

Public Appointments Service

Quality Customer

Service Action Plan

2014 - 2016

February 2014

First Published in 2014

by the Public Appointments Service

© 2014 Public Appointments Service

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Public Appointments Service.

This document is also published in the Irish Language and the Irish language Version is available on www.publicjobs.ie

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 2014-2016, which sets out our commitment to deliver a recruitment, assessment, redeployment, consultancy 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.

Against the background of a stabilising economy and anticipated 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 and timeliness of services we deliver to our existing and potential clients and customers.

This Action Plan, in conjunction with our Strategy Statement, is timely in that, following a number of difficult years for the country, it provides a clear framework for a leaner PAS to achieve new standards of excellence in the sourcing, assessment, delivery and movement of people and quality candidates 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

To be the recruitment and resourcing shared service provider of choice in the 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 is the centralised provider of recruitment, assessment and selection services for the Civil Service. We also provide recruitment and related human resource advisory services to Local Authorities, the Health Service Executive, the Education Sector, An Garda Síochána, other public bodies and non-commercial semi-state agencies, as requested.

While the moratorium on Public Service recruitment and promotions (as introduced by Government in March 2009) remains in place, there are indications that the Minister for Expenditure & Reform will be sanctioning a limited return to direct recruitment to certain positions in the Public Service. We will position ourselves to ensure that we can fill key positions across the Public Service by a combination of redeployment and/or recruitment, as demand arises.

Amongst our programme of activities we:

- fill key sanctioned positions through recruitment, redeployment and promotion
- recruit openly for essential positions in the public service which are sanctioned to be filled through a recruitment process
- support client organisations in managing the internal redeployment processes within their organisations
- select candidates for promotion within the Civil Service by means of competitive inter-departmental selection tests and interviews;
- assist other public sector organisations with their essential recruitment needs;
- assist clients with their internal promotions processes, where requested;
- 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 redeployment, 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 redeployment, 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 2014-2016, 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 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 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 REDEPLOYMENT

This group includes members of the public service who had either volunteered for redeployment or had been designated by their employer as available for redeployment. They are entitled to a process which is fair and impartial, where they will be dealt with in an efficient and courteous manner. As part of the redeployment process we will provide them with timely and accurate information in relation to possible options for redeployment and inform them whether they have been selected for particular redeployment positions in which they may be interested.

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 or special needs 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 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 2014-2016. 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 service.

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

We have a revised Client Relations Management process in place as of January 2014. A team of client managers has been put in place, drawn from different areas across the office. Each Department/Office/Agency has been allocated a dedicated client manager from that team. The client manager will be the main point of contact for his/her particular Department/Office/Agency and he/she will build a relationship with the Department/Office/Agency within which their recruitment/advisory needs will be discussed, explored and addressed. We envisage that this will have an immediate positive impact on how we interact with our clients.

Ongoing consultation provides a deeper understanding of their needs, which has allowed us to provide a recruitment process tailored to their requirements and to offer a wider range of recruitment related services.

QUALITY OFFICER

Our Quality Officer audits recruitment campaigns and ensures that the Codes of Practice are adhered to, that equality monitoring is conducted, and best practice followed in all campaigns.

e-RECRUITMENT

Our core recruitment application continues to be substantially enhanced in order to provide additional and higher quality on-line services to our customers. The application has been

welcomed by staff, clients and candidates and is viewed as a major improvement in how we carry out our business. Recent enhancements for our various customer groups include:

Clients

- Non Consultant Hospital Doctors - Updated the Extraction File which enabled the HSE to publish extraction dates and run reports themselves instead of having to re-advertise the campaign each time.
- Ability to publish a campaign privately (campaigns confined to a particular department). Clients receive a link to be circulated to staff for an application.
- Updated data extractable from Detailed Application form to reflect changes to form.
- Improvements to the File Vault functionality on the Client Portal.

Candidates

- Ability to attach multiple documents to an application when requested.
- Ability to receive attachments on candidates message board.
- Improved messaging and 'help text' during registration and application process.
- Updates to the Standard Application Form

THE REDEPLOYMENT FACILITY

The new Toolkit has now been agreed and is available on publicjobs.ie, on the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform website, and on our new Moodle page (which is accessible to all Redeployment Officers in Departments/Offices).

Reminders were issued in October and November 2013 to all bodies using the old "place holder" system to flag up redeployments that only named individuals who have submitted CVs can be included under the new toolkit. A clear down of the panel was then completed. This approach was designed to facilitate fast decision making on the "best fit" approach, as agreed in the new toolkit.

The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government has now set up a redeployment system for Local Government, which then feeds into our cross sectoral process, if there are no opportunities available in the local government sector. Wider circulation of posts within the Health Service Executive, through a centralised HSE portal, has also commenced with ongoing discussions to streamline that process.

