



27th September 2023

Deputy Neasa Hourigan
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 40724/23 - To ask the Minister for Health the exact requirements for the advertising of local recruitment competitions for HSE staff grade and senior grade psychology posts, such that they are compliant with the Commission for Public Service Appointments and the HSE's own recruitment protocols; the way these differ from other forms of psychology recruitment competitions run by the HSE for psychology posts; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

All services, National and Local have the same requirements under the recruitment licence depending on the nature of the post.

The requirements are as follows:

Once the need to recruit has been identified and approvals attained (including financial approval and for new posts, an approved national grade code & Department of Health approved salary scale), there are a series of steps in managing a recruitment process. Table 1 provides an overview of the sequencing of the different steps in organising and implementing a recruitment and selection process and a broad indication of milestone steps and timescales typically aligned with them, where relevant. Table 2 provides the [Commission for Public Service Appointments](#) (CPSA) expectation in relation to attracting candidates and advertising.

With effect from the 1st April 2005, recruitment for appointments to positions in the HSE is subject to the provisions of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act, 2004 (the Act) and is regulated by the CPSA. Appointments to positions in the Health Service Executive, apart from those positions which are subject to the Local Authorities (Officers and Employees) Act 1926, are subject to the Codes of Practice published by the CPSA. The Codes of Practice set out how the core of principles of probity, merit, equity and fairness might be applied on a principle basis.

The Codes of Practice

- Specify the responsibilities placed on candidates who participate in recruitment campaigns;
- Facilitate feedback to applicants on matters relating to their application when requested;

Outline procedures in relation to (a) requests for a review of the recruitment and selection process and (b) review in relation to allegations of a breach of the Code of Practice.

Please click on the links below to read or download the Codes of Practice.

(i) [Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service](#)

This Code of Practice sets out the principles to be observed in respect of both external and internal appointments to positions in the Civil Service, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive, the Health Information and Quality Authority, any other public body to which the application of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act, 2004 has been extended by order of the Minister for Finance, and to those positions in the local authorities and vocational education committees to which the Local Authorities (Officers and Employees) Act, 1926 applies.

(ii) [Code of Practice for Emergency Short-Term Appointments to Positions in the Health Service Executive](#)

This Code of Practice sets out the principles to be observed in respect of recruitment and selection procedures and practices carried out by the Health Service Executive in situations where it is necessary to make emergency short-term appointments to specific positions in the Health Service Executive to meet critical needs.

(iii) [Code of Practice for Atypical Appointments to Positions in the Civil Service and Certain Public Bodies](#)

This Code of Practice sets out the principles to be observed by Civil Service Departments and Offices in making appointments to specific positions in the Civil Service where (i) the appointment necessitates the re-grading of a person from the grade in which he or she is currently serving to another grade at an equivalent level, or (ii) it is deemed appropriate that the selection process be confined to unestablished civil servants. It also applies to appointment processes in the Civil Service and certain public bodies where standard recruitment and selection approaches may not be appropriate to meet critical short-term needs and it is necessary to assign a specific serving civil servant or public servant to higher duties on a temporary basis for a defined short-term period to address such needs.

Table 1: Overview of the Key Steps in a Recruitment Process and Sequencing of Same

