

Public Appointments Service

Quality Customer

Service Action Plan

2017 - 2019

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CONTENTS

Foreword by Chief Executive

The Role of the Public Appointments Service
Our Vision
About the Office

Quality Customer Service Action Plan

Development of the Quality Customer Service Action Plan
Our Customers and the services we provide to them
Recent Developments in Service Delivery
Implementing the Principles of Quality Customer Service

Customer Charter

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Contact Details
- Appendix 2 - Standards of Service Delivery
- Appendix 3 - Guidelines in relation to:
 - *Freedom of Information*
 - *Dealing with Customer Complaints*
 - *Dealing with appeals in relation to decisions taken in a selection process*

FOREWORD

I am pleased to present this Customer Action Plan for the period 2017-2019, 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.

At a time of a strengthening economy and increased demands for talent across skill areas and sectors, this 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, where, through our professionalism and excellence, we will work in partnership with our clients, attracting and engaging great people to the Irish public service.

This Action Plan, in conjunction with our Strategy Statement 2017-2019, 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, what is becoming, a more 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 flexibility, 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 new Strategy Statement and Customer Action Plan.

Fiona Tierney
Chief Executive

THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS SERVICE

OUR VISION

Through our professionalism and excellence, we work in partnership with our clients, attracting and engaging great people to the Irish public service.

ABOUT THE OFFICE

The Public Appointments Service 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 the Public Appointments Service (PAS).

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is the recruitment and resourcing shared service provider for client organisations in the civil and public service. PAS is responsible for the sourcing, assessment and delivery of quality candidates to public service clients. PAS is also responsible for running some internal promotion campaigns in the public service. 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; hospital consultant roles in the public health service; trainee Garda for An Garda Síochána; and a range of leadership and specialist roles across the civil and public service.

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, including the provision of the following services:

- advice and support on recruitment and selection matters to client organisations and other public bodies;
- job analysis services in order to obtain accurate job-related information to guide competency-based selection processes which are also of benefit to our client organisations for human resource development activity;
- a selection testing service (i.e. conducting the testing part of a selection process with the client conducting the remaining selection processes);
- assessor training in selection techniques, including interviewing;
- researching and sharing best practice with the public service in the area of recruitment, assessment and selection.

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 2017-2019, and our commitment to customers and service delivery set out in that document. This Action Plan 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 the Public Appointments Service has a legislative mandate to recruit for, and who avail of the recruitment, selection and advisory services that we provide (as set out on page 5). We will help them to publicise, to the fullest extent possible, the positions which they require to be filled, including through increased usage of social media. We are also open to providing assistance to clients with any other matters where they feel PAS 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 advertised by us 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 DISABILITIES

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.

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, gradpublicjobs.ie, stateboards.ie & social media), telephone, email and our public office. Full details on these are set out on the 'Contact Us' page of publicjobs.ie. While we aspire to interact with our customers via social media, resources, at this point, severely limit the extent to which we will be able to engage with this particular customer engagement channel.

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. Every reasonable effort is made to ensure high quality services are provided in Irish. In line with Government policy, applicants for public service positions who can demonstrate that they are proficient in both Irish and English may be awarded additional credit during the selection process.

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.

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.

RECENT 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 in 2017-2019. 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 annual 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, and all quarterly service standards reports, to identify the main issues arising.

CLIENT RELATIONS MANAGEMENT

In mid-2016 PAS implemented a new Client Relations Management (CRM) approach. A key objective of this was to provide a better service to clients by giving them a single point of contact to deal with their recruitment and staffing requests and to provide updates in relation to progress on campaigns and requests. An additional objective was to improve workflow and work scheduling internally within PAS, by enhancing our overview of current and projected demand for staff at different levels. The CRM team, along with client managers, act as the primary interface between PAS and its client organisations. Regular meetings are held with all major clients to discuss their staffing needs and ensure two way communication and feedback on the service provided. The CRM support team record all requests for staff and campaigns, provide updates and answer queries from client departments and offices, and support client managers in their role by providing them with accurate and up-to-date information on the work ongoing for each client. Regular updates on the status of campaigns and available panels are also provided to clients through circulation of a CRM newsletter.

