements will be made for the monitoring of and reporting on the commitments contained in this document. The various commitments to quality customer services will be included in each unit's business plan and will be included in the objectives specified for each staff member as part of the PMDS (Performance Management and Development System) process.

Our customers and the services we provide to them

All customers can expect to be treated by us in a professional, fair and impartial manner with the utmost courtesy and respect. We will endeavour to deliver a quality service in accordance with the highest standards of effectiveness, efficiency and integrity.

The specific services we provide for each of our customer groups are set out below:

Client Organisations

This group includes Government Departments/Offices, Local Authorities, the Health Services Executive (HSE), other public service bodies and non-commercial semi-state agencies for whom PAS has a legislative mandate to recruit for, and who avail of the recruitment, selection and advisory services that we provide. We will help them to publicise the positions which they require to be filled, including through increased usage of digital advertising. We are also open to providing assistance to clients with any other matters where they feel our expertise might be of assistance to them.

Applicants for Public Service Positions

This group includes members of the public who apply for any public service positions we run, and who are entitled to have their applications dealt with fairly, impartially and in an efficient and courteous manner. As part of our recruitment and selection service we provide services to applicants to allow them to participate fully in the relevant recruitment and selection process, including information on posts available and guidance on interview/test preparation.

Services for Applicants with a Disability

We encourage people with disabilities to apply for any position in the Public Service for which they hold the basic entry requirements. It is our policy to ensure that recruitment and selection activity is carried out in accordance with our core principles of fairness, equality and merit-based selection. We will ensure that all applications are fully considered on the basis of abilities, qualifications and suitability for the work in question. We are also happy to make all reasonable efforts to accommodate any requirements which applicants might have, in order to enable applicants to participate fully and fairly in the selection process. We appointed a dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead (ED&I Lead) at senior management level and established a team to optimise impact. A dedicated Disability Champion is in place to support all recruitment and selection processes.

The General Public

This includes members of the public who may be interested in applying for a public service position, or who have an interest in knowing that such positions are filled in an open and transparent manner. We also have a duty to account publicly for our use of the public funds entrusted to us and to demonstrate that such monies are spent properly, sensibly and with due consideration for value for money.

A range of information is provided on publicjobs.ie in relation to the types of careers in the public service. There is also a facility for members of the public to register their interest in particular types of posts and to receive an email notification when a post is advertised. We also promote positions advertised on publicjobs.ie via social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Our primary customer service channels are online (publicjobs.ie, stateboards.ie and social media), telephone, email and our public office (depending on the relevant emergency measures in place). Full details on these are set out on the 'Contact Us' page of publicjobs.ie. A new advertising strategy was rolled out in 2020.

Services for Irish Speakers

Irish speakers have the right to choose to conduct any business with us through Irish and/or bilingually. We are committed to providing a full, quality service through the Irish language to those who make request such a service. Every reasonable effort is made to ensure high quality services are provided in Irish.

Selection Board Members

The office relies heavily on the valuable contribution of all board members. Providing them with every possible assistance to carry out their task is essential to ensure a positive experience while working with us. A suite of e-learning modules was developed and rolled out to assist in the training of Interview Board members. These modules cover the approach to interviewing, relevant legislation, questioning, assessment, unconscious bias, as well as specific modules for different roles within the process such as the Public Appointments Service Representative and Chairperson.

Internal Customers

We believe that internal staff members should be considered as customers and should be entitled, as are all customers, to expect the highest standards of service delivery in their dealings with the organisation.

Developments in Service Delivery

Providing excellent customer service is a priority for the Office. To achieve and maintain high standards the following initiatives are in place:

Customer Charter

In conjunction with this Action Plan we have developed a Customer Charter, in consultation with external customers and staff. The Customer Charter sets out the level of service a customer can expect from PAS. This Action Plan sets out how it will be achieved. We will continue to monitor and report on our performance and customer satisfaction levels to ensure we are reaching the required standards and are delivering a high quality service to all our customers.

Customer Consultation

Meeting the needs and expectations of our customers is of the utmost importance to the Office. Through ongoing consultation we are able to keep in touch with our customers and have gained valuable feedback on our services.

This Office has always valued highly the contribution of our customers in the development of our services. As part of our commitment to providing quality customer care, we use regular Customer Surveys in order to ascertain whether we are achieving all of the service standards set for all our customer groups and how these groups rate the services we provide. These surveys include Selection Board Member, Client, Staff and Candidate Surveys. All of these surveys are anonymous and conducted on-line in order to make it easier for our customers to respond and provide feedback on our services. Following each survey, an Action Plan is produced in order to address any issues identified. As part of the development process for this Action Plan we have reviewed all customer surveys to date, to identify the main issues arising.

Client Relations Management (CRM)

The CRM team, along with client managers, act as the primary interface between PAS and its client organisations. Over the period of this Action Plan, the CRM team will continue to build on our model of client engagement to provide an enhanced customer centric focus that actively listens to the feedback provided by our clients to improve service delivery. This will involve both the introduction of process improvements and the development of new systems that are required to deliver a high quality and efficient service to our clients.

The CRM team act as the primary point of contact for all PAS clients on service delivery queries and our aim is to respond to clients within 3 days – the success rate achieved to-date has been high and we want to build on these standards going forward. The CRM team are also responsible for processing the requests for new staff and/or new recruitment campaigns. As part of this, the team work with individual clients to identify their resourcing needs so that the model of recruitment and selection activity (or part services) can be tailored to best meet those needs. The team are also in daily contact with our client organisations through responding to queries and providing status updates in relation to campaigns and requests. We will continue to share relevant information and updates with our clients on a regular basis through a quarterly PAS Client Newsletter.

As part of PAS client management, meetings take place with clients to further develop the relationship and gain a greater understanding of the needs and challenges of each client organisation. Client management meetings provide a dedicated space for clients to discuss their staffing requirements (including future plans), current recruitment campaigns and to facilitate a two-way communication and feedback on the service provided.

Going forward, there will be a key focus on enhanced access to timely and accurate information for our clients through the introduction of a new reporting framework on the status of campaigns and panel

availability. We will also be developing an online system, which will facilitate client organisations to log resource requests and track progress.

In addition to recruitment, assessment and selection, the remit of PAS also includes the provision of an advisory service on recruitment matters. There will be focus on the strengthening of our role as a trusted advisor, through the provision of relevant guidance across the public service and the sharing of best practice. We also intend to host client events to facilitate networking and the dissemination of relevant guidance / information.

We will continue to monitor our performance and customer satisfaction levels to ensure that we are reaching the required standards and are delivering a high quality service to our clients.

Compliance and Corporate Governance (including review procedures)

CPSA Code of Practice

Our Compliance Unit manages the review process under the CPSA Codes of Practice and ensures that there is a system in place to act on feedback from these reviews in order to continually improve the business processes and customer service in PAS.

The review process entails reviewing all relevant information from the selection process, ensuring that critical information is made available, and developing an understanding of the process involved in the specific competition under review. Consultations are held with selection board members in the majority of cases. The Reviewer may, from time to time, make recommendations on foot of their review findings. The recommendations are generally made to the internal Quality Administration and/or to the Recruitment Manager.

FOI and Data Protection

PAS has two designated FOI Decision Makers and one Internal Reviewer (with an alternative for each role should the Decision Maker/Internal Reviewer be absent or involved in the subject matter in any way). The FOI Decision Maker co-ordinates all requests made under FOI.

The Data Protection Officer co-ordinates and responds to all requests made under Data Protection. A range of documentation, incorporating obligations under the new Data Protection Legislation (General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act, 2018) were developed and published on the

Publicjobs.ie website in May 2018. These documents have been revised on a six monthly basis and updates are published on the website.

The process for conducting Privacy Impact Risk Assessments is in place and is being used in advance of all new projects or the introduction of new ways of processing data to ensure that the data we are collecting is necessary and to minimise the amount of data being collected and that it is only retained for as long as is strictly necessary for the purposes for which we are collecting it.

A record of processing activity (ROPA) is also in place.

