



An tÚdarás Rialála Limistéir Mhuirí
Maritime Area Regulatory Authority

Candidate Information Booklet

Head of Policy (Assistant Principal Grade)

This competition will be undertaken by Osborne Recruitment on behalf of the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) under licence from the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) in accordance with the Code of Practice for Appointments to the Civil and Public Service

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The Position:

Title of Position:	Head of Policy
Grade:	Assistant Principal (AP)
Tenure:	Permanent (subject to successful completion of probationary period)
Employing Authority:	Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA)
Location:	Menapia House, Drinagh Business Park, Co. Wexford, Y35 RF29
Annual Leave:	30 days per annum
Hybrid Working:	The successful candidate will be required to attend the office at least 2 days per week and can avail of remote working up to 3 days per week subject to business needs and the MARA blended working policy.
Closing Date:	10:00am Monday 17 th November 2025
Starting Salary:	Assistant Principal Grade
Working Hours:	35 hours (NET per week)
Panel:	Successful candidates will be placed on a panel from which appointments will be made. Vacancies will be offered to candidates based on the order of merit from the interview process. Any panel formed as part of this campaign, will expire 18 months from its establishment.

About MARA

The Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) is a new independent body responsible for the sustainable management of Ireland's diverse and unique maritime area, brought about by the enactment of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 (MAP Act). Established in July 2023, as part of the biggest reform of marine governance in Ireland in almost a century, MARA will be key to the transformation of our maritime governance regime.

The system and structures set out in the MAP Act are key legal enablers of development and the protection of the environment and cultural heritage in the maritime area for the future generations, including the envisaged expansion of the offshore renewable energy sector required to meet Ireland's 2030 climate goals in an integrated and sustainable manner.

MARA Mission, Vision and Values



The Organisational Context

MARA is an independent agency, established by the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021, now under the aegis of the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC). MARA has an 11-member Board who are appointed by the Minister.

Under the direction of a Chief Executive Officer, the executive of MARA are responsible for carrying out the following day to day functions:

- Processing applications for maritime area consents (MACs) for the maritime area;
- Processing application for maritime usage licences for specified scheduled activities;
- Compliance and enforcement of MACs, licences, foreshore authorisations and offshore development consents;
- Administration of the extant MHLGH Foreshore consent portfolio; and
- Fostering and promoting co-operation between regulators of the maritime area.

Working collaboratively with all its partners, MARA will support the pillars of Ireland's marine planning system by:

- Bringing its expertise, knowledge and skills to enhance forward planning in the maritime area;
- Developing a well-functioning transparent consenting system, consistent with the principles of proper marine spatial planning, for all maritime users and activities; and
- Implementing a rigorous, but proportionate, compliance and monitoring programme to ensure the sustainable use of our maritime area and challenge unauthorised development and non-compliance with maritime planning permission.

Strategic Objectives 2024 - 2027

MARA has completed its first Statement of Strategy with the following Strategic objectives for 2024 – 2027 which include:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	Establish solid foundations for delivery - this includes building an infrastructure to assess applications, issue timely robust decisions and deliver effective governance.	Build capacity and knowledge - this includes growing our team, building capacity within the organisation, enhancing our knowledge, insight and innovation, and embedding our structures.	Regulate effectively and impartially - this includes managing authorisations, monitoring compliance with legislation and driving regulation through risk-based compliance and enforcement.	Drive cooperation and empower action - this includes being a leading voice for the protection of Ireland's maritime are proactively informing policy, legislation, and better choices for the environment to overcome sea blindness and foster ocean literacy.
	INDICATOR OF SUCCESS	INDICATOR OF SUCCESS	INDICATOR OF SUCCESS	INDICATOR OF SUCCESS
	MARA is a well-governed regulator, operating a streamlined maritime authorisations process that builds trust and confidence, and can withstand scrutiny.	MARA is appropriately resourced with the necessary capabilities, knowledge and skills to fulfill out responsibilities with the capacity necessary to work innovatively and promote personal development.	MARA is trusted and respected for our transparent and fair decision-making and its risk based compliance and enforcement regime, which in turn supports a culture of compliance in the communities that we serve.	MARA is a recognised thought leader in the maritime area, whose evidence is relied upon in the development of maritime policy and legislation, and whose insights inform the identification of future developments in the maritime are requiring regulation.

