

# Person Specification and Further Information for Job Applicants

Job Title	Certifying Officer
Contract Type	This is a 23 month fixed term and pensionable appointment
Business Area	Food Standards Scotland
Civil Service Applicants	As this is an externally advertised fixed term appointment, existing Civil Service staff who are successful, will retain their permanent status. Providing there is no break in service, these staff remain eligible to apply for internal SG roles at the end of the fixed term appointment. This means your Civil Service pension and other benefits gained over the course of your civil service career are unaffected.
Main Location	Glasgow Area
Salary	£31,266 - £35,813
Nationality Requirements	<p>Nationality requirements</p> <p>This job is broadly open to the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK nationals</li> <li>• nationals of Commonwealth countries who have the right to work in the UKs</li> <li>• nationals of the Republic of Ireland</li> <li>• nationals from the EU, EEA or Switzerland with (or eligible for) status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)</li> <li>• relevant EU, EEA, Swiss or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service</li> <li>• relevant EU, EEA, Swiss or Turkish nationals who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service</li> <li>• certain family members of the relevant EU, EEA, Swiss or Turkish nationals</li> </ul>
Qualification Requirements	<p>Have or obtain within 2 months from appointment:            Veterinarian or Official Veterinarian and member of Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)            Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) panels -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Essential Skills (OCQ(V) - ES)</li> <li>2. Exports General (OCQ(V) - EX)</li> <li>3. Product Exports (OCQ(V) - PX)</li> </ol> <p>For jobs in Band B &amp; C you must hold a minimum of 3 Highers or equivalent.</p> <p>Other qualifications equivalent to these may also be acceptable, if you are in any doubt please contact to discuss.</p>

# Person Specification and Further Information for Job Applicants

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Please note: If you fail to demonstrate how you meet the minimum qualifications as stated above, your application will be automatically sifted out.</li></ul>
Working Pattern	This is a full time vacancy, however applications from people wishing to work an alternative working pattern will be considered.
Guaranteed Interview Scheme	Applicants claiming a guaranteed interview will be invited for further assessment should they meet the minimum essential criteria listed in this document.
Reserve List	In the event that further posts are required, a reserve list of successful candidates will be kept for up to 9 months.
Security	Good security is a priority for the Scottish Government and all employees play a key role in keeping the organisation safe, secure and resilient. A Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check will be carried out as part of the pre-employment checks for this role, as is standard with all Scottish Government posts. Additional security checks may also be required if a higher level of clearance is required for this post.
Further Information	Further information on the post is available from Steve Lomas at <a href="mailto:steve.lomas@fss.scot">steve.lomas@fss.scot</a> If you have any queries relating to your eligibility on the grounds of Nationality or Qualifications, or if you have any difficulty applying for this role, please contact <a href="mailto:recruitment@gov.scot">recruitment@gov.scot</a> .



## Information about the Role

Certifying Officers (COs) with a veterinary qualification will provide export certification for products of animal origin (POAO), primarily fish, fishery products and shellfish but other POAO may be required. This key front-line food and drink operational role will initially be based at hubs in Larkhall, Bellshill and Harthill, but other locations may become part of the network. The post holder requires knowledge of the food industry and / or a high technical regulatory environment, as well as awareness of health and safety issues, to ensure products meet the requirements of importing countries as detailed in the export health certificates. The CO role is one of the key front-line operational roles within the FSS. These staff deliver export certification in approved establishments for export of products of animal origin, ensuring that products exported meet the requirements of importing countries as detailed in the export health certificate. The CO will also deliver other Official Control functions as required by FSS. COs will manage and work with Certification Support Officers (CSO) to gather any information and evidence to support the export certification process. When relevant training and qualifications are in place, other Official Control (OC) duties will be required in other approved premises.

## Specific Duties

### Inspection and certification tasks

- Assess export documentation and additional information such as traceability records, sampling results, attestations and other compliance data received or required to be obtained through further research.
- Inspect and assess product presented for export in accordance with the export health certificate and requirements imposed by the importing country.
- Carry out activities in line with any specific Third Country requirements when requested.
- Complete export certification documents.
- Certification of product.
- Deliver Official Control duties as required in FSS approved premises.

### Enforcement and incident reporting

- Verify that approved premises comply with legislative requirements through their own food safety management procedures and take enforcement action if required (only required in FSS approved premises).
- Identify potential food fraud opportunities relevant to the food industry.
- Report to the relevant enforcement authorities' evidence of non-compliance.

