

Information for applicants Principal Data Specialist – Company Performance and Price Reviews, Ref: OFW– BC208

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
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 new [strategy](#) and as a regulator we are setting ourselves up to achieve and equal the ambition of this new 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 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.

Company Performance and Price Reviews cluster – PR24 and Beyond

We are looking for a Principal Data Specialist to join the PR24 cost assessment team.

Data analysts work across Ofwat, with diverse opportunities to contribute to meeting our ambitious goals. Ofwat is organised in 'clusters'. Each cluster has work programs that focus on particular areas of Ofwat's regulatory duties and strategy. The successful candidate will join the Company Performance and Price Reviews cluster, which is responsible for developing the approach for future price reviews including the next price review in 2024 (PR24). Ofwat is an agile working environment, so you can expect opportunities to support other clusters and to move around the organisation as work priorities shift.

PR24 may seem some time away, but it is crucial that we begin to work with the sector to develop our approach to help deliver our long term goals for the sector. The development of a price control goes beyond setting the revenue limits and outcomes that we expect from companies but also includes examining how we can make greater use of markets and incentives to deliver better outcomes for customers and the environment.

We have recently published '[PR24 and Beyond: Creating tomorrow, together](#)', which shares our ideas and ambitions for the 2024 price review. In this, we set out four ambitions for what PR24 can achieve for customers and the environment, and principles for how we'll approach and design the price review.

The successful candidate will join the cost assessment team for PR24. It is an exciting time to join the cost assessment team as the development of PR24 is at a relatively early stage, which means the role has the opportunity to help shape the design of PR24 and the approach to

cost assessment. As outlined in '[PR24 and Beyond: Creating tomorrow, together](#)', we are currently exploring several interesting cost assessment questions, including:

- How can we **build on our cost modelling approach** at PR19?
- How can we better explore the **link between costs and outcomes** and reflect this in the trajectories for meeting long term ambitions?
- How can we **strengthen our approach to long term operational resilience**, in particular whether we can take account of forward-looking pressures on capital maintenance?
- How can we **improve our assessment of nature-based solutions**, so that they are appropriately incentivised through the cost assessment framework?
- How can we take into account of key emerging issues such as **net zero, public value and partnership working**?
- How can we take better account of **social and environmental benefits** and the long term in investment proposals?

The role is at Principal level. Principals are expected to be able to lead workstreams, which will involve planning and delivery.

More specifically, the successful candidate will be our lead specialist on cost assessment issues relating to data. This includes issues related to data handling, analysis, quality and modelling. As part of this they would be expected to lead and co-ordinate our work across our PR24 cost assessment modelling suite. The cost assessment model suite is made up of individual feeder models that come together to determine efficient cost allowances. At PR19, we published over 100 cost assessment feeder models.¹ The role will include the provision of specialist advice and direction to ensure that our data and modelling meet our high standards and to mitigate the risk of error. This might involve managing the work of others to deliver the project objectives. During the price review there may be opportunity to assist other parts of PR24 on data and modelling requirements. After the price review there will be opportunity to assist other parts of Ofwat with data and modelling issues.

Data is a key part of Ofwat's [strategy](#) and how we see water companies being able to drive innovation going forwards. We have recently published a [discussion paper](#) which sets out our views on how Open Data can enable water companies to create value for water customers, communities, and the environment. We are also using data to help the development of markets, for example with the publication of the [bioresources market dashboard](#) which sets out bioresources production and treatment data to help inform trades.

¹ Ofwat, '[Final determinations models](#)', December 2019.

Role expectations

This is a key role in the cost assessment team for PR24. The role will have responsibility for leading the development of data requirements and feeder models for all of our cost assessment work through PR24. They will work with specialist economists and engineers leading on setting efficient costs for water and wastewater companies, co-ordinating their data and models to ensure that our evidence and decisions are accurately reflected in the determinations that Ofwat makes.

The role will require a variety of knowledge and expertise, including:

- Experience of designing, building and populating data models. This will require significant experience with data analysis using Excel, but could include Power Query, Power BI or Python too. The successful candidate will be expected to be the lead adviser for the team on technical data and quality assurance issues.
- A detailed understanding of how to manage data across its lifecycle. The successful candidate will be responsible for setting requirements for the cost assessment data that water companies will need to provide annually and in their business plans; managing this data in our corporate database; and ensuring that analysis and publications use this data correctly.
- Experience of building effective relationships and networks. The successful candidate will need to work with specialist leads across the cost assessment team, as well as with central programme management, to ensure that we use a consistent and high-quality approach across all our cost assessment data and models. They will need to explain their approach, and why this is important, to non-specialists.

Key deliverables

- Working with technical and policy leads to create the suite of cost assessment models for PR24 and designing how this will be used and governed in practice during the price review.
- Providing specialist advice on cost assessment data and models, including rapid development of models and analysis where necessary.
- Setting local standards and quality assurance practices for data and modelling in the cost assessment team and ensuring these align with Ofwat's corporate approach and requirements. Developing and operating the approach to making sure these standards and practices are followed across the team.

- Leading the development of business plan requirements (including data requirements) for cost assessment, working with other colleagues across the PR24 programme. Engaging with water companies on these requirements.
- Helping to develop our data capability as an organisation (as set out in our strategy) by helping to identify new approaches, ways of working and tools and technology associated with data.

Professional requirements

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to degree or post-graduate level in a relevant discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-graduate or professional qualification in a numerate subject such as mathematics, statistics, economics, data science, or social research
Experience and Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of designing, building and populating data models • Experience of building effective relationships and networks with relevant internal staff and external peers • Experience of working under pressure to produce high quality analysis to tight timescales while managing competing priorities • Good written and oral communications skills, including the ability to concisely explain complex analysis and issues to non-technical audiences • Highly numerate with strong analytical skills • Significant experience with data analysis using Excel • An in-depth understanding of managing data across its lifecycle, from collection and storage through to dissemination • Experience of designing and implementing quality assurance processes and user acceptance testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the water sector in England and Wales. • Knowledge of Ofwat's regulatory framework, particularly cost assessment • Working knowledge of Power Query, Power BI, or Python
Skills and behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making effective decisions • Leadership • Managing a Quality Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering at Pace • Communicating and influencing

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Terms and conditions of employment

Contract

This is a permanent appointment.

Salary

The salary range for this role is Band 4 (Principal) is £51,628 – £78,970. The level of salary offered to the successful candidate(s) will depend on the skills and experience demonstrated as well as other factors including internal relativities. For further information or an informal discussion please contact recruitment@ofwat.gov.uk. 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. However, the majority of employees are currently working from home 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.

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, the post holder will be transferred to permanent establishment at the end of their probation.

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 2020, member contributions are based on actual salaries.

From 1 April 2020, employee contributions are:

Actual pensionable salary (annual)	All members
Up to and including £22,600	4.60%
£22,601 to £54,900	5.45%
£54,901 to £150,000	7.35%
£150,001 and above	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.

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 be made on the civil service website prior to the closing deadline.

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	17 th January 2022 at 10am
Sifting	Week commencing 17 th January 2022
Interview date(s)	Week commencing 31st January 2021

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 as detailed in the above candidate pack. 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

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 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 and/or the Data Protection Officer by emailing 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.