There are Data Protection Liaison Officers in each Unit, and these Officers are responsible for ensuring compliance with data protection legislation within each area of PAS. Specialised training is provided for these roles, and for all other staff in relation to all aspects of data protection and protecting the privacy, and personal data, of individuals dealing with our organisation.

In order to ensure full compliance with our legislative obligations while adapting to remote working, the Data Protection Officer conducted Data Protection Impact Assessment in relation to the use of video technology, and the new ways of confirming identity as part of remote interviewing process and of receiving candidate information. She also shared information with other Departments such as tips for remote interviewing, working using our technology and tips to avoid a data breach when working from home. The DPO also attends DPO Network meetings regularly to share best practice.

Digital Transformation

The aim of the publicjobs.ie website is to provide a comprehensive online recruitment facility that is easy to use and effective for both clients and candidates.

Technology is key to ensuring delivery a quality, timely, responsive service to both clients and candidates. We continue to support, maintain and enhance our online recruitment platform (STAR), a system that underpins the recruitment process from start to finish. In 2019 work began on scoping and defining a multi-year, strategic change programme to replace STAR and undertake the associated redesign of business processes and organisation structures ensuring best practice recruitment and selection approaches and excellent user experiences.

The support and ongoing development of our flagship website is a significant element of the overall digital marketing and communications strategy and our objective of attracting a high quality, diverse pool of candidates.

The security of our systems and the data we store is a key priority. We have introduced new technology solutions to protect against the latest cyber threats. We are committed to providing innovative technology solutions to streamline business processes and improve the staff, candidate and client experience. PAS has also begun to explore the possibilities of leverage the power of Cloud computing to deliver the services we provide, and that will continue throughout the lifetime of our new Strategy.

We are active participants in the Build to Share initiative, a key pillar of the Public Service ICT Strategy and in 2020 progressed a number of projects, including the new Intranet for staff.

Response to Covid-19

Remote working was quickly set up in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. All staff were set up for remote working and an essential Guide to Remote Working was developed which included details on health and wellbeing as well as guides on the technology assisting remote working.

Recruitment, Paperless and Remote Solutions

New technology solutions continue to be implemented within PAS to enhance recruitment activities and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. Recruitment models have been developed and redesigned to deliver in the face of unexpected demands for entry level grades. There has been significant work done to use new technologies in the assessment of candidates. Asynchronous interviews are being used for both medium and large volume competitions, where candidates are shortlisted based on a video recorded interview. Remote proctoring is also being used for a range of competitions.

PAS managed to continue its programme of activity during the COVID-19 pandemic by conducting all assessments remotely.

Developing e-Learning led solutions to support Interviewer skills training

A suite of E-learning modules was developed and rolled out to assist in the training of Interview Board members. These modules cover the approach to interviewing, relevant legislation, questioning, assessment as well as specific modules for different roles within the process such as the PAS Representative and Chairperson. This continues to be rolled out, and is being well received by participants. An e-learning module on Unconscious Bias was also rolled out. PAS continues to add to the suite of resources available to support people serving on our interview boards. A client toolkit is also being devised with some modules

soon available for release e.g. approach to shortlisting guidelines and guidelines around how to effectively complete a review of a role to support the design of a recruitment process.

Online Assessment

PAS have an ongoing programme of online assessment that has become established as an appropriate and efficient approach to managing significant volumes of candidates. The feedback from both candidates and staff members is that it is a fair approach to testing and candidates prefer taking tests at their convenience rather than coming to take paper and pencil tests at regional centres. In moving to an online approach, PAS was very mindful of the importance of adhering to best practice under the nine grounds of the equality legislation and online campaigns are designed in such a way as to use a range of assessment instruments and to avoid adverse impact; PAS monitor all of the online assessments very carefully to this end. PAS also devote significant resources to facilitating people with disabilities and the experience is that online tests are very helpful and fair in this regard. Online assessment has become established as an appropriate and efficient approach to managing significant volumes of candidates and to allow us to assess candidate remotely.

PAS has also used video technology to conduct interviews remotely and also uses asynchronous interviews where candidates are shortlisted based on a video recorded interview. Furthermore, PAS has introduced tests that can be completed via a mobile phone such as a situational judgement test that mirrors a messaging system. These techniques have been found to be very appealing to candidates as they are used to working in these environments. Finally, video interviewing technology and remote proctoring are now being used for virtual assessment centres and a range of exercises previously conducted on a face-to-face basis.

Pre-Employment Checks

Two separate clearance and assignments teams are dedicated to conducting pre-employment checks on candidates for general service grades and professional and technical posts. This allows for standardisation of the pre-employment checking process and the implementation of measures to speed up the process.

Engagement with Board Members

To enhance the approach to engagement with and training of interview board members, a new Board Member Unit was set up in March 2020. The aim of the Unit is to work with our Board members and Recruitment Units to ensure that the Board Members are suitably trained, flexible and agile to deliver the

high quality candidates, reflective of the diverse nature of society, required by our clients, having regard to the digital challenges faced by PAS and our clients, Board members and candidates.

Irish Services

We are committed to reaching our customers and corresponding with them in either Irish or English, according to their preference. We provide a range of training interventions for staff to enable them to communicate with customers in the official language of their choice.

PAS ensures that receptionists and switchboard operators, who are normally the first points of contact with the public, are familiar with basic greetings in Irish and use these greetings. The Office has arrangements in place to put members of the public in touch, with minimum delay, with an appropriate member of staff who can deal with their business, whether in Irish or English. Reception and switchboard staff have access to a list of the staff members competent in Irish, to whom such callers may be directed. This list is also available on the Office Intranet. Staff Members of the Candidate Support Unit also have a sufficient level of Irish to respond to queries and to direct candidates and will deal with all queries to CRMmailbox@publicjobs.ie.

Many of our general service competitions at Clerical and Executive Officer have separate Irish language streams, or separate competitions to facilitate demand for fluent Irish speakers in the civil service. We also run the process to recruit Garda Trainees with fluency in the Irish Language. Recruitment and selection processes are also conducted to fill specialist positions which require fluency in the Irish language, at the request of the client.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) are central to the culture of the organisation. A commitment was given to a new and ambitious approach to putting ED&I at the centre of what we do. In this way the organisation demonstrated a commitment to our values, particularly those values that motivate a concern for equality and human rights and supporting implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. While PAS conducted an assessment of human rights and equality issues relevant to its role as part of the development of its first ED&I Strategy 2021-2023, and is satisfied that it is fulfilling its public sector duty as set out in the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014, the organisation recognises the key role it can play as leaders in the ED&I space. The organisation's commitment to promoting human rights and equality principles is reflected in a number of actions, including the

appointment of an ED&I Lead, the establishment of an ED&I function and the development of the first Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy.

Our dedicated ED&I Lead was appointed (at senior management level) and established a team to optimise impact. A key focus initially was the development of an ED&I strategy which is embedded in, and aligned with, the corporate strategy, NUA 23. This ED&I Strategy builds on the achievements and initiatives delivered over the previous corporate strategy. Our ambition is that the Irish public sector is acknowledged as a thriving workplace that has embraced equality, diversity and inclusion and which is energised by the contribution of employees that reflect diversity from all sectors of society leading to more responsive and inclusive policies, programmes and services.

The ED&I strategy was informed by an extensive consultation process which included feedback from civil and public service organisations, not-for-profit organisations engaging with people from diverse backgrounds, clients, interview board members and staff, elicited through various channels such as focus groups, written submissions and an online platform. The strategy development was also informed by an Advisory Board comprising internal and external expertise across a range of areas including recruitment, ED&I practice and research, equality and human rights, the civil and public service and engagement methodologies to reach out to diverse groups. Over three meetings, the Advisory Board both challenged and strengthened our ED&I understanding and ambition and allowed us to reflect on how best to maximise impact in terms of enabling ED&I, and the associated governance and implementation structures that would facilitate that process. This strategy will drive and guide the activities of PAS for the next three years.