A self service approach which feeds into the designation process envisaged under the Public Service Management (Amendment) Act 2013 has been created. This is hosted on the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's Training Policy Unit's Moodle Site. Our page on the site is being used to facilitate communications with, and between, Redeployment Liaison Officers across the wider public sector. It is hoped that this will encourage direct redeployment arrangements between organisations as is catered for under the new toolkit.

ISER Database

PAS has a centralised database in place containing a record for all people who retired under the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER). Certain details in respect of people who availed of the scheme are held on the centralised database. This database is used to ensure the re-employment provisions of Department of Finance Circular 12/2009 are complied with when

Departments/Agencies are recruiting staff. Departments/Agencies are required to verify whether the proposed staff member being recruited has availed of the scheme.

e-TESTING

To improve a candidate's experience of the testing process and to increase the efficiency of the process, we conduct computer based and on-line testing where possible.

We have successfully conducted e-Testing for the first stage assessment for the Administrative Officer and Garda Recruits (2014) campaigns. We planned this new development meticulously in advance of go-live by ensuring the robustness of the systems used, gathering evidence of system capacity, establishing experience comparable to the demands of PAS and conducting comprehensive user testing.

The success of these campaigns means that we will use e-testing, where relevant and appropriate, in the future. However, we are cognisant of the need to listen to clients and candidates, through the continued use of surveys, to ensure that our e-testing mechanisms are improved, where necessary.

PAPERLESS INTERVIEW BOARDS

We now conduct a number of our interview boards using our "Board Pad" electronic devices. These devices eliminate the use of paper for all interview board members and will, over time, result in significant savings. We are mindful of the security aspects of this new initiative and we have conducted a risk assessment on our processes and have procedures in place to ensure the process is robust and that all information given to interview board members remains secure.

The feedback from interview board members has been overwhelmingly positive.

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 our appeals officers are drawn from the Senior/Middle management team and all have been trained to a high degree 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).

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Equality and Diversity have remained central to the culture of the organisation with the following initiatives implemented:

- a customised Disability Training Programme, and other Equality related training, are offered to all staff;
- the provision of tests (where a need has been identified) in languages other than English/Irish;
- DORAS (Disability Orientated Recruitment & Assessment Service), allows for the testing of candidate(s) with special needs in a designated testing suite which has been equipped with the latest assistive testing technology. The technology has been installed both to help and support the candidate being tested and the staff member in preparing the test material;
- our 'Features and Services of the Public Appointments Service for customers with special needs' booklet highlights the various aspects of our accessible recruitment service and the physical accessibility of the Office in general. It is aimed at, and focused on, reassuring customers with special needs that we have the facilities and services necessary to allow them to take part in the recruitment process of their choice in a fair and impartial manner. This booklet is available on the website;
- retention of the Excellence through Accessibility Quality Award, National Disability Authority. As part of this award, an audit was carried out which involved the evaluation of our Quality Customer Service, Information Communication Technology and Built Environment facilities. The audit was extremely thorough, involving interviews with customers with a disability, in addition to auditing the Office.

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 new Corporate Orientation Programme (held for all new staff) which is in operation since January 2006.

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

The Excellence Through People accreditation is Ireland's national standard for human resource development, awarded by the National Standards Authority of Ireland (www.nsai.ie). Its two main objectives are to encourage the development of employees to their full potential so as to maximise their contribution to the specific needs of the organisation and to show recognition for organisations that have achieved this standard.

The award is achieved by organisations that have best practice Human Resource Systems in place, particularly in the area of staff training and development, communication, and staff involvement in the decision making processes in the organisation. Our most recent assessment for this award took place in 2013. This assessment involved a lengthy analysis of our Human Resource Systems and interviews with staff from across all grades and sections, in order to discuss their personal experience of opportunities for training and development and involvement in the organisation.

We retained our accreditation in 2013 and we are delighted with this major achievement.

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;

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;

Conduct Equality Monitoring in relation to the nine protected areas for all large volume tests in order to ensure that this recruitment activity complies with the Employment Equality Acts;

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

Conduct equality audits on internal selection systems.

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 or special needs.

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 with special needs;

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 fully availed of 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. 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. We use executive search 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 receive email notifications should a post they might be interested in be advertised;

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

Use social media to promote the Civil and Public Service and to publicise positions advertised on publicjobs.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 with special needs;

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;

Roll out e-testing to a wider range of campaigns which will help reduce the need for candidates to travel long distances to a test centre and which will give test results almost instantaneously;

Use 'board pads' for interviews as often as possible, thus improving the experience for the interview board member and reducing reliance on paper considerably.

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 for attendance at 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 a tailored solution to all other client recruitment needs within agreed timeframe;

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);

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, where possible, that will allow candidates conduct tests from a location of their choice using the internet;

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

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 'board pads'.

