

FOI DOF/2025-0117

Request

I wish to request information regarding Vacancy IRC 286576 Alternative Working Pattern Staff Officers at Great Northern Tower Belfast, DWP Belfast Service Centre, DWP Ballymena Service Centre and Lisahally Service Centre.

I would like to know:

1. Of the 9 existing civil servants who were successfully in this recruitment, how many of the 9 moved up more than one NICS Grade, for example, was an Executive Officer 2 before and after being successful in this recruitment moved to Staff Officer or would move to SO.
2. How many of the 9 existing civil servants were men?
3. Ultimately what department within HR or Who within HR took the decision that there should be no aptitude test for this vacancy?

DoF Response

I can confirm the department holds some of the information requested.

1. The Department does not hold a figure of 9 successful candidates for competition IRC286576 Alternative Working Pattern Staff Officer (AWP SO). However, I can confirm that 4 of the successful candidates for this competition were Executive Officer 2 before moving to Staff Officer.
2. The Department does not hold a figure of 9 successful candidates for competition IRC286576 Alternative Working Pattern Staff Officer (AWP SO). However, I can confirm that 14 of the existing civil servants were male.
3. When a competition includes additional criteria beyond the standard requirements for a general service role, as was the case in the Alternative Working Pattern Staff Officer competition, aptitude tests are not typically used as part of the assessment process.

As a result, no specific department or individual within HR was required to take a decision to exclude an aptitude test for the Alternative Working Pattern Staff Officer competition. Rather, the established approach is that aptitude tests are not used for competitions that include additional role-specific criteria.

The additional criteria beyond the standard requirements for a Staff Officer general service role that applied to the Alternative Working Pattern Staff Officer competition (IRC286575) was:

- A minimum of 2 years' demonstrable experience within the last 5 years of successfully leading and discharging management responsibilities within an organisation with a particular focus on operational delivery
- A minimum of 2 years' demonstrable experience within the last 5 years of demonstrable experience of analysing and communicating information effectively to improve performance and assist and advise management decision making.
- A minimum of 2 years' demonstrable experience within the last 5 years of demonstrable management experience of successfully working with and influencing key stakeholders on the development and/or delivery of a major business reform or organisational change programme to meet business objectives in a customer focused environment.

In addition, candidates were required to work any hours between 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm on one Saturday in four as well as being available to travel, including overnight stays in Great Britain for DWP funded posts. It was therefore essential that candidates were able and willing to travel as and when required, sometimes at short notice.