In 2019 a cross-functional ED&I Forum was established to bring together nominated drivers from different teams across the organisation to identify priority areas and help to bring an ED&I lens to the day-to-day work. This staff engagement also facilitated the sharing of ideas and expertise, the creation of ED&I synergies across the organisation and the building of internal capacity. Work continues on the action areas identified by the Forum, which include the enhancement of provision of reasonable accommodation and assignment for people with disabilities and a review of the qualifications required for general service grade competitions, in particular, the Executive Officer grade.

PAS led the way in partnering with the Houses of the Oireachtas on the pilot Oireachtas Work Learning (OWL) Programme, an applied learning, development and socialisation programme for adults with an intellectual disability. It offers a unique opportunity for trainees to gain practical work experience over an eleven-month period, while partaking in formalised training through the Dublin City Education and Training Board leading to a Level 3 QQI qualification. Two OWL graduates joined the organisation in October 2019.

A guide to inclusive recruitment was developed, in conjunction with the Houses of the Oireachtas, to promote the OWL programme, leading to an increase in partnering organisations throughout the public service.

We continue our partnership with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and AHEAD on the Willing, Able, Mentoring (WAM) programme for People with Disabilities, which is a six-month work experience programme for graduates, and were delighted to retain once again, this year, a WAM Leader award for excellence in supporting diversity in recruitment and selection.

Training and Awareness Raising

Training in the provision of a quality customer service is central to our annual training programme. In order to highlight the importance of our service standards Customer Service awareness raising sessions have been developed as an online module which is available to all staff. The focus of these sessions is on the provision of a quality customer service, covering how each staff member can contribute to this, what exactly the service standards are, and how any barriers to achieving them can be removed. The achievement of service standards and the provision of a quality customer service also form part of a module of our Corporate Orientation Programme for all new staff.

Training support is available and offered to staff through the One Learning catalogue to develop team members skills in dealing with customers at all levels within the organisation. These courses include Delivering Excellent Customer Service, Effective Writing for Quality Customer Service and Telephone Skills and are delivered specifically for the staff of PAS and focus on our particular customers and how their needs can be met.

In response to the full pivotal change to virtual engagement, a key focus within training has been to upskill our teams in the areas of video interviewing, virtual communication and presentation as we now conduct the vast majority of our day to day engagement with PAS customers online. This trajectory of improved knowledge and confidence in utilising new communications is a cornerstone of this ongoing transition. Awareness webinar sessions are made available to staff in areas to develop a greater understanding of our customers' needs in the important areas of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Internal Customer Service

PAS was re-assessed for the NSAI Excellent Through People (ETP) accreditation and was upgraded to the ETP1000:2017 standard in November 2019, and maintained this standard in 2020. The focus of ETP is to

get organisations to look at their people as a key source of competitive advantage. The model helps organisations achieve business improvement by:

- Putting the right human resource systems in place to maximise employee contribution;
- Aligning people practices with the goals of the organisation;
- Maximising the investment in human resource management.

The sections covered were:

- Business Planning and Continuous Improvement
- Communication and Collaboration;
- Leadership and People Management;
- Learning and Development;
- HR Systems and Employee Wellbeing.

It is planned to retain this accreditation of the lifetime of this Action Plan.

Implementing the 12 Principles of Quality Customer Service

Quality Service Standards

Publish a statement that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect, and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.

With our Customer Charter we have committed to providing all our customers with a high quality service. We will publicise the Customer Charter to ensure all our customers are aware of the level of service they can expect. Along with the Customer Charter, our Customer Action Plan outlines how the service commitments will be delivered and evaluated over the next three years.

Key Action points

Publish Customer Action Plan, which will be made available to all customers on our website;

Publish & prominently display our Customer Charter in our offices and on publicjobs.ie;

Develop a revised and improved set of Standards of Service Delivery;

Communicate our Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan (including Standards of Service Delivery) to all our staff in a series of workshops designed to encourage shared ownership of the goals and objectives set out in this Plan;

Draw attention to the Customer Charter in all Customer Surveys;

Develop methods to allow customers provide feedback to us on an ongoing basis.

Equality/Diversity

Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community).

Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.

We are committed to providing a service that complies fully with all equality legislation and accommodates the specific needs of all our customers.

Key Action points

We will protect and respect equality, diversity & human rights in all dealings with our customers, and within our services, procedures and processes, in accordance with Public Sector Duty principles.

PAS comply with our “Charter on Positive Supports for Candidates with Disabilities”. A process map outlines the process for providing reasonable accommodations, “Reasonable Accommodations Requests – Process Flowchart” (both documents are in a prominent position under our “Disability & Accessibility” area of www.publicjobs.ie).

Provide a service that complies fully with all Equality Legislation, the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014), the Disability Act 2005 and the Code of Practice for the Employment of People with a Disability in the Irish Civil Service;

Continue to exceed the Government target for the employment of people with disabilities in the Office and develop best practice approaches. As part of the *Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015 – 2024* Strategy, the public service employment target of people with disabilities was to increase on a phased basis from 3% to 6% by 2024;

Continue to work towards exceeding the Government target of 1% for the employment of migrants and develop best practice approaches;

Continue to engage with national policy and implement actions set out in national strategies on ED&I issues related to gender, ethnicity (Travellers and Roma), migrants, LGBTI+, disability.

Encourage the widest possible pool of applicants for public service appointments;

Continue to promote Equality Awareness on all training provided in relation to recruitment and selection;

Continue to provide Equality, Diversity and Disability Awareness Training for all staff;

Engage with our customers (clients and candidates) to grow and enhance understanding of ED&I in the civil and public service, to share information and to collaborate on development of inclusive leadership and good practice;

Proactively support Government Departments and Offices in the recruitment and employment of people from diverse backgrounds;

Monitor the implementation of our Equality and Diversity Policy, as part of our overall Human Resource Strategy;

Conduct equality audits as part of our staff surveys.

Physical Access

Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

Recruitment and selection services will be provided in clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards, and are accessible to all, including persons with disabilities.

There was significant progress in 2019 in relation to upgrading the facilities in Chapter House, particularly in relation to the redevelopment of the ground floor. This floor was redesigned in order to become more accessible for all candidates, in addition to portraying a positive image of PAS as the window to the Irish Public Service. It was designed to showcase a modern public service providing 'careers that matter'. It has proven to be a useful space for running engaging sessions with staff, clients and other stakeholders.

Key Action points

Provide a clean, safe & comfortable environment, with facilities for private & confidential discussions;

Provide access & facilities to meet all our customers' needs, including those who require reasonable accommodation(s);

Ensure at all times that office accommodation is conducive to maximum mobility for all customers;

Ensure high standards of physical access at all points of service delivery e.g. testing centres, recruitment fairs, external training, etc.;

Ensure our website complies with disability access requirements;

Ensure health and safety policy and procedures have regard to physical accessibility;

Ensure that Equality Audits and Equality/Diversity policies and procedures take full account of physical environmental factors.

Information

Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is exploited and that the information available on our website follows the guidelines on web publication.

Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.

We provide accurate, up-to-date and comprehensive information on job opportunities within the civil service and on the selection process. We also offer applicants feedback on their performance during the selection process. Our web-site contains details of employment opportunities available and facilitates candidates to apply online. Information is provided to candidates on their right to request a review a decision in relation to their candidature or to make a complaint in relation to the process carried out under the Code of Practice.

We are committed to developing stronger public recognition of the Public Appointments Service and publicjobs.ie. To this end, there has been a significant investment in a marketing and communications programme and in initiatives to enhance the diversity of the candidate pool. This included the ongoing promotion and marketing of campaigns and attendance at careers fairs and conferences, and social media, Focus groups were also held with groups of people who had never applied for public sector jobs through the Public Appointments Service in order to understand their perceptions of public service careers and the recruitment process. The feedback received will be incorporated into new recruitment processes being developed in 2020 and will be central to the development of the new Marketing Strategy.

We use social media (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) to promote our services and to publicise positions advertised on publicjobs.ie. For specific roles, Executive Search is used to reach a wider, more relevant, audience of prospective suitable candidates for senior positions in the Civil and Public Service.

