###### [The logo of the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/)

###### CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

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| **Open Competition for Appointment to the Role of**  **Senior Information Communications Technology (ICT) Specialists (HEO Level)**  **in**  **The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine**  **The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection**  **The Office of the Revenue Commissioners** |

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners are committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

This competition will be run in compliance with the Codes of Practice prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). Codes of Practice are published by the CPSA and are available on www.cpsa.ie.

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**Candidate Information Booklet**

**Please Read Carefully**

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**Information Communications Technology (ICT) Specialists (HEO Level)**

## Section 1: Overview of the Departments

**The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine**

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) is a multi-functional organisation which provides a wide range of services both directly and through specialist state agencies operating under its aegis. The Department has a wide and diverse customer base which includes farmers, taxpayers, consumers, food processers and other commercial operators, those involved in sea fishing, forestry, bio-energy, research as well as diverse EU institutions, other State Bodies and special interest groups. Irish agriculture has developed a global network where we provide safe and high quality food to consumers in at least 175 countries around the world. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) is at the forefront of these exciting developments as it implements its mission to lead the sustainable development of the agri-food and marine sector and to optimise its contribution to national economic development and the natural environment.

**Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection**

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection is the largest Department of State in the Irish Civil Service and one of the largest organisations in the State. It plays the lead role in developing policy and advising government on social protection and labour market issues including employment rights, income support, pensions and activation policies. The Department also has responsibility for the delivery of a wide range of services through its own nationwide network of offices and through a number of agencies and third party service providers. The Department, which employs over 6,800 staff, has an annual budget of approximately €20 billion, processes in excess of 2.5 million customer service applications per annum and issues about 87 million payments each year to 2.2 million customers and their families. The Department is completely reliant on ICT to deliver its wide ranging remit.

**Office of the Revenue Commissioners**

Revenue is the Irish Tax and Customs administration. Its mission is “*To serve the Community by fairly and efficiently collecting taxes and duties and implementing import and export controls”.*

Revenue has a staffing level of approximately 6,000, deals with almost 3.3 million personal and business taxpayers and is responsible for collecting in the order of €48 billion per annum in taxes and duties for the Exchequer, and for trade facilitation and frontier control. It is a highly decentralised organisation with offices in all parts of the country.

**Vacancies**

Both Departments currently have a number of vacancies for the role of ***Senior Information Communications Technology (ICT) specialists***. The role is equivalent to the grade of Higher Executive Officer (HEO) and offers an opportunity to develop a career in ICT in any one of the three largest Government Departments in the state. Successful candidates will be encouraged and supported to undertake further training and certification so as to build expertise in the area they are appointed to.

The posts will be located at:

* Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine offices in **Portlaoise** and **Backweston** (Celbridge, Co. Kildare) and at Department headquarters in **Kildare Street, Dublin 2**
* Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection Offices in **Dublin** and **Sligo**
* Revenue offices in **Dublin**

The competition will be administered by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on behalf of the three Departments.

## Section 2: Overview of the Role

The role of Senior ICT Specialist is divided into two streams, or areas of specialism, with opportunities to be placed on panels as follows:

**Stream 1 – Senior ICT Development Specialist**

Senior ICT Development Specialist will suit candidates with an interest in further developing their ICT career in areas such as software and applications development and testing, web development, data management, data base administration, project management, business analysis/ discovery, business intelligence and data analysis.

**Stream 2 – Senior ICT Infrastructure and Operations Specialist**

Senior ICT Infrastructure and Operations Specialist will suit candidates with an interest in further developing their ICT career in areas such as enterprise architecture, technical infrastructure service design and delivery, telecommunications and networking infrastructure delivery support, technical support, ICT service management, operations and server support, ICT Security/Cyber Security, Cloud computing and project management.

Candidates may apply for positions in either one or both streams so long as they meet the relevant essential qualifications and experience criteria set out below. Separate panels will be created for each stream.

Following an assessment process, candidates who achieve the qualifying standard will be placed on one or both panels and assigned to fill vacancies as they arise. The panels will remain in force for a period of up to two years from the date of the first appointment or until exhausted.

In cases where a candidate applies to participate in both streams of the competition, the one selection process will be used to assess suitability for both streams but the candidate will be assessed separately for each stream.

In the event that a candidate achieves a place on both panels, he/she will be offered one or more appointments from either panel as vacancies arise until such time as the candidate is appointed or until the panels expire. The appointment of the candidate to a post automatically removes the candidate from both panels.

Candidates who refuse an offer of appointment to a specific panel and location will retain their placing on that panel but forfeit their right to be offered an appointment to that location under that panel.