The approach for requesting staff and new campaigns has been formalised through the introduction of request forms, which the client must complete and submit through the CRM mailbox, and this has greatly improved our ability to track, monitor and report on the status of all staffing requests. An additional objective of the new CRM approach is to enable better working relationships and information sharing with our clients, and, to facilitate this, the CRM team plan to hold a number of Client events and workshops. The first client event, held in December 2016, was

a workshop on 'Preparing for Specialist Recruitment campaigns', and it is hoped to schedule three such events per annum.

COMPLIANCE & QUALITY ASSURANCE

Our Compliance and Quality Assurance Unit co-ordinates the review process under the CPSCA 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.

e-RECRUITMENT

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. In 2016 a project commenced to redesign the publicjobs.ie website to provide an online platform that allows for dynamic creation of new web content for use in promotion of all aspects of the opportunities and services PAS offers to the public. This project is on course for delivery in mid 2017. The overarching vision of this project is a move to a more responsive and engaging experience for the end user, accessing our site in a desktop or mobile context.

Recruitment, Paperless and Remote Solutions

In 2016 a number of new technology solutions were implemented within PAS to enhance recruitment activities and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. These included:

- Addition of a third smaller online testing centre;
- Implementation of additional video conferencing capabilities;
- Implementation of a new secure software solution to support our paperless boards strategy for shortlisting and interview boards.

Developing an e-Learning led solution to support Interviewer skills training

In 2016, PAS commenced a project to transform our existing classroom based training material for Interviewers (Interviewer Skills / PAS Representative Briefing / Chairperson Briefing) into packages of highly engaging, interactive e-learning course material. The new material will form an important part of a new blended learning approach to support the training and continuous development of interview board members. The final product will be highly effective in terms of delivering key messages and will reflect the very latest in terms of modern approaches for such delivery. This training programme will be rolled out from 2017.

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.

In 2016, almost 95,000 online tests were completed by candidates for various recruitment campaigns. Evidence collected by PAS has found that people doing well on the online tests are performing very well at subsequent assessment stages, and PAS has had positive feedback on the calibre of people being appointed from recent campaigns.

In 2016, PAS has continued to roll out the use of technology into the Assessment Centre campaigns. The use of an E-tray for assessment in Executive Officer and Assistant Principal campaigns is now a well-established approach. An E-tray is a dynamic and interactive online assessment exercise which replicates tasks faced in the work context. Candidates are provided with information about a work situation which would be typical of the type of tasks faced by job-holders. As time passes in the exercise they get e-mail and phone call messages that they have to respond to in real time and they also have to produce some written output, which is done online. Candidates have responded very positively to what they have seen as challenging but realistic assessments.

As well as the more formal E-tray assessment, PAS has also introduced lap-tops to support candidates in responding to various case study exercises used at the assessment centre stage of recruitment campaigns and this has been viewed very positively by candidates who are used to working in an on-line environment.

CLEARANCE & ASSIGNMENTS

In 2016 PAS established two separate clearance and assignments teams dedicated to clearing candidates for general service grades and professional and technical posts in the civil service. This allowed for standardisation of the clearance and assignment process and the implementation of measures to speed up the process.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

As much information as possible is supplied to candidates as part of the first line response. A staff member is responsible for registering all appeals to allow for central management, monitoring and reporting. This gives a clearer indication if any particular issues are reoccurring and need to be addressed.

All members of our Appeals Unit have been trained to a high degree in conducting appeals.

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 staff to communicate with customers in the official language of their choice.

From time to time, we run general recruitment campaigns (at Clerical and Executive Officer level) to recruit staff who are proficient in the Irish language in order to ensure that our clients can access the staff they require to assist them meet their obligations under the Official Languages Act. We also recruit other specialist staff (e.g. Aistritheoir) and administrative staff with proficiency in the Irish language on the request of our particular clients (e.g. Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga, Foras na Gaeilge). We also run the process to recruit Garda Trainees with fluency in the Irish Language.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Equality and diversity are central to the culture of the organisation. PAS ensure this through:

- Equality-proofing all of the new assessment and selection techniques;
- Conducting equality monitoring on all large-volume tests;
- The implementation of our internal Equality and Diversity Policy and Accessibility Action Plan which are monitored by the Equality Monitoring Group (who also monitor adherence to the requirements of the Disability Act);
- Including Equality and Diversity issues as part of the Corporate Orientation Programme for all new staff; and providing Disability Awareness and Diversity Awareness training for staff;
- The development of a booklet entitled '*Accessible features and services of the Public Appointments Service*'. This information booklet highlights the various aspects of the accessible recruitment service provided and the physical accessibility of the office in general. It focuses on reassuring customers that PAS has the facilities and services necessary to allow them take part in the recruitment process of their choice in a fair and impartial manner. This booklet is available on publicjobs.ie.
- Involvement in the WAM Programme – Willing Able Mentoring Programme. This is a work placement project held in conjunction with the Equality Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, AHEAD and PAS. This programme encourages graduates to undertake a six-month work placement. PAS conducts the interviews for this programme annually.

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 provided to 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.

We provide a Quality Customer Service Telephone Skills Course and an Effective Writing Course. Both of these programmes have been designed specifically for the staff of PAS and focus on our particular customers and how their needs can be met.

We publish regular updates on our office Intranet in relation to our achievement of the standards and the results of customer surveys.

INTERNAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

In 2016, PAS, once again achieved an accreditation in the annual NSAI assessment for Excellence Through People (ETP).

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 process for business improvement covers six core sections. These sections are:

- Business planning and continuous improvement;
- Effective communication and people engagement;
- Leadership and people management;
- Planning of learning and development;
- Evaluation of learning and development;
- Human resource systems and employee wellbeing.

The assessor was on site for the assessment, reviewing written evidence of compliance with the standard, and interviewing a selection of staff in the office. The assessor examined all six areas and followed up on recommendations made in the previous assessment.

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

IMPLEMENTING THE 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;

Provide Customer Comment Cards in public areas of our office to encourage feedback from all of our customers;

Invite feedback from our customers on our website (www.publicjobs.ie).

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

Respect the principles of equality & diversity in all dealings with our customers;

PAS comply with the newly developed “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 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 quota of 3% for the employment of people with disabilities in the Office and develop best practice approaches;

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 both Diversity and Disability Awareness Training for all staff;

Proactively support Government Departments and Offices in the employment of people with disabilities;

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.

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;

Implement our Accessibility Action Plan within the agreed timeframe;

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; Review health and safety policy and procedures;

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, if they request it within 6 months of receipt of the result of the relevant stage of the process (*eg exam, shortlisting, interview*). Our web-site contains details of employment opportunities available and offers the facility to download application forms or apply online.

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.

We also provide information to clients on best practice in recruitment and selection.

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 (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 a "test familiarisation" information booklet 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;

Develop self-assessment tests to support prospective applicants in getting an understanding of their likely test range to help realistic decision making;

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;

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.

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;

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 as appropriate (including training on new approaches in advance of their introduction and refresher training, where required);

Roll out e-Learning training for Board Members;

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 appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.

We have formal systems in place to deal with customer complaints in relation to service delivery and for dealing with appeals in relation to selection decisions (outlined in Appendix 3).

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;

Provide information to candidates on the review process in place;

Monitor number of appeals at each level;

Provide relevant information for all initial requests for review or feedback;

Prepare management information reports on complaints and requests for review received (including actions taken to reduce the number of appeals) in order 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 consulted with various customers to ensure appropriate standards were set.

All Quality Customer Service (QCS) initiatives have been advanced through our Partnership structures.

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 and /Annual Output Statement 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 and the level of customer complaints received; this report will include any actions taken on foot of monitoring results/customer complaints.

Key Action points

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

Continue to use Comment Cards to obtain feedback from all customers who visit Chapter House;

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 quarterly reports to the Management Team 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 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;

Use the Annual Output Statement to report on the achievement of the commitments contained in our Customer Charter.

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. Our e-government programme is extending the nature and range of electronic services available to all our customers.

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 using the internet;

Continue development of website to provide additional electronic services;

Pilot new approaches to our online testing model, incorporating the use of 'remote proctoring' and 'asynchronous testing' and, where the piloting proves successful, roll out as appropriate;

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 to allow them to choose from a range of options which are in line with best practice (e.g. Executive Search, In-Depth Assessment);

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

Continue the roll out of paperless interview boards, replacing board papers with electronic devices.

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 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;

Provide an annual "Customer Services through Irish" course for all interested staff.