Key Action points

Provide general information on a broad variety of careers in the public service in order to inform new visitors to publicjobs.ie;

Provide a facility for members of the public to register with publicjobs.ie and stateboards.ie to set up alerts to receive the latest opportunities within the Civil and Public Service;

Bring vacancies to the attention of potential applicant pools by using an appropriate method and style of marketing;

Use social media to promote the Civil and Public Service and to publicise a number of positions advertised on publicjobs.ie or stateboards.ie;

Ensure that the material provided in relation to each post is accurate, up-to-date, clear and easy to understand;

Ensure all generally available information is accessible in both electronic and printed formats where required (e.g. Customer Action Plan, Annual Report, Familiarisation material etc.);

Provide detailed information on all of the stages involved in the campaign and the implications of these for candidates;

Provide information to prospective candidates about the post and the type of person required which accurately reflect the requirements of the post;

Ensure information is available in an accessible format, on request, for customers who may require it;

Continue to make efforts to simplify the application process;

Provide information to applicants on their responsibilities under the Code of Practice and how decisions can be reviewed;

Provide "test familiarisation" information material for all tests to help inform applicants in relation to issues such as the format of the test; answer sheets; the scoring system; and the time limits involved;

Give clients access to up-to-date information tailored to their interests;

Ensure all existing and potential clients have an understanding of the skills, expertise and capability of PAS as a shared recruitment service;

Continue to up-grade our web-site facility to increase access to a wider range of services;

Capture feedback from clients and candidates to get an understanding of their needs;

Ensure information on publicjobs.ie is accurate, up-to-date and useful, and is tailored to our different customer groups;

Use e-testing which helps reduce the need for candidates to travel long distances to a test centre and which will give test results almost instantaneously;

Continue the use smart tablets for interviews. In addition to improving the Board Member experience and reducing paper reliance, it also has the potential to improve information governance of personal data;

Continue to use video technology to conduct interviews remotely;

Provide meaningful feedback to candidates in respect of selection processes.

Timeliness and Courtesy

Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer.

Give contact names in all communications to ensure ease of ongoing transactions

Key Action points

Ensure our staff provide a friendly, courteous, efficient, timely and punctual service;

Ensure staff provides their names when answering or making phone calls.

Ensure contact details are provided in all communications.

All communications must issue from a named individual.

Provide documentation to applicants in a timely manner (e.g. test/interview information);

Provide adequate notice to applicants in advance of tests and interviews;

Supply results and feedback on tests and interviews to applicants as early as possible;

Develop and deepen our Customer Relations Management approach to serving our clients with a designated Client Manager assigned to each client;

Provide cost effective recruitment and selection solutions and related services to clients;

Consult & involve clients when planning recruitment competitions on their behalf;

Continue to adopt a systematic approach to project planning & management for all campaigns;

Continue the in-house development of assessment tools and techniques;

Continue to monitor selection methods and their efficiency and effectiveness;

Provide Board Members with timely relevant briefing/training/e-learning as appropriate (including training on new approaches, where required);

Provide adequate notice to Board Members for attendance at interview boards and provide board member documentation in a timely manner (e.g. Board papers);

Conduct applicable recruitment and selection processes in line with the relevant CPSA Code of Practice (ensuring probity and a fair, consistent and transparent process in which appointment is on merit and in line with best practice);

Maintain adequate records to prove that the above recruitment and selection processes were conducted in line with the relevant Code of Practice;

Monitor customer satisfaction with the timeliness and courtesy of staff and act on any issues arising.

Complaints

Maintain a formalised well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple to-use system of feedback/complaints for customers who are dissatisfied with the service they have received

We have formal systems in place to deal with customer feedback/complaints in relation to service delivery (*outlined in Appendix 3*). There is a “Contact Us” link in 2 places on each page of our website. A “Customer Charter” link is on each page of our website and is also on the “Contact Us” page.

Key Action points

Ensure our customer complaints and comments system is widely known and available to our clients/customers;

Raise awareness of staff in relation to the causes of complaints & effective complaint handling;

Prepare management information reports on complaints in order to contribute to the future development of services.

Appeals

Maintain a formalised well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to their application or who believe that there has been a breach of the Code of Practice that may have compromised the integrity of the recruitment and selection process.

We have formal systems in place to deal with requests for review in relation to selection decisions or complaints where it is believed that the integrity of the recruitment and selection process was compromised (outlined in Appendix 3). There is a “Review Process” link on each page of our website and the Review Process is explained in the Information Booklet accompanying each campaign at advertisement stage.

Key Action points

Provide information to candidates on the review process in place in Candidate Information Booklets and Circulars;

Clarify request with candidates where necessary.

Conduct a robust review, taking account of all relevant information;

Maintain database to record all relevant details to facilitate reporting;

Adhere to the timelines provided in the Code of Practice when conducting reviews;

Prepare management information reports on requests for review received and provide learnings to contribute to the future development of services.

Consultation and Evaluation

Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.

In developing our services, we have utilised the valuable contribution of customers. The office regularly consults with clients on service development and delivery through the Client Relations Management Team. In developing our Customer Charter and the Standards of Service Delivery we were guided by the Customer surveys to ensure appropriate standards were set.

We have put a programme in place to ensure appropriate monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the achievement of our commitments. We will evaluate the level of achievement of all commitments to ensure accountability and to facilitate learning and continuous improvement. The results will be used to identify more challenging customer service commitments.

We will use our Annual Report to report on the service standards in place; how performance has been measured; whether standards have been achieved and the next steps in the customer service improvement process. Where standards have not been met, we will identify how it is intended to meet standards in the future. The report will include the results of all customer surveys; this report will include any actions taken on foot of monitoring results/customer complaints.

Key Action points

Continue to conduct regular surveys of key customers groups (Clients, Selection Board Members, Staff and Candidate Surveys);

Evaluate progress on a quarterly basis in achieving our Standards of Service Delivery;

Use feedback from the surveys, focus groups, comment cards, and other monitoring systems to improve performance, by identifying common issues and putting measures in place to address these issues (and benchmark progress over time);

Ensure the commitments in this Action Plan are adequately reflected in each team's business plan, and in all individual PMDS objectives;

Provide regular reports to the Management Board and to the Board of PAS on the achievement of standards of service delivery and on measures being introduced to improve areas in which we might not be achieving the standards set;

Provide reports to the Management Board or Senior Management Team and to the Board following each customer survey on the feedback received and the actions being recommended as a result of the feedback received;

Publish a statement of progress on achieving Standards of Service Delivery, and actual results of surveys conducted in our Annual Reports, and on the Intranet;

Introduce a new reporting framework on the status of campaigns and panel availability;

Develop an online system, which will facilitate client organisations to log resource requests and track progress;

Provide relevant guidance across the public service, along with the sharing of best practice;

Host client events to facilitate networking and the dissemination of relevant guidance / information.

Choice

Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

Our Client Relations Management Team plays a vital role in tailoring recruitment services to suit the specific needs of individual client organisations on an ongoing basis.

Key Action points

Continue to provide an on-line application process for all campaigns and to provide results and other campaign related correspondence to applicants on-line (including making available on-line assessment material for general service entry level posts);

Continue to provide an e-testing facility that will allow candidates conduct tests from a location of their choice;

Continue development of website to provide additional electronic services;

Continue development of our social media presence to provide information and to interact with customers/clients, where possible;

Provide video & tele-conference facilities for interviews, where required;

Client Relations Management Team to continue to provide a single point of contact for client organisations on service delivery matters;

Provide tailored recruitment and selection services (or part services) to clients on request;

Provide a variety of recruitment and selection options to clients for their senior management and professional positions which are in line with best practice;

Enhance the client portal on publicjobs.ie to facilitate client organisations in managing their own campaigns.

Official Languages Equality

Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

We encourage all customers to exercise their right to choose to be dealt with by us through Irish or English or bilingually, if preferred.

Key Action points

We will continue to fulfill our obligations outlined in our Scheme under the Official Languages Act, 2003, and ensure that all members of the public are facilitated in using Irish, if they so choose;

Ensure all correspondence (written/electronic) received in Irish is responded to in Irish;

Provide all key publications bilingually;

Ensure all candidate facilities available on the www.publicjobs.ie website are bilingual;

Continue to encourage and support staff in developing or improving their Irish skills at Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced Level courses.