**Duties of the Role**

The specific technical duties of these posts will largely be determined by the area to which you are assigned but in general will include some or all of the following:

* Develop and support end-to-end business application solutions, or infrastructure and operations solutions, across a broad set of leading technologies including reporting, interfacing and business intelligence solutions;
* Promote the effective use of ICT to support the Business of the organisation;
* Demonstrate and maintain a broad knowledge of technology solutions, current trends and techniques and proactively pursue new technology developments;
* Take responsibility and be accountable for ensuring issues are resolved or escalated to the proper resources to resolve in a timely manner with minimum disruption to the operational areas.
* Critically evaluate and analyse business information, translating business requirements into design options that are (i) cost effective (ii) efficient (iii) sustainable and reusable, (iv) comply with standards and (v) enhance business processes;
* Ensure that all IT security policies and procedures are adhered to;
* Participate in the development and roll out of ICT policies as required;
* Create and maintain comprehensive technical documentation
* Provide effective leadership to a team of IT specialists ensuring a focus on continuous improvement and service delivery
* Manage a range of project groups and quality improvement initiatives at the same time both in relation to ICT Projects and non ICT specific projects, managing issues and risks and driving progress to ensure project timelines are met
* Work with business units to help identify ICT needs;
* Work within and across Departments and functions as may be required to deliver on projects which have a cross functional relevance;
* Stream 1 - Database Administration and Data Analysis;
* Testing and quality assurance of solutions including the preparation or oversight of test scripts and the use of automated testing procedures;
* Drafting of technical documentation, non-technical documentation, user manuals, etc.;
* Managing or overseeing procurement exercises;
* Liaising with providers in relation to the delivery, installation or enhancement of software and acceptance sign-off;
* The motivation, development and management of staff including the day-to-day management of a section, the management of staff performance by way of the PMDS, flexitime, work planning etc and
* Undertake such training and development as may be required to ensure that you stay up to date with the technologies in your area of operations;

## Section 3: Person Specification

We are looking for people who are enthusiastic, logical and imaginative. You will be someone who also takes a thorough and structured approach to organising tasks and solving problems and who can deliver on time against project deadlines.

You will also need to have good communications skills and be comfortable working as part of and at times leading a team or project group. You will be someone who can establish and maintain good working relationships with others, identify their needs and be receptive and responsive to their queries.

You will need to be confident and persuasive and able to explain complex ideas to a non technical audience in a structured and concise manner with the ability to influence the choice of appropriate solution.

You will be someone who keeps up to date with emerging technologies and is always eager to learn new skills. You will also need to be happy working in an environment where there is ongoing and significant change.

You will have proven leadership skills in an ICT environment.

You will have a proven track record demonstrating initiative with a proactive approach to the introduction of ICT-based solutions.

You will have a commitment to developing staff through training and on the job experience.

You will have a proven track record in project management; in the design, development, implementation and delivery of IT solutions and ICT projects in complex business and technical environments.

You will also need to be focused on providing the best possible service to the public and to customers in your organisation.

You are a self starter with the ability to work with minimal supervision, to multi-task and prioritise within tight deadlines.

**Essential Requirements**

Candidates must have, on or before the closing date:

**Senior ICT Development Specialist:**

1. A level 8 qualification in a relevant ICT discipline and 3 years directly relevant ICT hands on experience

**or**

1. 5 years directly relevant hands on experience in the area of ICT Development (this can include areas such as business analysis, programming, testing, web development, database administration or data analysis)

**Highly Desirable –** Level 6 qualification in a relevant discipline and/or at least 2 Professional Certificates in relevant areas of ICT

**Senior ICT Infrastructure and Operations Specialist:**

1. Level 8 qualification in a relevant ICT discipline and 3 years directly relevant ICT hands on experience

**or**

1. 5 years directly relevant hands on experience in the area of ICT Infrastructure and Operations support (this can include areas such as infrastructure and network support, technical and user support, operations and server support, ICT security/cyber security, and Cloud computing)

**Highly Desirable** - Level 6 qualification in a relevant discipline and/or at least 2 Professional Certificates in a relevant area of ICT

**Candidates should note that** **admission tothe competition does not imply that they meet the eligibility criteria. Therefore candidates should satisfy themselves that they meet the eligibility criteria for this competition.**

## Section 4: Application and Selection Process

**How to Apply and Closing Date**

Application forms may be downloaded from

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/customerservice/customerservice/careers/currentcompetitions/>

* All sections of the form must be fully completed.
* One copy of the application form must be submitted to [competitions@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:competitions@agriculture.gov.ie) by 4pm on 10th November, 2017

Applications will not be accepted after this date.

