

Candidate Guidance

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life.



Our Application & Assessment Process

Our recruitment process is fair, transparent, and based on merit in line with [Civil Service Principles](#). We'll assess your skill, experience, knowledge, and attributes, and give you the best opportunity to showcase these.

The guidance below includes information on:

1. [Finding the right job](#)
2. [Inclusive Recruitment at Ofwat](#)
3. [Making your application via Civil Service Jobs](#)
4. [Our shortlisting \(sifting\) process](#)
5. [Interviews at Ofwat](#)

1. Finding the right job

Have a look at the opportunities we currently have on our [Careers site](#). Once you find a role that excites you, you can apply via [Civil Service Jobs](#). Utilising this platform enables a fair assessment, helps eliminate bias, and keeps your data secure. It also allows you to access your application portal at any time and review your application status.

2. Inclusive recruitment at Ofwat

2.1 Name-blind recruitment

We operate anonymous sifting to eliminate bias from the application review process. During the sifting stage, the hiring panel shortlist applicants for interview solely on merit. They will not see any personal identifying information. To maintain this anonymity, please don't use any identifying information in your application (e.g. - do not sign or include your name in your personal statement)

2.2 Diversity & Inclusion

Your application will include a short Diversity & Inclusion questionnaire. Your answers are anonymous. The data captured is only viewed by our HR team and is used for monitoring purposes only. We aim to be representative of the communities we serve, and we want to see diversity and inclusion embedded into all that we do. This data is important for informing our D&I strategy. You will have the option to decline to answer questions if you would prefer.

2.3 DCS (Disability Confident Scheme) employer

We are proud to be a disability confident employer and as part of the DCS, we guarantee to interview all candidates applying under the scheme who meet the minimum essential criteria.

2.4 Reasonable adjustments

You will have the opportunity to request reasonable adjustments as part of your application. At any stage of the process, you can contact us via recruitment@ofwat.gov.uk to discuss any further help you may require.

3. Making your application via Civil Service Jobs

When you click 'apply' you will be prompted to sign-in/create an account prior to starting your application form. The application form consists of questions detailing your employment history, previous skills and experience, and relevant qualifications. You may be asked to provide a personal statement, depending on the requirements for the role.

Please ensure you have submitted your application in full ahead of the deadline listed in the advert. Unfortunately, we won't be able to consider late applications. If you are unable to make an online application, then please contact recruitment@ofwat.gov.uk and we will be happy to support.

3.1 Your Application (CV Section)

This section of the form consists of three subsections. Complete each text box manually.

- **Employment History**

Give us an overview of your career. Include job titles, names of employers and dates of employment. List your most recent role first. Consider the relevance of your experience to the role you are applying for. Don't worry about going back further than 10 years unless you think it's relevant to the role. For example:

- Principal Economist – 'Company A' – June 21 – Current
- Economist – 'Company B' – January 18 – June 21
- Junior Economist – 'Company C' – Sept 15 – Dec 17

- **Previous Skills & Experience**

This section offers you the opportunity to highlight relevant responsibilities, skills, and achievements. Please link these with your previous roles or qualifications. Focus on the essential criteria listed in the candidate pack.

- **Qualifications**

Provide the name/type of qualification, subject, and grade. Don't include any reference to the institution you studied at. For example:

- BSc – Environmental Studies – 2:2

3.2 Personal statement (if applicable)

For some of our roles we ask for a personal statement You can refer to the "Selection process" section within the candidate pack for specific guidance.

Although there's a word limit, don't feel you have to fill the space. It's about the quality of your words, not the quantity. Highlight specific experience, skills and knowledge you consider relevant but remember that we only score how well you demonstrate evidence of the criteria being assessed. In your response, focus on your own personal contributions when providing examples.

You may find the STAR method a useful tool for structuring your answer. Find out more about STAR and how to apply it [here](#).

4. Our sifting (shortlisting) process

We will assess your application against the essential skills, experience and knowledge listed in the 'Professional requirements' section in the candidate pack.

When we receive a high volume of applications, we may 'pre-sift' applications on just '**lead criteria**' identified in the 'Selection process' section of the pack. Be specific and ensure you address the lead criteria as advertised.

4.1 Application Outcome

Your application will only be reviewed after the advertising window has closed. The closing date and sifting date(s) will be identified in the candidate pack. We'll let you know of the outcome and what to expect at the next stage via email within 5 to 10 working days of the closing date. Keep an eye on your spam folder as this response is automated from civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk. Unfortunately, we are not able to provide detailed feedback at this stage.

You can access the application portal to monitor the progress of your application by logging into your [Civil Service account](#). Your outcome and assessment score will be visible under the 'Applications' tab.

5. Interviews at Ofwat

Our interviews are structured around the attributes, experience, skills, and knowledge specified in the candidate pack. It's important to review these essential criteria to prepare for your interview.

We've included more guidance below to help you to make the most of your interview and to give you the best chance of success.

There is usually just one interview, but some roles may have additional assessments, including a written exercise, presentation, or a second interview. The advert and the candidate pack will specify exactly what's required for your interview in the 'Assessment process' section. You can find the advert again in your 'Application Centre', on the Civil Service Jobs platform.

5.1 Questions

The interviewing panel will typically ask you around five to eight interview questions depending on the duration of the interview and on whether or not an additional presentation/task is required. You may also be asked follow-up questions, to delve deeper into your answers. This section covers most of the interview time, and you are scored on the essential attributes, experience, knowledge, and skills, as highlighted in the candidate Pack.

There are no trick questions. The panel want you to do well, so feel free to ask them to repeat or clarify questions if you need to or ask the interviewers to post the questions in the chat.

Your interview may start with a warm-up question/icebreaker to help you feel more comfortable. The remaining interview questions will be a mixture of attribute-based and other competency-based questions which will be more technical in nature.

5.2 Attribute-based questions

Our [Framework for Success](#) outlines the attributes that you'll need to succeed at Ofwat specific to your grade. . The framework also helps our colleagues identify their strengths and development areas, enabling them and their People Leader to align their development with their career aspirations.

We recognise that we all react differently to interview situations. To increase transparency, you will receive a selection of our attribute-based questions ahead of interview with your interview confirmation email. We call this transparent interviewing. This gives you the opportunity to think through your response ahead of time, so you have relevant examples to share. You can use notes throughout the interview to jog your memory, but you will want to strike a balance to avoid over-preparation or scripting your answer. We want to you be able to give your absolute best and this forms part of our approach to enable this.

5.3 The Panel

The interviewing panel will usually consist of two people, and we try to ensure diverse representation as much as possible. Names and positions of the panel members will be shared in the interview confirmation email. The interviewing panel will receive a copy of your application prior to your interview.

5.4 Location

Most interviews at Ofwat are completed virtually via Microsoft Teams. For some roles it may be required that you attend the office in London or Birmingham.

Information on how to access your interview will be emailed to you as part of your interview confirmation. Prior to your interview, you should check that you're able to join Teams calls and that your internet connection is stable. You should also join from a location that is well-lit, quiet, and free from interruptions.

5.5 Duration

Interviews typically last around 60 minutes, but they may last longer if you have been asked to give a presentation or complete an additional task. The duration will be set out in your invite. There will be an opportunity at the end of the interview to ask questions. We consider interviews a two-way conversation and as much as we want to find out more about you and your experiences, it's also a chance for you to find out more about us and the role you have applied for.

5.6 Interview Feedback

You will be provided with scores and constructive feedback once all interviews have been completed and the panel have had the opportunity to finalise scores. We aim to do this as quickly as possible, and the panel will usually indicate when you can expect to hear an outcome.

Best of luck!