### Technical requirements

- Knowledge and understanding of HACCP based principals.
- Knowledge and understanding of Animal By Products.
- Knowledge and understanding of microbiological criteria (dependent on the importer country).
- Have or obtain all relevant export qualifications.
- Knowledge and understanding of general and third country specific export requirements.
- Knowledge and understanding of the principles of certification.
- Where relevant, knowledge and understanding of animal health and notifiable disease elements.
- Cascade technical information as required in regards to export certification to colleagues.
- Manage the induction and practical training of new COs, and CSOs.

## Stakeholder management

- Establish and maintain productive working relationships with approved premises and other stakeholders (Local authorities, APHA, SG, DEFRA, etc.).
- Inform approved premises of any legislative changes or importer country requirements that have an impact of their export.

## Health and Safety Management

- Provide support in implementing FSS Health and Safety policy at plant level.
- Participate when required to investigate and record incidents involving the plant team.
- Participate in plant inductions, ensuring plant teams and visitors are fully aware of FSS Health and Safety policy and procedure.

## General

- Maintain confidentiality of internal FSS communications and commercially sensitive information.
- Continued familiarisation with guidance documents as appropriate.
- Awareness of and commitment to all relevant FSS policies.
- Maintain export related qualifications through the appropriate revalidation as and when required.
- Maintain up to date training and CPD as required by the role and the professional organisations such as RCVS, REHIS, etc.

## Essential Criteria

You will be asked to provide evidence of how you meet these criteria in your application.

1. Strong organisational skills, adaptable and able to deliver to agreed timescales and deadlines.
2. Excellent verbal (English) and written communication skills.
3. Ability to work well and lead a team as well as independently with minimum supervision to achieve objectives.
4. Able to build professional relationships with a range of internal and external stakeholders.

During the application process you will be asked to provide specific evidence based examples to demonstrate how you meet the criteria. Please ensure that provide specific evidence – you may wish to follow to STARR format (Situation, Task, Action, Result, and Reflection).

- Situation – give a *brief* outline of the context
- Task – What did you want to achieve? What were your aims / objectives?
- Action – What did you personally do?
- Result – What was the result?
- Reflection – Do you have reflections on the event? How have you applied this learning since? What would you do differently next time?

Where the criteria states that you must hold a qualification, you need only state that you do or do not hold the qualification and provide any other information you feel relevant. We would recommend that you prepare your answers before you begin the online application process.

# Person Specification and Further Information for Job Applicants

## Competencies Required

Here are details of the Competencies required for this role and you will be tested against these competencies if you are invited to attend the interview/assessment.

- [Scottish Government Competencies \(PDF\)](#)
- [Competencies for Band B Roles \(PDF\)](#)

## Political Activity

All appointees to the Civil Service must be able to fully comply with the requirements of the [Civil Service Code](#) and are expected to carry out their role with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values: which are Honesty, Integrity, Objectivity and Impartiality. As part of this, some restrictions are placed on political activity. You will see that there is a question regarding such activity on the application form. A positive response to this question should not affect the consideration of your application, but is likely to mean that you will be asked additional questions at interview. What you then say at interview will clarify if you meet the requirements of the Civil Service Code.

The Civil Service Code states that:

### *You must*

- Serve the government, whatever its political persuasion, to the best of your ability in a way which maintains political impartiality and is in line with the requirements of this code, no matter what your own political beliefs are
- Act in a way which deserves and retains the confidence of ministers, while at the same time ensuring that you will be able to establish the same relationship with those whom you may be required to serve in some future government
- Comply with any restrictions that have been laid down on your political activities

### *You must not*

- Act in a way that is determined by party political considerations, or use official resources for party political purposes
- Allow your personal political views to determine any advice you give or your actions.

## Pre-Employment Security and Eligibility Checks

If you are successful, and are not currently a serving member of the Civil Service, we will as part of the Scottish Governments pre-employment process carry out the following enquiries into your identity, employment/academic history, nationality and immigration status, 'unspent' criminal record (Disclosure certificate), health and other matters, to ensure that you are qualified for the appointment.

Further details on these checks are available to view [here](#).

## Completion of Pre-Employment Security and Eligibility Checks

When the pre-employment enquiries are satisfactorily completed to our standard, we will then make you a formal offer of appointment and you will be expected to take up appointment as soon as possible. If you have any question about our pre-employment checks please do not hesitate to get in touch.

