

April 2021

## **Information for applicants**

**Senior Associate – Customer  
Enquiries & Disputes (18-month fixed  
term) – Regulatory Enablers Cluster**

**Ref: OFW-BC-537**

## **Information for applicants Senior Associate – Customer Enquiries & Disputes (18-month fixed term) – Regulatory Enablers Cluster Ref: OFW–BC–537**

### **Introduction from David Black, interim Chief Executive**

Water companies support all aspects of life. Safe and reliable water and wastewater services are essential for our day to day lives, our wellbeing, and our natural world.

And as the economic regulator of water and waste water in England and Wales, our role is to enable, incentivise and hold companies to account for providing the very best for customers, society and the environment now and in the future. We also oversee the markets that exist in the water sector to make sure they are working for customers.



To achieve this, we've set ourselves three goals. They are to:

- transform water companies' performance;
- drive water companies to meet long-term challenges through increased collaboration and partnerships; and
- for water companies to provide greater public value, delivering more for customers, society and the environment.

Delivering these goals will help to meet customers' needs: ensure reliable and safe water supplies today with a better environment, affordable bills and a resilient and sustainable future for water.

As we do this, we will be working to fulfil the UK and Welsh Governments' strategic priorities for Ofwat, and UK and Welsh Government policy.

We're ambitious about the future and looking for people who can help us to achieve our goals. Thanks for your interest in joining Ofwat. We look forward to receiving your application.

**David Black**  
**Ofwat Interim Chief Executive**

## About Ofwat and the role

Ofwat (the Water Services Regulation Authority) is the economic regulator of the water and wastewater sector in England and Wales. Our role is to help it build trust and confidence with customers, the environment and wider society. Ofwat has an ambitious [strategy](#) and as a regulator we are setting ourselves up to achieve and equal the ambition of this strategy. It matters to us that things on the ground really change so that our impact on customers, the environment and the future of water is tangible and meaningful.

Our work is high-profile and fast-moving, within a dynamic and agile environment. The work that you'll be involved in every day will be about helping us to deliver our strategy, helping to us to be the regulator we want to be and helping the sector to deliver outcomes that matter to customers and society. Our strategy sets out the role Ofwat will play. We will adapt, be confident, act with purpose and integrity and continuously improve so that we make the greatest contribution possible to improving life through water.

## Regulatory Enablers Cluster

This role is in the Casework and Enforcement team within Ofwat's Regulatory Enablers cluster. This cluster is a group of teams that work with colleagues across Ofwat to influence, support and reinforce the impact of their regulatory interventions. In addition to Casework and Enforcement, the wider cluster includes our legal, communications, governance, customer research and Chief Economist teams.

The Casework and Enforcement team is the “front door” for many of the customers and stakeholders who contact Ofwat with enquiries or complaints about the sector or their water company. Where we have the legal powers to do so (typically under the Water Industry Act 1991, or the Competition Act 1998), the team protects customers and holds water companies to account. We investigate and resolve customer disputes or water company failures when they happen, to ensure that water and sewerage companies meet their legal obligations to their customers. Our work can range from helping an individual customer resolve a dispute with their water company, to imposing multi-million pound fines on a water company where it has failed to meet its legal obligations.

The Casework and Enforcement team also assesses applications from companies seeking to be granted a licence to serve customers in the water sector. In deciding on these applications we seek to ensure customers can benefit from having a choice of provider, whilst being sufficiently protected for the provision of their water and sewerage services.

Our team works with a diverse range of stakeholders, including regulated water companies, new entrants to the sector, Government, other regulators, investors, environmental groups and customers and their representative bodies. Communicating effectively with our customers and internal and external stakeholders is central our team's success.

## Role expectations

As a Senior Associate in the Casework and Enforcement team you will support a number of our workstreams. Your work will be particularly focused on managing and supporting the work and people involved in responding to customer enquiries and complaints Ofwat receives. As part of this you will yourself respond to enquiries and complaints we receive and deliver small scale investigations, where we have legal powers to determine a dispute between a customer and their water company. You will also support other workstreams within the team, where you will assess licence applications submitted to us by companies wishing to operate in the water sector and may have opportunities to support larger enforcement investigations.

The successful candidate will have strong customer service and planning skills; be able to identify and assess relevant information to make evidence-based recommendations; and be great at working with others to gather and share information clearly in writing or verbally.

You will be responsible for managing a varied caseload of customer enquiries and complaints, licence applications and/or enforcement work alongside some management responsibilities for our customer and enquiries workstream. This will involve:

- Managing and supporting day-to-day organisation and delivery of our customer and enquiries service, including coordinating inputs of team members, monitoring service delivery and quality and performance reporting.
- Being responsible for assessing and responding accurately and effectively to customer enquiries and complaints received by Ofwat, including contacts made to our CEO and Chair.
- Leading on the delivery of small scale investigations, where we have legal powers to determine a dispute between a customer and their water company.
- Making recommendations to senior decision-makers (including Ofwat's CEO and Chairman) on the next steps in processing a customer complaint or licence application.
- Proactively and independently planning, prioritising and managing various work items in parallel to provide a high quality service to customers and meet our service timeframes.
- Working with internal and external stakeholders, including those from other professional disciplines (for examples legal, engineers, communications), to gather and share information relevant to each others' work.
- Maintaining accurate and up-to-date case / project files.
- Working with colleagues to identify and consider trends, insights and lessons learnt from our day-to-day work, to feed into policy development and into improvements to how we and water companies deliver for customers, society and the environment.

- Sharing your technical knowledge and support with colleagues, including through the management and support of more junior members of the team.

You will be a self-starter and expected to take strong ownership of the work you are responsible for, demonstrating Ofwat's [SAILOR values](#) and ways of working. Ofwat is a learning organisation and you will have opportunities to further develop your knowledge and experience. We have a well-supported, agile working environment, and have a trust-based culture intended to help empower you and enable and support you to succeed within Ofwat.

## Key deliverables

The successful candidate for this role will be expected to:

1. **Provide a high quality service to customers and stakeholders** contacting Ofwat via phone, letter or email with enquiries or complaints. This will require:
  - a. **Strong active listening skills** to ensure you understand and can effectively respond to questions and concerns raised with us.
  - b. **Maintaining accurate and up-to-date records** of customer contacts you have responded to via our contact management system.
  - c. **Working collaboratively with internal subject matter experts** where needed to draft appropriate and timely responses.
2. Lead the **successful delivery of licence application assessments and small scale investigations into customer disputes**. This will require:
  - a. **Strong project management skills** to plan, prioritise and manage work to meet deadlines and in line with our processes and governance framework.
  - b. **Analytical and problem-solving skills** that enable you to identify, gather and assess a range of relevant data and information relevant to our decision.
  - c. **Strong written and verbal communication skills** that will allow you to clearly and concisely present evidence-based conclusions and recommendations for complex problems.
  - d. **Effective stakeholder engagement** to identify and gather from internal and external stakeholders the inputs and information required to ensure our decisions are appropriate and timely.
3. **Manage, support and monitor the work and people involved** in responding to customer enquiries and complaints. This will require:

- a. **Working with other team members to allocate and manage delivery** of our customer enquiries work to meet our level of service commitments and quality standards.
  - b. Helping the team **identify and address issues and risks** arising from this work.
  - c. **Managing small-scale external budgets** if required to support our delivery.
  - d. **Reporting on delivery** to the Director of Casework.
4. **Support continuous improvement** in our ways of working. This will require:
- a. Stepping back to **identify and report trends and insights** from our work and to **reflect on lessons learnt**, in order to identify and escalate issues and risk as appropriate, and to inform improve future ways of working.
  - b. **Sharing your knowledge and support with colleagues**, including through the management and support of other team members and providing constructive feedback.
  - c. Actively participating in **finding solutions to issues and risks** that arise in our work.
  - d. **Taking ownership of your own personal development** and growth.

## Professional requirements

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree level qualification in an analytical discipline or demonstrable relevant experience in a customer facing role</li> </ul>	
<b>Experience and Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant experience of working directly with customers and external stakeholders to provide a frontline service.</li> <li>• Experience of managing a team and/or the inputs of others to deliver a service to defined timescales and quality standards.</li> <li>• Experience of handling difficult conversations with and conveying complex information to customers, including vulnerable customers by phone and in writing.</li> <li>• Experience of working under pressure, effectively planning, prioritising and managing a varied and changing workload to meet different, and often tight, deadlines.</li> <li>• Responsibility for maintaining accurate and up-to-date records / project files, with exceptional attention to detail.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of utility regulation and current economic issues.</li> <li>• Knowledge and/or experience of how the water sector and its regulation operates.</li> <li>• Experience of updating and making recommendation to senior managers.</li> <li>• Experience of understanding and applying legal and/or compliance frameworks.</li> <li>• Experience of handling confidential and</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background of gathering and assessing complex information to make evidence-based conclusions and recommendations.</li> <li>• Ability to clearly communicate complex information in writing and verbally.</li> <li>• Strong stakeholder management skills, with the ability to work with internal and external stakeholders to gather and share information and to deliver a common objective.</li> <li>• Experience of leading steps to evaluate and improve ways of working.</li> </ul>	sensitive information in day-to-day work.
<b>Skills and behaviours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing a Quality Service</li> <li>• Communicating and Influencing</li> <li>• Working Together</li> <li>• Delivering at Pace</li> <li>• Making Effective decisions</li> <li>• Changing and Improving</li> <li>• Demonstrating our SAILOR values (Support, Ambition, Integrity, Learning Ownership, Respect)</li> </ul>	

## Terms and conditions of employment

### Contract

This is an 18-month fixed term appointment.

### Salary

The salary range for Band 3 Senior Associate is - £34,528 - £51,627. For this position external candidates can expect to achieve a starting salary from the bottom of the band up to £42,000, depending on relevant skills and experience required for the post. Salary is paid monthly by credit transfer.

Internal and Civil Service candidates already at this job level would normally maintain their existing salary arrangements as this would be classed as a level transfer. If applying for the role as a promotion, these candidates can typically expect to be appointed on a salary at the bottom of the band or a 10% increase to existing salary, whichever is greater.

## Location

The role will be based in either Birmingham or London, with travel between offices and occasional other travel as required, when restrictions allow. Currently the majority of employees are working from home in line with the government's advice, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Contracted place of work and taxable expenses

Any person who regularly works more than two days a month in both the Birmingham and London offices, irrespective of their contracted place of work, is considered by HMRC to have two permanent workplaces.

The payment of your rail fare, accommodation or subsistence in this situation attracts tax and National Insurance because you are receiving a benefit.

Ofwat meets the cost of the tax and National Insurance by grossing up your expenses and recovering the net amount through your monthly pay package. But the expenses are classed as taxable earnings, which could impact on any attachment of earnings – for example, student loan repayments, high income child benefit and state benefits.

This means that you will not be required to meet the costs of travel to the office location where you are not based.

For further information on taxable expenses, please email [payroll@ofwat.gov.uk](mailto:payroll@ofwat.gov.uk).

## Hours of work

The successful post holder will be required to work a minimum of 37 hours, excluding lunch breaks. You will be required to work such additional hours as is reasonable and necessary for the efficient performance of your duties

## Probation

There is a probationary period of six months for all new entrants, subject to satisfactory performance.

## Annual leave

On appointment the post holder will be entitled to 25 days annual leave plus 10½ days' public and privilege holidays a year. Annual leave entitlement will be increased by one day for each year of continuous employment with Ofwat, up to a maximum leave allowance of 30 days.

## Pension

On appointment, you are eligible to join the Civil Service Pension. The Civil Service offers a choice of defined benefit and stakeholder pensions, giving you the flexibility to choose the pension that suits you best. We offer you a choice of two types of pension.

**Alpha:** alpha is an occupational pension scheme and provides a defined benefit worked out on a Career Average basis.

From 1 April 2021, member contributions are based on actual salaries.

From 1 April 2021, employee contributions are:

Annualised rate of pensionable earnings	Employee contribution rate
£0 to £23,100	4.60%
£23,101 to £56,000	5.45%
£56,001 to £150,000	7.35%
£150,001	8.05%

From 1 April 2020, employer contributions are:

Revised Salary Band (£)	ASLC rate from 1 April 2020
23,000 and under	26.6%
23,001 to 45,500	27.1%
45,501 to 77,000	27.9%
77,001 and over	30.3%

**Partnership:** this is a stakeholder pension with a contribution from Ofwat. How much we pay is based on your age. We pay this regardless of whether you choose to contribute anything. You do not have to contribute but, if you do, we will also match your contributions up to 3% of your pensionable earnings.

Employer age-related contributions are:

Age at the last 6 April	Percentage of your pensionable earnings
Under 31	8%
31 to 35	9%
36 to 40	11%
41 to 45	13.5%
46 or over	14.75%

To learn more about the Civil Service Pension schemes, please follow the link <http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/>

## **Ofwat benefits**

We also offer a range of additional benefits. These include:

- access to our package of benefits via our ‘Edenred’ scheme. This is a voluntary benefits scheme where staff have access to exclusive discounts on a range of goods and services such as retail outlets, theatre tickets, holidays, insurance and gym membership;
- cycle-to-work scheme;
- season ticket loan for travel between home and office;
- flexible working arrangements;
- fees paid for membership of relevant professional bodies;
- regular professional development;
- health and wellbeing initiatives; and
- free eye tests and contribution towards lenses/spectacles for VDU users, if appropriate

Any move to Ofwat from another employer will mean you can no longer access childcare vouchers. This includes moves between government departments. You may however be eligible for other government schemes, including Tax-Free Childcare. Determine your eligibility at <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>.

## Further information

### Security clearance

Any offer of appointment will be subject to satisfactory completion of security and pre-employment checks. Further information about the security checking procedure is available on request.

### Nationality and immigration control

This post is open to nationals of states within the British Commonwealth and the European Economic Area (EEA) and certain members of their families. There must be no employment restriction or time limit on your permitted stay in the UK.

If you would like further information on Nationality and Immigration Control, please email us at [people@ofwat.gov.uk](mailto:people@ofwat.gov.uk).

### Stocks or shares

Because of the nature of the information you will come into contact with and the need to be wholly independent of the water sector in England and Wales, you and your family (including your spouse or civil partner and any children or step-children under the age of 18 who still live at home, or any other member of your household) will be precluded from owning, purchasing or dealing in the shares of the water companies and their holding companies.

## How to apply

Applications should include a:

- curriculum vitae (**CV**);
- **covering letter** or supporting statement that outlines the contribution you can make to Ofwat, including how you feel you meet our professional requirements and demonstrate behaviours outlined in our competency framework;
- completed **CV supplement form**; and
- **completed diversity monitoring form**. This form is not mandatory.

Please email your CV and supporting documents to [recruitment@ofwat.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@ofwat.gov.uk) by the closing date.

If you are unable to make an electronic application, you may submit your application on paper. Please contact us to find out how.

## Selection timetable

Closing date	Tuesday 20th April @ 5.00pm
Sifting	Wednesday 21st –Friday 23rd April
Interview date(s)	Wednesday 5th, Thursday 6th, Friday 7th May

Please note that during the Covid-19 pandemic interviews will be conducted via video conferencing software such as BlueJeans, Skype or Microsoft Teams.

It is expected that the interview process for this vacancy will include a short presentation and/or assessment. Further details will be provided to shortlisted candidates upon invitation to interview. It may be necessary for a second stage interview, which will be communicated to the successful candidates, if required.

If you have any queries about any aspect of this role, selection process, or you require any reasonable adjustments please email [recruitment@ofwat.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@ofwat.gov.uk)

## Expenses

We will refund travelling costs at the rate of standard rail fare for the journey or motor mileage rates (cars: 25p per mile).

Please note that proof of purchase will be required for all public transport expenses.

We cannot refund expenses for travel into the UK. If you have to stay overnight, please contact [recruitment@ofwat.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@ofwat.gov.uk) for further details.

## Data protection

We will use your application only to inform the selection process. If you are successful it will form the basis of your personal employee record with us and we will store it electronically within our SharePoint Electronic Document Management System (EDRMS) and our HR system iTrent. Unsuccessful applications are not retained and will be destroyed using Ofwat's secure disposal methods. If you have indicated that you would like Ofwat to retain your information for future similar employment opportunities we will retain this information. If at any point you decide you do not wish Ofwat to retain your information for these purposes please contact us and we will ensure your information is removed from our systems, unless we are legally obliged to hold it for a further period.

We will hold any data about you in completely secure conditions and with restricted access. Information in statistical form on present and former employees in some instances is provided to appropriate outside bodies. Wherever possible Ofwat ensures that statistical information is anonymised.

We will include data that you provide on the diversity monitoring form in a general database for statistical monitoring purposes only. This enables us to monitor the effectiveness of our policy on equal opportunities in employment.

Ofwat processes all the personal data you have provided during your application as set out in Ofwat's privacy policy which is available here: <https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/publication/privacy-policy/>. If you have any concerns regarding the processing of some or all of your data please inform the People Hub in writing to [people@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:people@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk) and/or the Data Protection Officer by emailing [FOI@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FOI@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk).

## Diversity

Ofwat aims to be an equal opportunities employer. We intend to make sure that there is equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all irrespective of:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership status;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race, religion or belief; or
- sex or sexual orientation.

We would like to assure you that we will treat the information you provide on the diversity monitoring form in the strictest confidence and only use it to help us monitor appropriate equal opportunities policies. This information plays no part in our selection process.

## Investors in People (IIP)

Ofwat has IIP accreditation which reflects good management practices throughout our organisation, including in business planning, individual objective setting, learning and development opportunities, as well as continuous constructive feedback through our delivery and development conversations approach to performance management.

## Complaints procedure

The process of recruitment and assessment embraces the principles of fair and open competition and best practice. The first is to maintain the principle of selection for appointment to the Civil Service on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the [Civil Service Recruitment Principles](#). The second is to promote an understanding of the [Civil Service Code](#) which sets out the constitutional framework in which all civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold, and to hear and determine appeals made under it.

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the recruitment principles and you wish to make a complaint, you should contact Sarah Lal, Head of HR, Corporate Enablers (People), Ofwat, Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham, B5 4UA in the first instance. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from us you can contact the Civil Service Commission at [info@csc.gov.uk](mailto:info@csc.gov.uk).



**Ofwat (The Water Services Regulation Authority)  
is a non-ministerial government department.  
We regulate the water sector in England and Wales.**

Ofwat  
Centre City Tower  
7 Hill Street  
Birmingham B5 4UA

**Phone:** 0121 644 7500  
**Fax:** 0121 644 7533

© Crown copyright 2021

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information, you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This document is also available from our website at [www.ofwat.gov.uk](https://www.ofwat.gov.uk).

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to [mailbox@ofwat.gov.uk](mailto:mailbox@ofwat.gov.uk).

**OGL**