Better Co-ordination

Foster a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.

Through the Client Relations Management Unit we are proactively planning service delivery in partnership with our clients. This approach of tailoring our services to meet the specific needs of clients.

Key Action points

Continue to provide a recruitment service for the public service;

Provide responsive, quality, timely recruitment and resourcing services to our core public service clients;

Continue to build on our model of client engagement to provide an enhanced customer centric focus that actively listens to the feedback provided by our clients to improve service delivery;

Introduce process improvements and the development of new systems that are required to deliver a high quality and efficient service to our clients;

Work with individual clients to identify their resourcing needs so that the model of recruitment and selection activity (or part services) can be tailored to best meet those needs;

Support the NSSO, both from the shared HR perspective and as a client of NSSO for our own staff;

Amalgamate, where possible, recruitment campaigns for various clients so that candidates will only have to undertake the recruitment process once to be eligible for appointment to a number of posts/locations;

Strengthen our role as a trusted advisor, through the provision of relevant guidance across the public service and the sharing of best practice. We also intend to host client events to facilitate networking and the dissemination of relevant guidance / information.

Continue our involvement in the selection of people for nomination to the Boards of State Bodies.

Internal Customer

Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

We are very conscious that the standard of service enjoyed by external customers is directly related to the overall satisfaction of our own staff with the organisation in which they work.

Partnership structures, which are firmly established within the office, provide a useful mechanism for staff consultation and participation. Staff will be given the appropriate supports including training and development to ensure quality customer service is delivered.

Key Action points

Revise our Internal Customer Charter, through Partnership;

Develop, through Partnership, a new People Strategy to support the Strategy Statement 2021 - 2023;

Provide the leadership, at all levels across the organisation, to motivate staff and provide clear direction, inspiration and support in ensuring continuous improvement in the services we deliver;

Through the Partnership process, continue to provide a work environment that is challenging, stimulating and enjoyable for all staff;

Conduct regular Internal Customer Surveys and prepare and implement an Action Plan based on feedback from each survey;

Participate in HR benchmarking activities and maintain the NSAI Excellence Through People Accreditation;

Provide necessary support to staff in advance on any major change programme;

Provide ongoing support to staff to allow them to carry out their duties in a healthy and safe environment, and to provide an excellent customer service to staff (e.g. Wellness Programme, relevant Information Sessions, fully functioning Intranet);

Maintain a highly effective Performance Management and Development System, that ensures that staff are aware of what is expected from them; are equipped to deliver on their objectives; and are measured against challenging performance indicators;

Provide the training and development for staff to allow them to meet their objectives and ensure personal development;

Develop an innovative culture which will lead to process improvements and the delivery of services more efficiently, using fewer resources;

Ensure effective communication across the organisation.

Your Responsibilities

In order to ensure that this Office can provide a quality customer service to all of its customers, customers should be aware that they also have responsibilities in this regard.

All customers are obliged to treat staff in a respectful manner and are expected to respect the right of the individual to dignity in their working life. Any form of harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated.

Applicants must not knowingly or recklessly provide false information, canvass any person with or without inducements, or interfere with or compromise a recruitment/selection process in any way.

We would be grateful if applicants could:

Read carefully all supporting documentation relating to the application process and/or the assessment process in advance of filling out an application or in advance of sitting a test or interview;

Quote candidate reference numbers in all correspondence and/or communication with this Office;

Ensure that all application forms are completed fully, accurately and legibly, include any necessary supporting documentation and are returned by the specified closing date;

Provide correct information in any correspondence with this Office;

Notify this Office at the earliest possible opportunity if they cannot attend for a scheduled interview;

Familiarise yourself with the Codes of Practice (available on www.cpsa.ie) before you submit an appeal of a decision of PAS;

Treat the staff of PAS with dignity and respect;

Comply with our directive that PAS does not allow the unsanctioned use of any type of recording equipment on its premises or at its test venues. This applies to any form of sound recording and any type of still picture or video recording, whether including sound recording or not, and covers any type of device used for these purposes (*this directive is set out in more detail in the Information Booklet accompanying each Job Advertisement*);

For applicants with a disability, notify us as early as possible should you require any accommodations at test or interview.

Complaints & Comments

We welcome customer feedback on all of our services (including compliments, general comments and complaints) and invite customers to contact us with any feedback that they may have;

All complaints will be dealt with promptly, fairly & impartially in line with our Procedure for Dealing with Customer Complaints (contained in Appendix 3); Contact customerfeedback@publicjobs.ie

How to Contact the Office

Our Head Office, is located at

**Chapter House,
26-30 Abbey St. Upper,
Dublin 1.**

Our web-site address is www.publicjobs.ie: email: info@publicjobs.ie

Our telephone service -

the main number is **01- 8587400**

Locall **1890 449 999**

Contact details and direct dial numbers for staff responsible for all our frequently used services are included in the Appendix 1.

Where Can I Find Out More?

Information on current job opportunities are available on our web-site www.publicjobs.ie

Websites for individual Government Departments can be sourced through www.gov.ie

Further copies of this plan, together with Office publications are available on request and can also be viewed on our website www.publicjobs.ie.

'Like' us on Facebook : Public Appointments Service

Follow us on Twitter : @publicjobsie

Linkedin Page : Public Appointments Service

PAS Social & Digital Media Policy

Who we are:

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is the independent centralised recruitment, assessment and selection body for the Civil Service, Health Service, Local Authorities, the Garda Síochána, Prison Service and other public service bodies.

These guidelines outline your involvement criteria for postings and published commentary on any of the Public Appointments Service social media sites.

What to expect from our Social Presence:

PAS uses social media to share information with our community. Our Social Media sites are managed by authorised personnel of PAS during normal working hours. While we welcome your input and thoughts, we will remove comments or content that include:

- Obscene or racist content
- Abusive content
- Potentially libellous statements
- Plagiarized material
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Posts or comments on issues of a political nature.

Facebook

PAS uses Facebook to:

- Post jobs in relation to publicjobs.ie
- Advertise events that we'll be attending such as Careers Fairs and GradIreland
- Respond to queries from members of the public
- Share content relevant to the Civil and Public Service

Twitter

PAS uses Twitter to:

- Repost jobs in relation to publicjobs.ie
- Follow and retweet organisations and people relevant to the Civil and Public Service

- Post photos and videos from our events
- To issue notices about external factors that may affect normal operations e.g. weather related

Linkedin

PAS uses LinkedIn in a similar way to Facebook to

- Post jobs in relation to publicjobs.ie
- Advertise events that we'll be attending such as Careers Fairs and GradIreland
- Provide information about PAS

We welcome feedback and ideas from all our followers, and will endeavour to join the conversation where possible. However, we may not be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received.

Sending a message via Social Media will not be considered as contacting our office for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through the social media channels. Please use the info@publicjobs.ie email address for communicating a query to PAS.

CUSTOMER CHARTER

2021 – 2023

Our Vision

Recognised as the centre of excellence in recruitment, trusted by those we serve.

Our Mission

Recognised as the centre of excellence in recruitment, trusted by those we serve

Our Services

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is responsible for resourcing via recruitment and promotion competitions. The activities of PAS are primarily focused on the sourcing of candidates for roles in the Civil Service, the most senior roles in Local Authorities, leadership positions and Hospital Consultant roles for the HSE, trainees and internal promotions for An Garda Síochána, large volume recruitment at all levels in the Civil Service, and a range of Head of Office and specialist roles across the civil and public service.

This Office seeks to deliver high standards of customer service, and it is our goal to deal with our clients and candidates in a professional, fair and impartial manner, and with courtesy and respect.

Our Customer Charter sets out the customer service levels against which our performance can be measured for all of our customers (client organisations; candidates and prospective candidates; and selection board members)

Our aim is to treat our clients, candidates and colleagues with dignity and respect and provide a professional service which focuses on improving quality and value.