## Selection

We have a two stage selection process. The first stage is where we review your application form to decide if it does or does not meet the Essential Criteria. Those who meet the Essential Criteria will normally be selected for the next stage of assessment. It is therefore important that you complete your application as fully, but concisely, as possible to demonstrate how you meet the criteria for the post. Please ensure that you study the selection criteria carefully before you complete your application.

The next stage of assessment will be a competency based interview and in most circumstances this will be accompanied by other forms of assessment such as a presentation or written test. You will be given further details about the competency based interview and other assessment elements with your letter of invitation. The data we collect throughout the selection process will be held and used in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act.

## Interview Expenses

Travel and subsistence expenses incurred during the selection process are the responsibility of the applicant.

## Diversity Monitoring Form

Information given on the diversity monitoring form will be treated in strictest confidence and will be retained by HR for monitoring purposes. It will be kept separately from your application form and will not be made available to those involved in the selection decision. Guidance on the Diversity Monitoring Form and why we ask you to complete it is available on our [website](#).

## Disability

We are participants in the Jobcentre Plus “Positive about Disabled People” scheme. Under the terms of the scheme, all candidates who consider themselves to be disabled in terms of the Equality Act 2010, and who meet the essential minimum criteria for the post, will be guaranteed an interview. Note: The Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A 'substantial disadvantage' is a disadvantage which is more than minor or trivial. 'Long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring conditions). Further guidance in relation to the meaning of disability is accessible on the Equality and Human Rights Commission [website](#).

We will also ensure that we consider and implement any reasonable adjustments you may require to attend for interview or during the course of your employment, should you be successful in securing a post.

## Starting Salary

We expect that all new entrants will join us on the minimum of the advertised pay range.

## Working Pattern

The standard working week is a 5 day week of 37 hours, net of lunch breaks. You may have the scope to participate in the Scottish Government's flexible working scheme. Consideration will be given to candidates interested in part-time or other non-standard working patterns and in-line with best practice, the Scottish Government has extended to all staff the right to request a flexible working pattern. All requests will be seriously considered.

## Annual Leave (pro rata for part-time)

You will have an annual leave allowance of 5 weeks, rising to 6 weeks after 4 years. In addition, the Scottish Government observes 11½ days public and privilege holidays, dates of which are set annually.

## Probation

You will be required to serve a probationary period of 9 months and confirmation of your appointment is dependent on the satisfactory completion of this probation period in terms of performance, conduct and attendance.

## Travel and Subsistence

Subsistence allowances and travelling expenses on official duty are paid. The cost of normal daily travel between home and office is not reimbursable.

## Sick Absence

You are expected to attend for work. However, we do recognise that 100% attendance may not be possible on occasions when you are unwell. We have an attendance management policy in place that makes it clear the level of attendance that the Scottish Government expects and what may happen if this cannot be achieved. The policy outlines the support offered to staff during periods of illness and the assistance available to help them back to work.

## Retirement

The Scottish Government has a "no retirement age" policy for staff in Bands A-C. This means that you are free to continue in employment for as long as you wish. Continued employment will remain subject to the normal rules concerning performance, conduct and attendance.





## Outside Activities

As a civil servant, you may not take part in any activity which would in any way impair your usefulness to the Service, or engage in any occupation which may conflict with the interests of the Scottish Government or be inconsistent with your official position. Subject to these conditions, and in some circumstances prior permission being sought, work of a minor or short-term nature (for example, vacation work or work after hours) is normally allowed. Also for health and safety purposes you should notify HR if you have more than one job. You will also be subject to certain restrictions, depending on your grade and the nature of your work, on national and local political activities. These include standing as a candidate in parliamentary or local authority elections, or canvassing on behalf of candidates; and expressing views on matters of political controversy in public speeches or publications.

## The Civil Service Commission

The Department's recruitment processes are underpinned by the principle of selection for appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. Details of how this principle should be applied can be found at the Civil Service Commission [website](#). If you feel that your application has not been treated in accordance with the Commission's guidance and you wish to make a complaint, you should write to Head of Resourcing, F Spur, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD in the first instance. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you can contact the Office of the Civil Service Commission.

## Civil Service Values

As a civil servant, you are appointed on merit on the basis of fair and open competition and are expected to carry out your role with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values: Integrity, Honesty, Objectivity and Impartiality. These values are set out in the [Civil Service Code](#).

### 'Integrity'

Putting the obligations of public service above your own personal interests;

### 'Honesty'

Being truthful and open;

### 'Objectivity'

Basing your advice and decisions on rigorous analysis of the evidence; and

### 'Impartiality'

Acting solely according to the merits of the case and serving equally well Governments of different political persuasions.