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 shared service for the public service;

Continue to provide the Resource Panel Database for all public service sectors, as required;

Support clients in the process of uploading data in respect of their resources available for redeployment;

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

Operate an efficient redeployment process which identifies suitable people for sanctioned vacancies identified by clients;

Provide redeployment consultancy services and support to clients;

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, 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;

Provide assistance to client organisations with the implementation of merit based internal promotional processes, including running a series of seminars on this area;

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;

Participate in the implementation and further development of the Civil Service transformation programme;

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 Strategy for Corporate Development and Human Resources, and a Learning and Development Strategy, to support the Strategy Statement 2014-2016;

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;

Continue our programme of staff consultation, including internal customer panels/staff workshops;

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;

Provide appropriate training to staff and managers, in advance of, and during, the changeover to Peoplepoint;

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;

For applicants with a disability, notify us as early as possible should you have any special requirements 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

2014 – 2016

Our Vision

To be the recruitment and resourcing shared service provider of choice in the 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, redeployment and some 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 faxes and 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, Codes of Practice, 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;

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

Provide cost effective recruitment and selection solutions and related services;

Provide a tailored solution to all other agreed recruitment needs within an agreed timeframe;

Bring vacancies to the attention of potential applicant pool by using appropriate methods of marketing and using, primarily, publicjobs.ie to advertise all campaigns;

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

Give access to up-to-date information tailored to your requirements;

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, candidate profiling, 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;

Operate an efficient redeployment process, in accordance with the agreed 'tool kit', which identifies suitable people for sanctioned vacancies identified by clients;

Provide redeployment consultancy services and support.

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;

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;

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 remaining 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.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

CONTACT DETAILS

| Unit | Staff Names | Services | Telephone Numbers |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Graduate and other Administrative Recruitment | Cathriona Tumelty Emer Grenville | <i>Running campaigns for:</i> Staff Officer Executive Officer Administrative Officer Higher Executive Officer Assistant Principal Principal Officer Selection Testing Service for Client Organisations | 01 8587468 01 8587619 |
| Garda Trainee, Garda Reserve, Prison Officer, and Clerical Officer Recruitment | Antoinette Fearon | <i>Running campaigns for:</i> Garda Trainee Garda Reserve Prison Officer Mature Code Trainee Nurse Temporary Clerical Officers | 01 8587526 |
| Senior Management Recruitment | Niamh McGuinness | <i>Running campaigns for:</i> Senior Management Posts | 01 8587646 |
| Senior Professional Recruitment | Denise Fitzpatrick / Marese Phelan | <i>Running campaigns for</i> Senior professional posts | 01 8587455 01 8587437 |
| Redeployment and Central Applications Facility | Gillian Holmes | Dealing with the Redeployment Process and the Central Applications Facility | 01 8587491 |

| Unit | Staff Names | Services | Telephone Numbers |
|---|---|--|--|
| Other Professional and Technical Recruitment | Marese Phelan | <i>Running campaigns for Professional and Technical posts</i> | 01 8587437 |
| Hospital Consultant Recruitment | Paula Quinn | <i>Running campaigns for All senior level medical posts</i> | 01 8587671 |
| Assessment Services Unit | Áine Gray Sarah Heywood Aoife Lyons | Assessment Development, Research and Evaluation, Consultancy Services | 01 8587413 01 8587628 01 8587629 |
| Human Resources (Internal) | Colm Dorgan Emma Adams | Human Resources and Training and Development | 01 8587702 01 8587576 01 8587694 |
| Corporate Development Unit | Catherine Dobbins | Strategic and Business Planning, Risk Management and Internal Audit, Project Management, Corporate Publications, Partnership | 01 8587516 |
| Freedom of Information and Quality Unit | Gillian Holmes | Dealing with all requests under the Freedom of Information Act 1997 & 2003 Quality assurance of recruitment and selection processes | 01 8587639 |

| Unit | Staff Names | Services | Telephone Numbers |
|---|----------------------------|--|--|
| IT Unit | Karl Brogan Paul Page | Supporting and developing secure IT systems | 01 8587660 01 8587707 01 8587714 |
| Business Support and Records Management Unit | Anne McEvatt | 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 |