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 will also allow us to target opportunities towards particular market segments and geographical areas.

Key Action points

Continue to provide a recruitment service for the public service;

Support Peoplepoint and the Payroll Shared Services Centre (PSSC), both from the shared HR perspective and as a client of Peoplepoint/PSSC for our own staff;

Progress our e-recruitment strategy in consultation with our strategic partners;

Conduct common recruitment campaigns which allow for recruitment across the public service, facilitating a shared PAS recruitment service and delivering economies of scale;

Provide standardised comprehensive training programmes for selection board members to all interested client organisations;

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;

When scheduling tests for interdepartmental campaigns, where possible, offer clients the opportunity to run their own internal promotion campaigns in conjunction with these, in order to avail of the opportunity to include a test as part of their internal selection process;

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

Provide advisory/consultancy services to clients on recruitment matters;

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, now 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 2017-2019;

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 annual 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, Careers Store and SMART Centre are 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.irlgov.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

CUSTOMER CHARTER

2017 – 2019

Our Vision

Through our professionalism and excellence, we work in partnership with our clients, attracting and engaging great people to the Irish public service.

Our Services

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is the Shared Service Recruitment Centre for the civil and public service, and 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 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

When dealing with us you can expect:

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

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

Your phone call to be answered promptly (our aim is within 10 seconds);

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:

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

Provide a shared inbox email address so all correspondence and queries will be responded to within the agreed timeframe;

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

Provide cost effective recruitment and selection solutions and related services;

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, primarily, publicjobs.ie to advertise all campaigns;

Advertise upcoming campaigns via social media;

Seek to ensure clients have an understanding of the skills, expertise, capability and capacity, of PAS as a shared recruitment service;

Circulate up-to-date information relating to relevant competitions via quarterly newsletters and email circulars;

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);

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 in accordance with the Codes of Practice of the CPSA (if requested within 6 months of receipt of the result of the relevant stage of the process (eg *exam, shortlisting, interview*));

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;

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

For Interview Board Members we will:

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.

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 respect the principles of equality & diversity in all dealings with our customers;

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 implement the actions in our Accessibility Action Plan within the agreed timeframe.

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 and the level of customer complaints received. 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

The Public Appointments Service 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.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

CONTACT DETAILS

Unit	Staff Names	Services	Telephone Numbers
Graduate and other Administrative Recruitment (including Clerical)	Cathriona Tumelty Marie Hayes Maura Fogarty	<i>Running campaigns for:</i> Temporary Clerical Officer Clerical Officer Executive Officer Administrative Officer Higher Executive Officer Assistant Principal Principal Officer Selection Testing Service for Client Organisations	01 8587468 01 8587494
Garda Trainee, Garda Reserve, Prison Officer	Antoinette Fearon	<i>Running campaigns for:</i> Garda Trainee Garda Reserve Prison Officer Mature Code Trainee Nurse	01 8587526 01 8587468
Senior Executive Recruitment	Niamh McGuinness	<i>Running campaigns for:</i> Senior Executive Posts	01 8587646
Professional & Technical Recruitment	Denise Fitzpatrick / Marese Phelan	<i>Running campaigns for</i> Professional & Technical posts	01 8587519 01 8587437
Mid Volume Recruitment Unit	Mary Keaveney	Running campaigns that draw a mid-level volume of applicants	01 8587527

Unit	Staff Names	Services	Telephone Numbers
Hospital Consultant Recruitment	Owen Lenehan	<i>Running campaigns for</i> All senior level medical posts	01 8587671
Assessment Services Unit	Áine Gray Sarah Heywood Aoife Lyons Michelle Canny	Assessment Development, Research and Evaluation, Consultancy Services	01 8587413 01 8587628 01 8587629 01 8587647
Human Resources (Internal)	Colm Dorgan Emma Adams	Human Resources and Training and Development	01 8587702 01 8587694
Corporate Development	Catherine Dobbins	Strategic and Business Planning, Risk Management and Internal Audit, Corporate Publications, Partnership	01 8587516
Freedom of Information and Data Protection	Ciarán Oman	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 8587461