**Selection Process**

The methods used to select candidates for this post may include some or all of the following:

* completion of online Assessment Questionnaire(s)
* online and/or paper-based assessment test(s)
* shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application
* a competitive preliminary interview
* presentation or other exercises
* a final competitive interview which may include a presentation and/or additional assessment exercise(s)
* any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate

**Communication**

Candidates should note that all communications relating to this competition from Competitions & Recruitment Section, including the provision of results, will issue by way of email only. Candidates should ensure that a valid email address is provided on the application form and should check that email address on a regular basis.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and ensure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

**NOTE: Candidates should note that where a short listing exercise based on the information supplied in the application form is applied, a board will examine application forms and assess them against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position as outlined in this booklet. It is therefore in candidates’ interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of their experiences relevant to this post in the application form.**

Candidates must produce satisfactory documentary evidence of all relevant qualifications and experience claimed by them, if required.

## Section 5: Eligibility to Compete

**Eligibility to compete and certain restrictions on eligibility**

Candidates should note that eligibility to compete is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Swiss citizens under EU agreements may also apply.

**Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants**

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the Public Service by any Public Service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility) and the Minister’s consent will have to be secured prior to employment by any Public Service body.

**Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):**

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are not eligible to apply for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

**Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):**

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider Public Service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years.People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition*.*

**Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013)**

The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013 introduced a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for Local Authorities. In accordance with the terms of the *Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants* dated 28 June 2012 as detailed above, it is a specific condition of that VER Scheme that persons will not be eligible for re-employment in any Public Service body [as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011 and the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012] for a period of 2 years from their date of departure under this Scheme. These conditions also apply in the case of engagement/employment on a contract for service basis (either as a contractor or as an employee of a contractor).

**Declaration:**

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a Public Service scheme of incentivised early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

**Maximum Recruitment Age:**

Candidates should be aware that a maximum recruitment age will apply to this competition. Candidates must not yet be 67 years of age on the closing date and time for the competition

## Section 6: Principal Conditions of Service

**General**

The appointment is to an established post in the Civil Service and is subject to the Civil Service Regulations Act 1956 to 2005, the Public Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the Civil Service.

Personal Pension Contribution (PPC) Pay Scale will apply where the appointee is an existing civil public servant appointed on or after 6'h April 1995 or is newly recruited to the Civil Service and is required to make a personal pension contribution:

**Pay**

The PPC *[Personal Pension Contribution]* salary scale for this position, with effect from 1st April 2017, is as follows:

€47,081.00, €48,458.00, €49,831.00, €51,204.00, €52,581.00, €53,955.00, €55,329.00 (NMAX), €57,314.00 (LSI1), €59,294.00 (LSI2)

This rate will also apply where the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6th April 1995 and is required to make a personal pension contribution. A different rate will apply where the appointee is a civil or public servant recruited before 6th April 1995 who is not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution. Long service increments may be payable after 3(LSI1) and 6(LSI2) years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

Candidates should note that entry will be at the minimum of the scale and will not be subject to negotiation and the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Increments may be awarded annually subject to satisfactory performance.

**Important Note:**

Different terms and conditions may apply, if, immediately prior to appointment the appointee is already a serving Civil Servant or Public Servant.

Payment will be made fortnightly in arrears by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) into a bank account of an officer’s choice. Payment cannot be made until a bank account number and bank sort code has been supplied to the relevant Department. Statutory deductions from salary will be made as appropriate.

An officer appointed to the post of Information Communications Technology (ICT) specialists will agree that any overpayment of salary or of travel and subsistence may be deducted from future salary payments due in accordance with the Payment of Wages Act 1991. In accordance with that Act, the Authority will advise the officer in writing of the amount and details of such overpayment and give at least one week’s notice of the deduction to take place and will deduct the overpayment, at an amount that is fair and reasonable having regard to all the circumstances, within six months of such notice in accordance with the Act.

**Tenure and Probation:**

The appointment is to an established position as Information Communications Technology (ICT) specialists and will be subject to a probationary period.

The probationary contract will be for a period of one year from the date of appointment. Notwithstanding this paragraph and the paragraph immediately following below, this will not preclude an extension of the probationary contract in appropriate circumstances.

During the period of the probationary contract, an officer’s performance will be subject to review by the appropriate supervisor(s) to determine whether the officer:

1. has performed in a satisfactory manner
2. has been satisfactory in general conduct, and
3. is suitable from the viewpoint of health with particular regard to sick leave.