MARA will achieve this by building expertise in its people, its processes and its technology. As custodians of the maritime area, MARA will ensure that through good management and transparent decision making we will optimise our maritime resource on behalf of all citizens.

To realise its ambition, MARA has recruited and continues to seek motivated, dynamic and passionate people to join its team. This is an unrivalled opportunity to join a new agency at the early stages of its journey and to be at the forefront of managing Ireland's extensive maritime resource.

The Role

The head of Policy will be a key member of MARA's Policy and External Affairs Directorate. The Policy Unit in MARA contributes to Mara's functions in many ways, including but not limited to the following:

- National and international stakeholder engagement
- Proactive engagement in considering and informing a range of national policies as they relate to MARA's functions
- Reviewing MARA's functions in line the MAP Act

The role will involve working with internal and external stakeholders to build and maintain MARA's reputation as a well-functioning regulatory agency that delivers societal value. A key component will involve interacting with relevant government departments and agencies on relevant national and EU maritime legislation.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Policy

- Contribute to the objectives of the Policy and External Affairs Directorate and MARA's wider strategic priorities through, inter alia, detailed policy mapping and analysis, desk-based research and engagement with MARA's wide range of national and international stakeholders
- Maintain key relationships with Agency and Department representatives through regular consultation.
- Assess and understanding the impact of national and international maritime policy developments as they may relate to MARA.
- Contribute to MARA's strategic development and the delivery of MARA's statutory functions as they relate to the MAP Act.
- In conjunction with the Director of Policy and External Affairs, shape MARA's position on policy matters, horizon scanning and identifying gaps, risks and opportunities in the overall maritime regulatory environment. Support MARA's input to government policies affecting MARA's functions.
- Preparing and providing written and verbal briefings, presenting information in a clear, concise and effective manner.
- Support and assisting the Director of Policy and External Affairs plus other colleagues across MARA, as needed, to support the attainment of wider organisational objectives.
- Liaise and oversee stakeholder engagement.
- Lead consultations and engagement exercises to ensure transparency and legitimacy in policy development.
- Build and maintain strong working relationships with government departments, industry, external stakeholders and international regulators.
- Develop and advance MARA's strategic policy and legislative requirements. Current key outputs include:
 - Development and implementation of MARA's competitive Maritime Area Consent (MAC) process for the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) sector;
 - Legislative review of the Maritime Area Planning Act (MAPA) 2021 and relevant secondary legislation;
 - Develop co-operation agreements with other maritime authorities
 - Review of MARA's levy framework;
 - Manage the roll out of new functions to MARA;
 - Align MARA's statutory functions with national policy and legislative requirements in relation to seaweed harvesting.
- Manage the team assigned within the internal unit ensuring that all goals are met, leave is managed, and training opportunities are identified to support a high performing team.

- Provide mentoring and professional development opportunities for staff.
- Coordinate and compile data for internal and external audits, ensuring accuracy, consistency and compliance with audit requirements

Leadership/Management

- Manage the team assigned within the internal unit ensuring that all goals are met, leave is managed, and training opportunities are identified to support a high performing team.
- Provide mentoring and professional development opportunities for staff.
- Coordinate and compile data for internal and external audits, ensuring accuracy, consistency and compliance with audit requirements
- Manage the budget allocated to the unit in accordance with good financial practice.
- Create and maintain a good work environment in the Policy Unit and wider MARA agency in keeping with the Values of the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority.
- Promote open communication among staff and good levels of staff morale.
- Be conscious of health and safety matters in the workplace and in particular to comply with employees obligations as set out in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and to ensure that the procedure as set out the Safety Statement are implemented at all times.
- Assisting with such other duties and responsibilities as are assigned from time-to-time by the Director of Policy and External Affairs and others.