Unit	Staff Names	Services	Telephone Numbers
IT Unit	David Bolger Paul Page John Norton	Supporting and developing secure IT systems	01 8587705 01 8587714
Operations Support	Brian Jackson	Facilities Management and Storage/Retrieval of Records, Careers Store, Customer Service Centre, Reception	01 8587442
Finance Unit	Joe Hanahoe Carol Black	Payment of accounts and financial administration	01 8587415 01 8587636
Senior Executive Recruitment Research	Michelle Noone	Conducting executive search and related research	01 8587426
Marketing Unit	Sinéad Coleman	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	Victoria Farrington	Engaging and collaborating with our Client Departments/Offices	01 8587451
Clearance & Assignments Unit	Karen Mooney Gillian Holmes	Managing the candidate clearance process; Assigning successful candidates to client Departments/Offices	01 8587720 01 8587639
Compliance & Quality Assurance	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

APPENDIX 2

Standards of Service Delivery 2017-2019

Service	Standard	Method and Frequency of Monitoring
<p><u>Client</u></p> <p>Availability of qualified candidates to meet client demands for general service administrative staff</p>	<p>Panels in place for Dublin vacancies for general service posts and 80% of vacancies filled within 8 weeks from the date of the client request.</p>	<p>Internal Quarterly Reports</p>
<p>Assignment to Senior Management Positions</p> <p>Assignment to Professional/ Technical/Specialist Positions</p> <p>Selection of suitable candidates for Hospital Consultant Positions</p>	<p>90% of campaigns to be completed within 12 weeks of advertisement</p> <p>90% of campaigns to be completed within 16 weeks of advertisement</p> <p>90% of campaigns to be completed to interview stage within 16 weeks of advertisement</p>	<p>Internal Quarterly Reports</p>
<p>Provision of a Quality Service to Clients</p>	<p>90% satisfaction ratings with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our understanding of client recruitment needs; • Recruitment process timescales; • Quality of staff assigned/recommended 	<p>Annual Client Survey</p> <p>Log of client feedback which is reviewed at weekly meetings</p> <p>Monthly 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%	Annual 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	Annual Applicant Surveys
Provision of timely feedback following each stage of the assessment process	80% satisfaction rating with the quality and timeliness of feedback	Annual 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	Quarterly reports on formal appeals
<u>Board Members</u>		
Provision of board papers / Materials / Smart Tablets	Papers will be provided in time to adequately prepare for the Board	Annual Board Member Survey
Provision of a Quality Service to Board Members	95% satisfaction rating with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training; • Information/Briefings; • Overall service provided by the Staff of PAS 	Annual Board Member Survey

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 Staff Survey
Provision of a Quality Service to Internal Customers	95% staff satisfaction levels with this area	Annual Staff Survey
Provision of a healthy and safe place to work	95% staff satisfaction levels with this area	Annual 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; 85% Candidate satisfaction and 90% Client satisfaction with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of use of publicjobs.ie; • Quality of information on publicjobs.ie 	Internal Quarterly Reports Annual Applicant and Client Surveys
Provision of timely service in relation to telephone queries	Calls answered promptly (aim - 10 secs. during office hours)	Internal Quarterly reports
Provision of a quality service in relation to correspondence	Routine queries dealt with within 3 days; Non routine queries dealt with within 10 days; All correspondence in clear and simple language.	Annual Applicant Surveys and Annual Client Survey

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>Annual Applicant Surveys</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>Accessibility Action Plan fully Implemented</p>	<p>Annual Applicant Surveys</p> <p>Annual Candidate Survey</p> <p>Internal monitoring by Equality Monitoring Committee</p>
<p>Provision of a quality service by PAS staff to all customers</p>	<p>90% satisfaction level with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtesy of staff; • Knowledge levels of staff; • Helpfulness of staff; • Staff efficiency/speed of service; • Availability of staff to handle queries; • Quality of advice received from Staff 	<p>Annual 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>Annual 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

(A) FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

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

access official information held by us in relation to their application
(for selection to a position being handled by us);

have such 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 (*eg exam, shortlisting, interview*).

(B) 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 (Colm Dorgan) can be contacted at customerfeedback@publicjobs.ie or 01 8587702.

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 (Colm Dorgan) can be contacted at customerfeedback@publicjobs.ie or 01 8587702.

(C) PROCEDURES WHERE A CANDIDATE SEEKS A REVIEW OF A DECISION TAKEN IN RELATION TO THEIR APPLICATION

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.