Prior to completion of the probationary contract a decision will be made as to whether or not the officer will be retained. This decision will be based on the officer’s performance assessed against the criteria set out in (i) to (iii) above. The detail of the probationary process will be explained to the officer by the relevant Department on commencement of employment.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraphs in this section, the probationary contract may be terminated at any time prior to the expiry of the term of the contract by either side in accordance with the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts, 1973 to 2005.

In certain circumstances the contract may be extended and the probationary period suspended. The extension must be agreed by both parties.

The probationary period stands suspended where an employee is absent due to Maternity or Adoptive Leave

In relation to absence on Parental Leave or Carers Leave, the Department to which the candidate is appointed may require probation to be suspended if the absence is not considered to be consistent with a continuation of the probation

Probation may be suspended in cases such as absence due to a non-recurring illness.

The employee may in these circumstances make an application to the relevant Department for an extension to the contract period.

**Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977-2005:**

The Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977-2005 will not apply to the termination of this employment by reason only of the expiry of this probationary contract without it being renewed.

**Duties:**

The employeewill be required to perform any duties appropriate to the position which may be assigned from time to time. The officer may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business which would interfere with the performance of official duties or conflict with his/her role in the Department to which he/she is appointed.

**Headquarters:**

The employee’s headquarters will be such as may be designated from time to time by the relevant Department. When absent from home and headquarters on duty appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances will be paid, subject to the normal civil service regulations.

**Hours of attendance:**

Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time. At present they amount to 43 hours 15 minutes gross per week (37 hours net).

**Annual Leave:**

The annual leave allowance will be 29 days per annum, rising to 30 days after 5 years’ service and rising to 31 days after 10 years’ service. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave and is on the basis of a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

**Health:**

A candidate for and any person holding the office must be fully competent and capable of undertaking the duties attached to the office and be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

**The Organisation of Working Time Act 1997:**

The terms of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

**Sick Leave:**

Pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the sick leave circulars.

Officers paying the Class A rate of PRSI will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts direct to the relevant Department. Payment of salary during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims for social insurance benefit to the Department of Social Protection within the required time limits.

**Superannuation and Retirement**

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the Civil Service at the time of being offered an appointment.  In general, an appointee who has never worked in the Public Service will be offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (“Single Scheme”). Full details of the Scheme are at <http://www.per.gov.ie/pensions>

Where the appointee has worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment or is currently on a career break or special leave with/without pay different terms may apply. The pension entitlement of such appointees will be established in the context of their public service employment history.

Key provisions attaching to membership of the Single Scheme are as follows:

* Pensionable Age: The minimum age at which pension is payable is 66 (rising to 67 and 68) in line with changes in State Pension age.
* Retirement Age: Scheme members must retire at the age of 70.
* Career average earnings are used to calculate benefits (a pension and lump sum amount accrue each year and are up-rated each year by reference to CPI.
* Post retirement pension increases are linked to CPI

**Pension Abatement**

* If the appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public Service and is in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during his/her re-employment that pension **will be subject to abatement** in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. **Please note: In applying for this position you are acknowledging that you understand that the abatement provisions, where relevant, will apply. It is not envisaged that the employing Department/Office will support an application for an abatement waiver in respect of appointments to this position.**
* However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil or Public Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER), the Department of Health Circular 7/2010 VER/VRS or the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular letter LG(P) 06/2013 which, renders a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements may, however be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

**Department of Education and Skills Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007**

The Department of Education and Skills introduced an Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. It is a condition of the Early Retirement Scheme that with the exception of the situations set out in paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the relevant circular documentation, and with those exceptions only, if a teacher accepts early retirement under Strands 1, 2 or 3 of this scheme and is subsequently employed in any capacity in any area of the public sector, payment of pension to that person under the scheme will immediately cease. Pension payments will, however, be resumed on the ceasing of such employment or on the person's 60th birthday, whichever is the later, but on resumption, the pension will be based on the person's actual reckonable service as a teacher (i.e. the added years previously granted will not be taken into account in the calculation of the pension payment).

**Ill-Health-Retirement**

Please note that where an individual has retired from a Civil/Public Service body on the grounds of ill-health his/her pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement within the pension scheme of that employment.

**Prior Public Servants**

While the default pension terms, as set out in the preceding paragraphs, consist of Single Scheme membership, this may not apply to certain appointees. Full details of the conditions governing whether or not a public servant is a Single Scheme member are given in the 2012 Act. However the key exception case (in the context of this competition and generally) is that a successful candidate who has worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) capacity in the public service within 26 weeks of taking up appointment, would in general not become a member of the Single Scheme. The pay and pension entitlement of such an appointee will be established in the context of their public service employment history.

