

FOI DOF/2025-0667

Request

Re: Administrative Officer – North West vacancies

1. Please outline the shortlisting process for the above position.
2. What did the 'careful review' as detailed in the email correspondence consist of?
3. Who was involved in the shortlisting process?
4. What criteria was used to assess my self-assessment?
5. Please detail the required threshold.
6. Was there an EQIA, Section 75 Screening form or Rural Needs Assessment carried out on this selection process? Please provide a copy of these.

DoF Response

I can confirm the Department holds the information requested.

1. The shortlisting process was designed to ensure applicants met the minimum eligibility criteria, which included:

- Age and right-to-work requirements.
- Pre-agreed preferred experience relevant to the AO role.

Applicants completed a self-assessment questionnaire, rating their experience against seven predefined administrative and organisational criteria aligned to AO duties. Each criterion carried a predetermined weighting reflecting its importance. The total score was calculated by combining responses across all seven criteria. Meeting the minimum eligibility criteria was essential for progression. The operational delivery of this competition was managed by TalentDog.

2. The review consisted of:

- Verification of eligibility (age, right to work, preferred experience).
- Assessment of self-assessment responses against the weighted criteria.

- Application of the scoring key developed for this pilot process to ensure consistency.

3. TalentDog managed the operational aspects of the process, which was overseen by the NICSHR Resourcing Team.

4. Criteria Used to Assess Self-Assessment;

- Administrative and organisational criteria relevant to AO duties.
- Each criterion had a weighting based on its importance.
- Candidates' self-assessment scores were combined to produce a total score.

5. The required threshold to advance in this phase was based on achieving a minimum combined score across all weighted criteria after confirming eligibility. Applications with the highest rankings will move forward at this stage, and the remaining ones will be placed on a list should further vacancies arise.

6. The information you have requested is being withheld as it is exempt under section 22(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 22(1) protects information intended for future publication. Section 22 is a qualified exemption, and I have considered whether the balance of the public interest favours maintaining the exemption in section 22(1) or disclosing the information. By applying Section 22 Exemption of the FOI Act, we are required to carry out a Public Interest Test. This can be found attached as a separate document (Annex C). The information will be published in the near future.

Annex B - Internal Reviews

An Internal Review request examines the response based on applied exemptions, search adequacy, or response timeliness.

It is not the following, which will be treated as specified:

- Questions asking for clarification on information provided: Will be treated as part of the original FOI request.
- Additional questions about the information in the response: Will be treated as a new FOI request.
- Questions about the subject not related to the original request: Will be treated as new FOI request.
- Questions regarding how a service operates or why a decision was made: Will be treated as normal business and responded to accordingly.
- Complaints or concerns raised in response to information provided: Will be treated in line with relevant complaints procedure.

To make an Internal Review request:

- **Clearly state:** That you want an internal review of a previous FOI response and provide the necessary details.
- **Follow the timeline:** Be sure to submit your request within 40 working days of receiving the original response. If the Department has not responded at all, you have 40 working days after the original 20-day response period has passed.
- **Wait for a response:** The review is typically completed within 20 working days but can take up to 40 working days in exceptional circumstances. The Department should inform you of any delays.

What the review includes

- A fresh decision based on a reconsideration of all relevant factors.
- An assessment of whether the request was handled correctly and if exemptions were applied appropriately.
- The review will be conducted by someone who was not involved in the original decision.

If you wish to request an internal review, please email foi@finance-ni.gov.uk or write to FOI/EIR Team, Department of Finance, 2nd Floor, Craigantlet Buildings, Stoney Road, Belfast, BT4 3SX.