Our Commitment To You

Recruitment: Potential candidates can expect a customer-oriented experience when accessing career opportunities, with speed and ease of delivery a key factor in engaging talent. PAS has met the challenges of Covid-19 by transitioning to the remote provision of our recruitment services. We will embrace the opportunity to adopt innovative solutions to continue the delivery of our services to all clients.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: PAS is committed to implementing systems, policies and processes to ensure a possible candidate pool, reflective of our diverse population.

Recruitment Service Delivery: PAS is positioned to respond appropriately to client requests, adopting a flexible scalable resourcing model to respond to demands.

Reform: PAS actively supports the ongoing delivery of Civil Service Renewal and Public Service Reform agendas. Attracting and retaining a diverse and engaged workforce is a key factor in delivering on the reform agenda.

Trusted Partner: PAS aims to provide an informed and evidence based advisory function to support public policy development.

New Ways of Working: PAS undertakes to strengthen and evolve our recruitment model to be responsive to the evolving requirements of our clients and our candidates in a competitive environment.

Marketing and Social Media: Our objective is to attract more diverse and high quality applicant pools, to promote our client organisations and inform the people we serve of our role in developing a workplace of the future as a recruiter of choice for the civil and public service.

Technology and Digital Presence: We will continue to exploit opportunities for use of innovative technology solutions and communication avenues to ensure we keep pace with the rapid rate of advances in technology and an increasingly tech-savvy population.

Organisational Governance and Controls: We have effective corporate governance and compliance structures, processes and systems in place to support the ongoing work of the organisation, ensuring compliance and best practice.

Organisational Capacity: Building our leadership capability and our collective capacity to be agile, resilient, engaged, inclusive and open to change, will equip us to meet the challenges of the future.

Better Use of Data and Metrics: PAS will improve organisation performance, measured in terms of service delivery, through the development and use of advanced data analytics.

When dealing with us you can expect:

Professional, courteous staff who will identify themselves, and provide appropriate contact details for any further communication;

While working remotely, staff have their phone lines transferred and are in a position to answer phone calls made to their direct numbers. Otherwise, requests for telephone conversation acknowledged promptly.

An acknowledgement of all written enquiries (including e-mail) within 3 working days and a reply to your enquiry within 10 days.

When providing information we will:

Provide accurate and appropriate information on a recruitment campaign and/or your candidature using clear and simple language;

Ensure all information published in hard copy is also published on our website (e.g. Governance Framework, Customer Action Plan, Annual Report, Strategy Statement, test familiarisation material, etc.);

Ensure information is made available, when requested, in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, audio format, etc.;

Comply with our legal and regulatory obligations, particularly the CPSA Codes of Practice (as applicable), Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation.

For Client Organisations we will:

Deliver quality candidates through best practice approaches, inclusive recruitment practices and improved time to hire metrics;

Nominate a designated person to liaise with you as regards your requirements;

Consult and involve you when planning recruitment competitions on your behalf;

Continue to build on our model of client engagement to provide an enhanced customer centric focus that actively listens to the feedback provided by our clients to improve service delivery.

Introduce process improvements and develop new systems to enable us to deliver a high quality and efficient service to our clients:

Work with individual clients to identify their resourcing needs so that the model of recruitment and selection activity (or part services) can be tailored to best meet those needs.

Provide cost effective recruitment and selection solutions and related services;

Meet with clients to further develop the relationship and gain a greater understanding of the needs and challenges of each client organisation. Client management meetings provide a dedicated space for clients to discuss their staffing requirements (including future plans), current recruitment campaigns and to facilitate a two way communication and feedback on the service provided;

Provide project plan for each campaign within an agreed timeframe;

Bring vacancies to the attention of the widest possible potential applicant pool by using appropriate methods of marketing and using, publicjobs.ie and other social media to advertise campaigns;

Share relevant information and updates with clients on a regular basis through a quarterly PAS Client Newsletter;

Introduce a new reporting framework on the status of campaigns and panel availability. We will also be developing an online system, which will facilitate client organisations to log resource requests and track progress.

Provide advice and guidance with the design and implementation of merit based internal promotional processes;

Provide a variety of recruitment and selection tools to you for senior management and professional positions which are in line with good practice (e.g. executive search, in-depth assessment, advanced assessment techniques);

Strengthen our role as a trusted advisor, through the provision of relevant guidance across the public service and the sharing of best practice;

Host client events to facilitate networking and the dissemination of relevant guidance / information.

Provide access to our recruitment application system for all clients who wish to use this application system for their own recruitment and selection needs;

For Candidates we will:

Ensure probity and a fair, consistent and transparent process in which appointment is made on merit and in line with best practice by conducting applicable selection processes in line with the CPSA Codes of Practice;

Ensure probity, fairness, consistency and transparency where appointments are on merit and in line with good practice for all campaigns not covered by the CPSA Codes of Practice;

Develop information booklets which set out the role, terms and conditions and the essential requirements for the post;

Acknowledge receipt of your application via publicjobs.ie;

Provide information on the different stages involved in the recruitment campaign and the selection process;

Provide adequate notice for attendance at tests and interviews;

Issue results from each stage of a selection process in a timely manner;

Provide each candidate with the result of their participation in each stage of the process, and provide feedback to candidates on request;

Use assessment techniques which are up-to-date, appropriate to the post, and in line with good practice;

Provide information to candidates on accessing the Code of Practice, or the Guidelines for PAS where the Codes of Practice do not apply;

Process all requests for review/complaints within timelines published by the CPSA, and in cases where this is not possible, keep candidate informed of status of review;

For applicants who have declared to us that they have a disability, we will ensure that reasonable accommodations are in place.

For assessments tests which may need more time to complete remotely, additional time will be added;

For assessments being carried out remotely, candidates will be given an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the system being used;

For Interview Board Members we will:

Have a dedicated Board Member Unit in place to deal with issues arising;

Provide relevant & up to date training (including training on use of e-enabled tools);

Provide training on new approaches in advance of their introduction and provide refresher training, where required;

Provide documentation in a timely manner;

Provide adequate notice for attendance at interview boards;

Capture feedback to inform future processes and to identify training needs.

For assessments conducted remotely, Board Members will be given an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the system being used;

Our Website - we will:

Seek to ensure all information is accurate and up to date;

Provide information and online facilities tailored to our different customer groups;

Ensure our website complies with universal access requirements;

Ensure our website is clear, easy to use and contains useful information;

Seek to constantly develop our website and digital communication channels to enhance their value to clients and candidates.

Equality & Diversity:

We will protect and respect equality, diversity & human rights in all dealings with our customers, and within our services, procedures and processes, in accordance with Public Sector Duty principles;

We will accommodate the needs of all of our customers by providing a service that complies with relevant legislation, guidance and good practice (including Equality legislation, the Disability Act 2005 and the Code of Practice for the Employment of People with a Disability in the Irish Civil Service);

We will strive to exceed the Government target for the employment of people with disabilities in the Office and develop best practice approaches. As part of the *Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015 – 2024* Strategy, the public service employment target of people with disabilities was to increase on a phased basis from 3% to 6% by 2024;

Consult with representative groups to increase the proportion of candidates from diverse groups applying for jobs through the Public Appointments Service.

Services in Irish:

We will ensure that all members of the public are facilitated in using Irish if they choose;

We will ensure that all candidate facilities available on the publicjobs.ie website are bilingual;

We will make all key publications available in Irish;

We will ensure that all correspondence (written/electronic) received in Irish will be responded to in Irish.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

We will use our Annual Report to report on the service standards in place, how performance has been measured, whether standards have been achieved and the next steps in the customer service improvement process. Where standards have not been met, we will identify how it is intended to meet those standards in the future. The report will include the results of all customer surveys. This report will also include any actions taken on foot of monitoring results and/or customer complaints.

Comments and Queries

We welcome customer feedback on our services and invite customers to contact us with any feedback that they may have;

All complaints will be dealt with promptly, fairly & impartially in line with our procedures for dealing with customer complaints.

Contact us by email on customerfeedback@publicjobs.ie

Reminder of your responsibilities as a customer

PAS enjoys a very positive relationship with its customers and clients and respect issues rarely arise. Nonetheless, as part of our duties as an employer, we remind customers that you are obliged to treat staff of the Public Appointments Service, and anyone providing services on our behalf, in a respectful manner and to respect the right of the individual to dignity in their working life. Any form of aggression, bullying, harassment or discrimination will not be accepted and we reserve the right to take appropriate action should the necessity arise.

We ask that you familiarise yourself with the Codes of Practice (available on www.cpsa.ie) before you submit an appeal of a decision of PAS.

We ask that you comply with our directive that PAS does not allow the unsanctioned use of any type of recording equipment on its premises or at its test venues.

APPENDIX 1 – Contact Details

Unit	Manager	Services	Telephone Numbers
Justice Sector Recruitment	Antoinette Fearon Ciarán Howley	Justice Recruitment	01 8587526 01 8587658
Large Volume Recruitment	Andrea Wilson	Higher Executive Officer	01 8587605
Large Volume Recruitment	Marie Hayes/Maura Fogarty	Assistant Principal Principal Officer Selection Testing Service for Client Organisations	01 8587494
Large Volume Recruitment	Emma Appleby	Executive Officer Administrative Officer	01 8587664
Large Volume Recruitment	Stephen Kennedy	Temporary Clerical Officer Clerical Officer	01 8587744
Senior Executive Recruitment	Denise Fitzpatrick	Senior Executive Posts	01 8587519
Professional & Technical Recruitment	Marese Phelan/ Mary Keaveney	Professional & Technical posts	01 8587437 01 8587527
Specialist Recruitment Unit	Louise McEntee	Running campaigns for non-core PAS clients	01 8587436
Medical Consultant Recruitment	Louise Keegan	Senior level medical posts	01 8587671
Assessment Services Unit	Aoife Lyons Sarah Heywood Sarah O'Neil Martina Rooney Karen Lopez Julie McCafferty	Assessment Development, Research and Evaluation, Consultancy Services	01 8587629 01 8587628 01 8587647 01 8587561
State Boards Recruitment Unit	Caroline Kielty	Providing an open, efficient and effective gateway and process to identify top quality people for consideration by Ministers for appointment to State Boards.	01 8587592

Unit	Manager	Services	Telephone numbers
Clearance & Assignments Unit – General Service	Niamh Tiernan-Shields	Managing the candidate clearance process; Assigning successful candidates to client Departments/Offices	01 8587720
Clearance & Assignments Unit – Professional & Technical	Gillian Holmes	Managing the candidate clearance process; Assigning successful candidates to client Departments/Offices	01 8587639
People & Culture (Internal)	Emma Adams Ann-Marie Brennan	People and Culture and Training and Development	01 8587694 01 8587702
IT Unit	Paul Page Niall O’ Doherty John Norton Rian O’Farrell	Supporting and developing secure IT systems	01 8587714 01 8587688 01 8587460 01 8587705 01 8587425 01 8587493
Operations Support	Brian Jackson Mary Regan Paul Farrell	Facilities Management and Storage/Retrieval of Records, Careers Store, Customer Service Centre, Reception	01 8587442
Finance Unit	Aileen Tuliani Carol Black	Payment of accounts and financial administration	01 8587415 01 8587636
Senior Executive Recruitment Research	Ashley Gilmore	Conducting executive search and related research	01 8587426
Marketing Unit	Áine Gallagher Peter Smyth	Responsible for marketing to potential candidates in the civil, public and private sectors through advertising, promotion at events, social media and industry publications	01 8587419
Client Relations Management Unit	Julie Hoey	Engaging and collaborating with our Client Departments/Offices	01 8587451

Unit	Manager	Services	Telephone Numbers
Corporate Governance	Catherine Dobbins	Risk Management and Internal Audit, PAS Board	01 8587516
Freedom of Information; Data Protection	Sínead Dolan	Dealing with all requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and ensuring compliance with the Act Dealing with all Data Protection requests and queries	01 8587576
Compliance	Kathleen Jordan	Co-ordinate the review process under the CPSA Codes and to ensure that there is a system in place to act on feedback from these reviews in order to continually improve the business processes and customer service in PAS.	01 8587697
Quality Administration	Joanne O' Connor	Ensuring quality processes throughout the organisation	01 8587645

APPENDIX 2 - Standards of Service Delivery 2021-2023

Service	Standard	Method and Frequency of Monitoring
<p>Client</p> <p>Availability of qualified candidates to meet client demands for general service administrative staff</p>	<p>80% of vacancies filled within 6 weeks from the date of the client request (where there is no requirement for additional security clearance)</p>	<p>Internal Reports - quarterly</p>
<p>Assignment to Senior Management Positions</p> <p>Assignment to Professional/ Technical/Specialist Positions</p> <p>Appointment to Specialist Positions</p>	<p>80% of campaigns to be completed within timescale agreed with clients</p>	<p>Internal Reports – quarterly</p>
<p>Provision of a Quality Service to Clients</p>	<p>90% satisfaction ratings with the services provided by PAS and the quality of candidates assigned</p>	<p>Client Survey</p> <p>Regular meetings with clients & client managers</p>

Service	Standard	Method and Frequency of Monitoring
<u>Applicants</u>		
Provision of a Quality Service to Applicants	Satisfaction with quality of the recruitment process to exceed 80%	Regular Applicant Surveys
Provision of timely notice and results for each stage of the assessment process	80% satisfaction rating with the provision of notice and results	Regular Applicant Surveys
Provision of timely feedback following each stage of the assessment process	80% satisfaction rating with the quality and timeliness of feedback	Regular Applicant Surveys
Provision of appeals/request for review process in line with timescales set out in the CPSA Code of Practice	Acknowledgement issued within 3 working days Outcome notified within 25 working days	Internal Reports - Quarterly
<u>Board Members</u>		
Provision of board papers / Materials	Papers will be provided in time to adequately prepare for the Board	Regular Board Member Surveys
Provision of a Quality Service to Board Members	95% satisfaction rating with: the overall service provided by the Staff of PAS	Regular Board Member Surveys

Service	Standard	Method and Frequency of Monitoring
<u>Internal</u> Provision of comprehensive quality learning and development programmes for all staff	Implementation of annual Learning and Development Plan; Excellence Through People Accreditation retained	Annual Plan in place Accreditation by the NSAI
Provision of the necessary IT support to staff	95% staff satisfaction levels with this area	Annual IT Staff Survey
Provision of a Quality Service to Internal Customers	95% staff satisfaction levels with this area	Regular Staff Survey
Provision of a healthy and safe place to work	95% staff satisfaction levels with this area	Regular Staff Survey
<u>All Customers</u> Provision of suitable, accessible and informative websites - publicjobs.ie; gradpublicjobs.ie; stateboards.ie	99% uptime; Service restored within 2 hours of interruption being notified; Publicjobs.ie; 90% Candidate and satisfaction and 90% Client satisfaction Calls answered promptly (aim - 10 secs. during office hours)	Internal Quarterly Reports Regular Applicant and Client Surveys
Provision of timely service in relation to telephone queries	Routine queries dealt with within 3 days; Non routine queries dealt with within 10 days;	Local Management Monitoring
Provision of a quality service in relation to correspondence	All correspondence in clear and simple language.	Regular Applicant and Client Surveys

Service	Standard	Method and Frequency of Monitoring
<p><u>All Customers</u></p> <p>Provision of a service through Irish where required</p>	<p>All key publications available in Irish</p> <p>All requested services through Irish provided in line with our commitments in Official Languages Scheme</p>	<p>Monitoring by Translator and annual reports to Management Board</p>
<p>Provision of a quality service to all groups covered by the Equality Legislation</p>	<p>Investigation of all requests for accommodations and agreed accommodations provided;</p> <p>All campaigns conducted in line with best practice in relation to equality and diversity;</p> <p>90% Candidate satisfaction with the service provided to candidates with a disability</p>	<p>Annual Report to Management Board from ASU</p> <p>Annual Candidate Survey</p>
<p>Provision of a quality service by PAS staff to all customers</p>	<p>90% satisfaction level with this area</p>	<p>Regular Applicant, Client and Board Member Surveys</p>
<p>Provision of suitable accommodation for all customers which is clean, safe, comfortable and accessible</p>	<p>80% satisfaction level with the facilities provided in PAS</p>	<p>Regular Applicant, Client and Board Member Surveys</p>

APPENDIX 3 – Guidelines in relation to:

(A) Freedom of Information

(B) Dealing with Customer Complaints

(C) Dealing with appeals in relation to decisions taken in a selection process

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act (FOI) gives members of the public a right to access information held by public bodies. In the context of the recruitment activity undertaken by this Office the Act gives applicants the right to:

- access official information held by PAS
- have personal information amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading;
- obtain reasons for decisions affecting their application.