**Pension Accrual**

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one pre-existing public service pension scheme(i.e. non-Single Scheme) as per the 2012 Act shall apply. This 40-year limit is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

**Pension-Related Deduction**

This appointment is subject to the pension-related deduction in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measure in the Public Interest Act 2009.

For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme for Public Servants please see the following website: <http://www.per.gov.ie/pensions>.

**Secrecy, Confidentiality and Standards of Behaviour:** **Official Secrecy and Integrity:**

During the term of the probationary contract, an officer will be subject to the Provisions of the Official Secrets Act, 1963, as amended by the Freedom of Information Acts 1997, 2003 and 2014. The officer will agree not to disclose to third parties any confidential information either during or subsequent to the period of employment.

**Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour:**

The appointee will be subject to the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour.

**Ethics in Public Office Acts:**

The Ethics in Public Office Acts will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

**Prior approval of publications:**

An officer will agree not to publish material related to his or her official duties without prior approval by the Chairperson of the Authority or by another appropriate authorised officer.

**Political Activity:**

During the term of employment the officer will be subject to the rules governing public servants and politics.

**Important Notice**

**The foregoing represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.**

## Section 7: Important Information

**Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014 applications will be treated in strict confidence. All aspects of the application and assessment process are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside of those persons directly involved in an aspect of the assessment process.

**Clearance Procedure**

Candidates who come under consideration for appointment to any one of the three Departments will be required to undergo a clearance procedure that will include, but is not restricted to, security checks by An Garda Síochána on all addresses in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland at which the candidate resided, verification of identity, qualifications, experience, and medical status, and the provision of references. In addition the Department may make any other queries deemed necessary to establish the candidate’s suitability for the post. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

**Other important information**

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a campaign, or an invitation to attend any element of the selection process, is not to be taken as implying that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important, therefore, for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for selection tests/interview(s) you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

Should the person assigned to a post decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises the Department may, at its discretion, select another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

**Candidates' Rights - Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process**

The selection process for this competition is being carried out in accordance with the principles set out in the Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service. This Code of Practice can be accessed through the Commission for Public Service Appointments website at [www.cpsa.ie](http://www.cpsa.ie).

Information regarding review procedures is set out in Sections 7 and 8 of the above Code of Practice. (The two procedures are mutually exclusive other than in the most exceptional circumstances which will be determined by the Commission at its sole discretion.)

* **Informal Review:** Where possible, and only with the agreement of the candidate, every effort will be made to resolve any issues/complaints by way of an informal process.
* **Section 7** review procedures apply in cases where a candidate is unhappy with an action or decision in relation to his/her candidature (but does not believe there was a breach of the Code of Practice).
* **Section 8** review procedures apply where a candidate believes that an aspect of the process breached the CPSA’s Code of Practice.

**Requests for Review**

Requests for informal review should be submitted to [competitions@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:competitions@agriculture.gov.ie). In the event that a formal process is invoked, the candidates should determine which procedure is appropriate to their circumstances, i.e. Section 7 or Section 8. The candidate must submit their request in writing to the Office Holder, i.e. the Secretary General, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine at email address [SecGen@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:SecGen@agriculture.gov.ie), clearly setting out the grounds for review and specifying the relevant Section of the Code. A request for a review may be refused if the candidate cannot support their request.

Timelines for review requests are as follows

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SECTION 7 Review** | **SECTION 8 Review** |
| Interim stage of competition  Request for Informal Review – 2 working days after receipt of decision  Request for Formal Review – 4 working days after receipt of decision  Final stage of competition  Request for Informal Review – 5 working days after receipt of decision  Request for Formal Review – 10 working days after receipt of decision or 2 working days after notification of informal review | Interim and Final stages of competition  Request for Informal Review – 5 working days after receipt of decision  Request for Formal Review – 2 working days after notification of decision arising from informal review or without delay where candidate does not avail of informal Review  CPSA – 10 working days after receipt of decision arising from office holder’s review |

**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
* interfere with or compromise the process in any way
* a third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process
* 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.

**Specific candidate criteria**

Candidates must:

* have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned
* be suitable on the grounds of character
* be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned; and if successful, they will not be appointed to the post unless they
* agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed
* are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position.

**Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn**

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

**Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003**

When a candidate application form is received, Competition & Recruitment section of the Department creates a record in the candidate’s name which contains much of the personal information the candidate has supplied. This personal record is used solely for the purpose of processing the candidate’s candidature. Should the candidate be successful certain information will be retained by the Department’s HR division. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. To make a request under the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003, please submit your request in writing to: The Data Protection Co-Ordinator, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. A fee of €6.35 should accompany your request. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, or personal cheque, made payable to the ‘Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine’. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes.