

FOI DOF/2026-0081

Request

For IRC319326 – DAERA Grade 5 Digital Services Director competition, under freedom of information legislation please provide the following information:

1. The number of applications received
2. The number of applicants who were existing NICS employees
3. The number of candidates invited to interview
4. The number of candidates invited to interview who were existing NICS employees
5. The number of candidates who passed the interview
6. For each of the 5 sections criteria (Presentation, Leading & Communicating, Changing and Improving, Collaborating and Partnering & Achieving Outcomes thorough Delivery Partners) please provide the highest and lowest awarded mark for each of these questions/criteria.
7. Please also provide the highest and lowest total candidate score for the competition

DoF response

I can confirm the department holds the information requested.

1. There was a total number of seventeen applications received.
2. Four applicants were existing NICS employees.
3. Seven applicants were invited to interview.
4. Four candidates invited to interview were existing NICS employees.
5. Three candidates were successful at interview.
6. Presentation – highest score (19) lowest score (11).
Leading and Communicating – highest score (18) lowest score (9).
Changing and Improving – highest score (18) lowest score (10).
Collaborating & Partnering – highest score (19) lowest score (8).
Achieving Outcomes through Delivery Partners – highest score (18) lowest score (8).
7. I can confirm the department holds the information requested, however the information you have requested is being withheld because it is exempt under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 40(2) exempts personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would, amongst other things, contravene one of the data protection principles of the Data Protection Act.

In this case, I believe disclosure would contravene the first data protection principle, which provides that personal data must be processed lawfully and fairly. Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and the Department is not obliged to consider whether the public interest favours disclosing the information.

Having considered all the information contained within the Legitimate Interest Test – lawful, fairness and transparency test (attached as a separate document – Annex C), the department has established that, on balance, there is no lawful basis for the disclosure of the remaining third-party personal data falling within the scope of the request of which the requester is not the data subject.