APPENDIX 2

Standards of Service Delivery 2014-2016

| 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 all general service posts for which there is demand</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>95% 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> |

| 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 20 working days | Annual Applicant Surveys Quarterly reports on formal appeals |
| <u>Board Members</u> | | |
| Provision of board papers/ Materials / Board Pads | Papers will be provided in time to adequately prepare for the Board | Annual Board Member Survey |
| Provision of a Quality Service to Board Members | 85% satisfaction rating with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information/Briefings; • Overall service provided by the Staff of PAS | Annual Board Member Survey |

| Service | Standard | Method and Frequency of Monitoring |
|---|---|---|
| <p><u>Internal</u></p> <p>Provision of comprehensive quality learning and development programmes for all staff</p> | <p>Implementation of annual Learning and Development Plan; Excellence Through People Accreditation retained</p> | <p>Annual Plan in place</p> <p>Accreditation by the NSAI</p> |
| <p>Provision of the necessary IT support to staff</p> | <p>95% staff satisfaction levels with this area</p> | <p>Annual Staff Survey</p> |
| <p>Provision of a Quality Service to Internal Customers</p> | <p>95% staff satisfaction levels with this area</p> | <p>Annual Staff Survey</p> |
| <p>Provision of a healthy and safe place to work</p> | <p>95% staff satisfaction levels with this area</p> | <p>Annual Staff Survey</p> |
| <p><u>All Customers</u></p> <p>Provision of suitable, accessible and informative websites - publicjobs.ie; gradpublicjobs.ie; stateboards.ie</p> | <p>99% uptime; Service restored within 2 hours of interruption being notified; Publicjobs.ie; 80% satisfaction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity of information on publicjobs.ie; • Ease of use of publicjobs.ie; • Quality of information on publicjobs.ie | <p>Internal Quarterly Reports</p> <p>Annual Applicant Surveys</p> |
| <p>Provision of timely service in relation to telephone Queries</p> | <p>Calls answered promptly (aim - 10 secs. during office hours)</p> | <p>Internal Quarterly reports</p> |
| <p>Provision of a quality service in relation to correspondence</p> | <p>Routine queries dealt with within 3 days Non routine queries dealt with within 10 days All correspondence in clear and simple language</p> | <p>Annual Applicant Surveys and Annual Client Survey</p> |
| <p>Provision of a service through Irish where required</p> | <p>All key publications available in Irish All requested services through Irish provided in line with our commitments in Official Languages Scheme</p> | <p>Annual Applicant Surveys</p> |

| Service | Standard | Method and Frequency of Monitoring |
|---|---|--|
| <p><u>All Customers</u></p> <p>Provision of a quality service to all groups covered by the Equality Legislation and to applicants with special needs</p> | <p>Investigation of all requests for accommodations and agreed accommodations provided; All campaigns conducted in line with best practice in relation to equality and diversity; Accessibility Action Plan fully Implemented</p> | <p>Annual Applicant Surveys</p> <p>Internal monitoring</p> |
| <p>Provision of a quality service by PAS staff to all customers</p> | <p>85% 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

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 Acts 1997 & 2003". 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"

There is an up-front application fee for requests that involve non-personal information (or includes both "personal" and "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 immediately after the results of the competition have been announced;

Applicants for professional and technical posts will be provided with a summary of their performance at interview, on request.

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 (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.

DEALING WITH APPEALS IN RELATION TO A SELECTION PROCESS

General information

The PAS will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of the codes of practice published by the CPSA. A candidate can seek a review by a person in the recruiting body (initial reviewer). Where a candidate remains dissatisfied following this initial review, he/she may seek to have the conduct of the initial review examined by a “decision arbitrator”.

As an alternative to the above, it is open to a candidate to seek to have the matter resolved on an informal basis, as set out below. If a candidate remains dissatisfied following any such discussion it is open to him/her to seek a formal review.

The Codes of Practice are available on the website of the Commission for Public Service Appointments, www.cpsa.ie.

Informal process

- The candidate can avail of the Informal Review within 5 working days of notification of the initial decision, and should normally take place between the candidate and the person who communicated the decision (or relevant person).
- 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.

Formal process

Initial review

- The candidate must address his/her concerns in relation to the process in writing to the Chief Executive, setting out those aspects of the action or decision in relation to his/her candidature that he/she wishes to have reviewed.
- A request for review must be made within 10 working days of the notification of the initial 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 20 working days of receipt of the complaint or request for review. The candidate will receive the outcome of the review by means of a written report.
- Should a candidate be dissatisfied with the outcome of the initial review, he/she may request a review by a decision arbitrator of the conduct of the initial review.

Review by the decision arbitrator

The decision arbitrator is appointed by the Chief Executive. The decision arbitrator is unconnected with the selection process and he/she will adjudicate on requests for review in cases where a candidate is not satisfied with the outcome of the initial review. The decision of the decision arbitrator in relation to such matters is final.

- A request made to the decision arbitrator must be received within 7 working days of the notification of the outcome of the initial review.
- The outcome of the investigation must be notified to the candidate in the form of a written report within 10 working days.

Where a candidate believes that an aspect of the process breached the CPSA's Code of Practice, he/she can have it investigated under **Section 8** of the code.

Candidates' Obligations

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- personate a candidate at any stage of the process
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

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, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.