The Freedom of Information Act 1997 is now cited as the "Freedom of Information Act 2014". Since the Freedom of Information Act came into effect on 21 April 1998, the office has been committed to meeting all requests for information to the fullest extent possible without compromising the fairness and integrity of the selection process.

It should be noted that information under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts (FOI) is not restricted to applicants.

Requests made under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts for "Personal Information"

There is no application fee for request that involve "PERSONAL INFORMATION" only as defined in the FOI Acts.

There may be a charge for "Search and Retrieval" and copy of records in certain circumstances. If it is proposed to impose such a charge, you will be advised accordingly and given an estimate of the cost involved, prior to the commencement of a search. You may be asked to pay a deposit. The information will

not be provided until the full amount has been paid. If the actual cost involved for the "search and retrieval" of records concerned is less than the original estimate, the balance will be refunded.

Requests made under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts for "Non-Personal Information"

A "Search and Retrieval" fee may also be payable for requests that include a request for "non-personal" records. If it is proposed to impose such a charge, you will be advised accordingly and given an estimate of the cost involved, prior to the commencement of a search. You may be asked to pay a deposit. The information will not be provided until the full amount has been paid. If the actual cost involved for the "search and retrieval" of records concerned is less than the original estimate, the balance will be refunded.

Details of the contact person for dealing with FOI requests are included in the list of contacts provided in Appendix 1.

Information Available outside of FOI (Free of Charge)

This office has a policy of openness and transparency with regard to access to "personal" information relating to an applicant's individual candidature. Information relating to your candidature (interview notes for example) is available on request from the recruitment unit processing your application;

There is also an option to obtain Feedback on your performance where it is requested within 6 months of receipt of the result of the relevant stage of the process (*e.g. exam, shortlisting, interview*).

Dealing with Customer Complaints in Relation to Service Delivery

We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

If the complaint cannot be dealt with immediately, we will issue a response to you within seven working days of receipt of the complaint. If this deadline cannot be met, we will inform you of progress in dealing with your complaint and provide you with an expected completion date.

If you are unhappy with the response, you may refer your complaint to the Complaints Officer who will respond within seven working days.

The Complaints Officer (Emma Adams) can be contacted at customerfeedback@publicjobs.ie.

Should you still be unhappy after receiving the reply from the Complaints Officer, you should make direct contact with the Complaints Officer again to discuss what action might be taken to ensure that the matter can be resolved.

Customers may at any stage take their complaint to the Ombudsman. The Office of the Ombudsman is an independent agency established to investigate complaints from the public who are dissatisfied with the service they have received from a public sector organisation.

Dealing with Customer Complaints in Relation to Accessibility (Disability Act 2005)

We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

If the complaint cannot be dealt with immediately, we will issue a response to you within seven working days of receipt of the complaint. If this deadline cannot be met, we will inform you of progress in dealing with your complaint and provide you with an expected completion date.

If you are unhappy with the response, you may refer your complaint to the Complaints/Inquiry Officer who will respond within seven working days.

Should you still be unhappy after receiving the reply from the Complaints/Inquiry Officer, you should make direct contact with the Complaints/Inquiry Officer again to discuss what action might be taken to ensure that the matter can be resolved.

A report on your complaint and the measure being put in place to address any issues you raised will be sent to the CEO as part of this process.

Customers may at any stage take their complaint to the Ombudsman. The Office of the Ombudsman is an independent agency established to investigate complaints from the public who are dissatisfied with the service they have received from a public sector organisation.

The Complaints/Inquiry Officer can be contacted at customerfeedback@publicjobs.ie.

Procedures where a Candidate seeks a Review of a Decision

A request for review may be taken by a candidate should they be dissatisfied with an action or decision taken by the Public Appointments Service (PAS). The PAS will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of **Section 7** of the Code of Practice *Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service* published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (Commission). When making a request for a review, the candidate must support their request by outlining the facts they believe show that the action taken or decision reached was wrong. A request for review may be refused if the candidate cannot support their request.

The Commission recommends that, subject to the agreement of the candidate, where the office holder (in this instance the Chief Executive Officer of PAS) considers the matter could be resolved they should first seek to engage on an informal basis, before making use of the formal review procedure.

Procedure for Informal Review

- A request for Informal Review must be made within 5 working days of notification of the decision, and should normally take place between the candidate and a representative of the PAS who had played a key role in the selection process.
- Where the decision being conveyed relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for informal review must be received within 2 working days of the date of receipt of the decision.
- Where a candidate remains dissatisfied following any such informal discussion, he/she may adopt the formal procedures set out below.
- If the candidate wishes the matter to be dealt with by way of a formal review, he/she must do so within 2 working days of the notification of the outcome of the informal review.

Procedure for Formal Review of Selection Process

- The candidate must address his/her concerns in relation to the process in writing to the Chief Executive, outlining the facts that they believe show an action taken or decision reached was wrong.
- A request for review must be made within 10 working days of the notification of the selection decision. Where the decision relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for review must be received within 4 working days.
- Any extension of these time limits will only be granted in the most exceptional of circumstances and will be at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive.
- The outcome must generally be notified to the candidate within 25 working days of receipt of the request for review.

Complaints Process

A candidate may believe there was a breach of the Commission's Code of Practice by PAS that may have compromised the integrity of the decision reached in the appointment process. The complaints process enables candidates (or potential candidates) to make a complaint under **Section 8** to the Chief Executive Officer of PAS in the first instance, and to the Commission for Public Service Appointments subsequently on appeal if they remain dissatisfied.

- Allegations of a breach of the Code of Practice should be addressed in writing, and within a reasonable timeframe, to the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance. The complainant must outline the facts that they believe show that the process followed was wrong. The complainant must also identify the aspect of the Code they believe has been infringed and enclose any relevant documentation that may support the allegation. A complaint may be dismissed if they the complainant cannot support their allegations by setting out how the Public Appointments Service has fallen short of the principles of this Code.
- On receipt of a complaint PAS may determine to engage with the complainant on an informal basis.

For further information on the above procedures please see the Code of Practice *Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service* which is available on the website of the Commission for Public Service Appointments, www.cpsa.ie

There is no obligation on the PAS to suspend an appointment process while it considers a request for a review. Please note that where a formal review of a recruitment and selection process has taken place under Section 7 of this Code of Practice, a complainant may not seek a further review of the same process under Section 8, other than in the most exceptional circumstances that will be determined by the Commission at its sole discretion.

Requests for Feedback/Test Rechecks (*if applicable*)

Feedback in relation to the selection process is available on request. There are no specific timeframes set for the provision of feedback or for carrying out test rechecks.

Please note that the Review Process as set out in the Code of Practice is a separate process with specified timeframes that must be observed. Receipt of feedback is not required to invoke a review. It is not

necessary for a candidate to compile a detailed case prior to invoking the review mechanism. The timeframe set out in the CPSA Code cannot be extended for any reason, including the provision of feedback and/or the outcome of rechecks.

Candidates' Obligations:

Candidates in the recruitment process must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

A third party must not impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process

Contravention Code of Practice

Any person who contravenes the above provisions, or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions, is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.

In addition, if a person found guilty of an offence was, or is, a candidate at a recruitment process:

- they will be disqualified as a candidate and excluded from the process;
- they will be removed from the post where they have been appointed to the post following the recruitment process.