

FOI DOF/2026-0222

Request

RE: IRC318746 - Agriculture Inspector Grade II – Agriculture

1. Have any of the interviewing/shortlisting panel members had any:
 - o Interview/selection/recruitment training; and/or
 - o Equal opportunities training
2. What consideration, if any, did the respondent give to its Equal Opportunities Policy in this recruitment exercise?
3. How many candidates applied for the above-named post? Please state the names, sex, age, marital status and number of dependents of the candidates.
4. How many applicants were shortlisted for interview? Please state the names, sex, age, marital status and number of dependents of those shortlisted.
5. Please state the essential criteria used for shortlisting for the post IRC318746 Agriculture Inspector Grade II – Agriculture
6. Please state the preferred criteria used for shortlisting for the post IRC318746 Agriculture Inspector Grade II – Agriculture
7. In respect of the shortlisting criteria please define precisely the term “objective evaluation” and please provide detail on the “scored basis” applied to the “objective evaluation”.
8. Please explain why and in what way the criteria of “2b” were relevant to the post?
9. If the shortlisting criteria were altered or revised at any stage, please state each and every respect in which they were altered and why.
10. Please state the names and job titles of those involved in the shortlisting process.
11. Did any of the shortlisted candidates receive assistance from any member of the interviewing panel? If so, please state:
 - o The name, sex, age, marital status and number of dependents of the candidate;
 - o The name of the panel member providing assistance;
 - o The type of assistance granted;
 - o Was this assistance offered to any/all of the shortlisted candidates.

DoF response

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

1. All panel members have up to date Recruitment and Selection training and Equality & Diversity Essentials training.
2. NICSHR does not hold this information.
3. 88 applicants applied for IRC318746.

The remainder of 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.

4. 52 applicants were shortlisted for interview.

The remainder of the information you have requested is being withheld because it is exempt under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

5. The information you have requested is held by the Department but is exempt under section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 21 exempts information if this information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.

This information is contained within the candidate information booklet which is in the public domain - [irc318746-cib-v5---final.pdf](#)

Section 21 is an absolute exemption, and the Department is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information.

6. Shortlisting was not used for this competition.

7. Shortlisting was not used for this competition.

8. NICS HR does not hold this information.

9. Shortlisting was not used for this competition.

10. The names and job titles of the sift panel are:

Albert Johnston – Agricultural Officer (G6)

Lynne Martin – Senior Principal (G6)

Francis Breen - Agricultural Inspector Grade I

11. NICS HR has confirmed that no candidates received assistance from the panel.