



OFFICE OF THE COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC SERVICE APPOINTMENTS
SCHEME 2005 – 2008

under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003



Oifig an Choimisiúin um Cheapacháin Seirbhíse Poiblí
Office of the Commission for Public Service Appointments

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction and Background

This scheme was prepared under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 (“the Act”) by the Office of the Commission for Public Service Appointments.

Section 11 provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory scheme detailing the services they will provide

- through the medium of Irish
- through the medium of English
- through the medium of Irish and English

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not provided by the body through the medium of the Irish Language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

1.2 Preparation of a Scheme

The Office published a notice under Section 13 on 13 January 2005, inviting representations in relation to the preparation of the draft scheme under Section 11 from any interested parties.

The scheme has been informed by these submissions. The Office appreciates the time and effort put in by all concerned in this process.

1.3 The Content and Commencement Date of the Language Scheme

This scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs. The scheme is commenced with effect from 30 May 2005 and shall remain in force for a period of 3 years from this date until a new scheme has been confirmed by the Minister pursuant to Section 15 of the Act, whichever is earlier.

The scheme builds on the commitment that has been operative within the Office of the Commission for Public Service Appointments since its establishment on the 19 October 2004 as well as the Principles of Quality Customer Service. Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the scheme will rest with the senior management within this Office.

The scheme also includes a commitment to assess on an ongoing basis the level of demand for services through Irish and to ensure that the Office meets this demand in a planned and coherent way.

1.4 Overview of the Office of the Commission for Public Service Appointments

The Commission for Public Service Appointments was established in October 2004 in accordance with the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 as an independent body to regulate recruitment to the Civil Service and to other public service organisations stipulated within the legislation.

The Commission sets standards, which it publishes as codes of practice, for recruitment and selection to the Civil Service and a number of public service bodies. One of the principal functions of the Commission is to safeguard these standards through regular monitoring and auditing of recruitment and selection activities.

The Commission also grants licences to certain public service bodies to recruit on their own behalf or with the assistance of private sector recruitment agencies specifically approved by the Commission.

The Office of the Commission for Public Service Appointments supports the work of the Commission. The Office is structured as a single unit where the day-to-day functions of the Commission together with the associated finance, HR and general office administrative matters are managed. It has a staff of 6 and is currently located at Chapter House, 26 – 30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1.

Stakeholders

The outcome of the work of the Office of the Commission for Public Service Appointments impacts on our stakeholders. The key stakeholders are listed below. The external customers are recruitment agencies and members of the general public:

The Public Appointments Service
Government Departments/Offices
An Garda Síochána
Health Service Executive
Private sector Recruitment Agencies
The General Public

The Office's interaction with private sector recruitment agencies arises from its responsibility to produce a list of recruitment agencies that may from time to time assist government departments/offices and a number of other public service bodies with some of the tasks associated with the recruitment/selection process. A notice is published on an annual basis requesting those agencies interested to submit an application. The Commission evaluates the applications and publishes a list of approved recruitment agencies.

The Commission interacts with members of the public in responding to general enquiries, responding to requests under the Freedom of Information and in processing cases of allegations of breaches of the codes of practice.

1.5 Assessment of Extent to which Services are Already Available Through Irish

The primary objective of the Act is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish.

The Commission for Public Service Appointments was established in October 2004. In setting up the Office, due regard was given to the requirements of the Official Languages Act 2003. The Commission has provided all its publications bilingually. They are as follows:

- Code of Practice for External Recruitment for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service
- Code of Practice for Selection of Persons for Appointment on Promotion to Positions in the Civil Service
- Code of Practice for External and Internal Recruitment for Appointment to Positions in An Garda Síochána
- Code of Practice for Recruitment for Appointment to Positions to which the Local Authorities (Officers and Employees) Act, 1926 applies
- Code of Practice for External and Internal Recruitment for Appointment to Positions in the Health Service Executive
- Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions on a Short-term Basis in the Health Service Executive
- Quality Customer Service Action Plan 2004 – 2007
- Customer Charter
- Sections 15 and 16 Freedom of Information Manual.

The website is fully bilingual. The Commission's Customer Charter commits it to fulfilling obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003, and ensuring that all members of the public are facilitated in using the official language of their choice. It also sets out the following commitments:

- All website facilities are and will be fully bilingual for the lifespan of this Scheme
- All publications which have the general public as part of their general audience will be available in Irish.

CHAPTER 2

This chapter briefly describes the functions/activities of the Office and sets out the official language regime operated by the Office.

2.1 Functions:

Establishing Standards for Recruitment and Selection for Promotion

- establishing standards of probity, merit, equity and fairness, and other principles to be followed in the recruitment and selection of persons for positions in the Civil Service and other public service bodies

Codes of Practice

- publishing the standards established as codes of practice

Monitoring Standards

- auditing and evaluating recruitment policies and practices to safeguard the standards and to establish whether the code of practice is being observed

Licensing

- evaluating applications for recruitment licences
- granting recruitment licences
- revoking recruitment licences where necessary
- issuing instructions and advices to licence holders

Appeals Procedures

- establishing and setting down appropriate appeal procedures

Providing Information

- reporting to both the Oireachtas and the Government
- providing information to ministers on the operation of recruitment and selection processes

Listing Private Sector Recruitment Agencies

- preparing, approving and publishing a list of private sector professional recruitment agencies who may provide assistance to licence holders in the task of recruitment.

2.2 Language Regime Operated by the Office

Means of Communication with the Public/Information to the Public

The Office's communications with the general public relating to its services are made available in both Irish and English, including:

- Application process and guidance information for recruitment agencies
- All publications which have as part of its intended audience the general public will be available in Irish
- The website is bilingual and will be bilingual for the lifetime of this scheme
- All Codes of Practice published by the Commission are published bilingually.

CHAPTER 3

The nature of the operations of the Office means that the level of interaction with the general public is not extensive. However, where the Office does interact with the public it is fully committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Official Languages Act and this has been set out among our customer service commitments in our Customer Charter.

3.1 Enhancement of services to be provided bilingually-

3.1.1 The Office is committed to ensuring that its team will, with immediate effect, include a member of staff who

- is able to give the name of the Office in Irish and English
- is at least familiar with the basic greetings in Irish and can arrange to respond satisfactorily to the enquiry.

3.1.2 The Office will continue to facilitate staff attending Irish language classes during office hours thus improving the Office's capacity to respond to the needs of its Irish speaking customers.

Within 12 months, two of our six staff members will have participated in an Irish language customer's services delivery course with a view to supporting and enhancing our day-to-day services through the Irish language.

CHAPTER 4

4. Monitoring and Revision

4.1 Senior Management within the Office will keep the effective operation of this scheme under review. As the role of this recently established Office evolves over time, every effort will be made to take advantage of any new opportunities to enhance the service provided to the public.

CHAPTER 5

5. Publicising of Agreed Scheme

5.1 The contents of this scheme along with the commitments and provisions of the scheme will be publicised to the general public by means of:

- Website
- Advertising in Foinse

A copy of this scheme has also been forwarded to Oifig Choimisinéir na dTeangacha Oifigiúla.