Stage: Pre Recruitment	Step	Milestones
Planning the Selection Process	Recruitment Request; Determining the Need	
	Approvals Process	
	CPSA Review and Complaints procedures: Have appropriately trained and knowledgeable persons available who will manage the review processes at each stage of the selection process.	The CPSA expects recruiters to have appropriate persons identified and appointed at the outset of the recruitment process who will be responsible for managing the Informal and Formal stages of the review and complaints procedures to avoid unnecessary delays.
	Job Specification & Competency Framework	All this work needs to be completed and mapped prior to advertisement as the design of the Application Form needs to reflect the mapping.
	Designing the selection process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deciding on the approach to selection to be used and documenting the process to be undertaken Decide on where and what the panel will be formed for (e.g. geographical reach, care group / speciality areas covered etc.) Designing the Application Form Prepare Guidelines for Selection Board Members, Note Taking and Marking Sheets Campaign Information for Candidates 	The ability to shortlist effectively is dependent on the information that is requested in the Application Form. The Application Form is built against the content of the Job Specification.
	Seek Selection Board nominations & confirm composition of Boards	These can be difficult to source at times so the more lead-in time you provide the more likely you might source available nominees. Also consider that Board Members need to be trained / briefed before sitting on boards.
Stage: Recruitment	Step	Milestones
Attracting Candidates	Advertise in appropriate media	Ideally 2-3 weeks (Exceptions may be made in critical situations)
Receiving Application Forms	Receive completed Application Forms Confirm receipt with applicant	Ideally confirmation of receipt of Application Form will occur as soon as possible / within 24-48 hours.
Eligibility Sift / Shortlisting	Prepare Eligibility Sift / Shortlisting packs and approach to be taken, logistics etc. Brief Selection Board Members on the approach to be taken Complete Eligibility Sift / Shortlisting Provide feedback to candidates	
	Requests for review / complaints re the CPSA Code of Practice	There are specific timelines for requests, and responses to requests that need to be adhered to. More on this in Section 15.

Selection Boards & Training	Professional Knowledge Questions and ideal answers generated by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)	Allow sufficient time for SMEs to generate appropriate professional knowledge questions and ideal answers
	Prepare Interview Board packs	
	Process Interview Board Conflict of Interest Forms	
	Interview Board Member training (www.hseland.ie Recruitment Interview Skills Certificate) and separate briefing on the specifics of the campaign	Board Members should submit proof of their having completed this module before they can serve on a Board (Certificate of Completion).
	Interview Board Housekeeping / Admin, online / venue set up etc.	If interviewing online schedule some practice runs with the Board Members in advance of 'live' interviews to ensure they are comfortable using the technology etc.
Interview	Candidate invited to interview (and given access to interview preparation material)	Make available to candidates a min of 2 weeks before interview date
	Candidate confirm attendance	
	Candidate scheduling	
	Interview ID check, interview	
	Benchmarking of multiple boards	
	Interview Board Results Verification	
	Interview Board Results issue to candidates	
Requests for reviews and / or complaints re the CPSA Code of Practice	There are specific timelines for requests, and responses to requests that need to be adhered to. More on this in Section 15.	
Stage: Post Recruitment	Step	Milestones
Panel Management	Panel Formation	
	Expression of Interest (where being used e.g. multiple vacancies)	e.g. 3 working days for a permanent post or 48 hours for a specified purpose whole time or part time post
	Job Offers	Usually allow 3 days to respond
Clearance	Clearance documentation collection	
	Garda Vetting	
	References	
	Occupational Health	
	Professional Registration	
Contracting	Verification of service and incremental credit	
	Confirm PRSI class, Pension Scheme	
Stage: Post Recruitment	Step	Milestones
	Draw up contract of employment	
	Validate Personnel file content	

Table 2: CPSA expectations in relation to attracting candidates / advertising:

<p>CPSA Expectations</p> <p>In attracting candidates to a position, the Commission expects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear, concise and effective marketing designed to target an appropriate applicant field is communicated openly, to afford equality of opportunity• Marketing approaches ensure recruitment is from the widest pool of available (and relevant) talent and experience. Information about employment opportunities will be made available to all potentially eligible applicants in formats and media that are accessible to persons with disabilities• Marketing techniques do not exclude any particular group within society• In the case of internal appointment processes, all eligible staff members have appropriate access to the marketing approaches used• All marketing and supporting materials are accessible, unbiased and reflect, where appropriate, the job and person specifications and assessment process that will be followed• All reasonable efforts are made to provide an application process which is accessible to all candidates
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To attract external candidates it is necessary to advertise widely / proactively, looking at different sectors, organisations and relevant representative bodies as relevant to the post. At a bare minimum posts should be advertised on www.hse.ie. The HSE engages in online advertising with a specific provider.

I trust this is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



Jacqueline Nix

Assistant National Director, HR Community Operations