Capabilities

Applicants should have all the attributes required of an Assistant Principal Grade and in particular they must demonstrate, by reference to specific examples from their career to-date, that they possess or have the capacity to acquire the qualities, skills and knowledge required for the role of Assistant Principal as identified in the capability framework (appendix A).

Essential Role Requirements

- A Third level qualification, at minimum level 8, in public policy, strategic management, maritime or environmental policy or a related field considered suitable by MARA.
- A minimum of 3 years proven experience in policy, strategy, or a related role.

Desirable Role Requirements

- A considered and detail orientated approach to research, ensuring accuracy and credibility in all outputs with an ability to synthesise large volumes of information, think strategically, and develop actionable insights.
- Knowledge of and interest in the Maritime Area, Marine and Ocean Policy, EU affairs etc.
- Experience in reading and understanding national and EU legislation

Skills and Abilities

- Excellent political awareness, judgement and ability to operate effectively
- Ability to operate effectively within a political environment.
- Well-developed written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills to build, maintain effective and credible relationships with partners, key stakeholders, and policymakers.
- Proven ability to manage and contribute to multiple projects simultaneously, deliver under tight deadlines, and ensure high-quality outputs.
- A willingness and capacity to assume responsibility for the delivery of a diverse programme of work.

- Proficient in MS packages e.g. Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint etc
- An ability to work on one's own initiative.
- Management experience to include experience of leading and supporting teams.
- High level of integrity, sound judgement, and commitment to public service and MARA values.

How to Apply

Eligibility to Compete:

Candidates must, by the date of job offer, be:

- a) A citizen of the European Economic Area. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
- c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- d) A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- e) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa

Applications should be submitted via email and must include:

- A completed application form outlining why you wish to be considered for the post and how your skills and experience meet the requirements for the position
- Only applications fully submitted will be accepted into the campaign.

To apply for this role candidates must submit the relevant, signed and completed application form to MARA@osborne.ie

Closing Date:

Deadline for application: Please note latest receipt for applications is **10:00am on Monday 17th November 2025**. Incomplete applications, postal applications or CV's will not be accepted. Any applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

Applications will not be accepted after the closing date and time. Late applications will be ineligible for consideration. Therefore, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have allowed sufficient transmission time of your application. Applicants must ensure they retain a copy of the email submitted to MARA@osborne.ie including the date and time in case of any queries.

An acknowledgement email will be issued in respect of all applications received (this email will acknowledge receipt, and it will not confirm eligibility or otherwise). If an applicant does not receive an acknowledgement email within 2 working days of the date of submission, the applicant should contact MARA@osborne.ie to ensure the application has been received.

Selection Process:

The selection process may include:

- Shortlisting of applications
- A competitive interview based on the capability framework
- Presentation to the selection panel

- Any other test or assessment as deemed appropriate including psychometric assessment.
- Completion of all relevant checks as set out below.

A second or final interview may be required, candidates will be informed following completion of the first round of interviews.

Additional selection steps may be included.

A selection board shall be established and shall use the essential and desirable requirements as referred to earlier in this candidate information booklet to shortlist candidates. Scoring at the shortlisting stage shall be based on the information contained in the application form. Therefore, it is in your interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of how your skills, personal qualities, qualifications, and experience meet the requirements of the post. While candidates may meet the eligibility criteria of the competition, if the numbers applying for the post are such that it would not be practical to progress all candidates to the next stage of the selection, which is the interview process, MARA may decide that a certain number of candidates shall only be progressed to the next stage. Candidates will be progressed through the various stages of the selection process based on their order of merit at each stage.

All relevant information will be issued to candidates at each stage of the selection process.

If MARA is not notified of any issues you experience in advance of or on the day of your interview/assessment, we are not in a position to address these after the fact.

Interview:

It is expected that interviews will be held in person in December 2025 within Wexford. Candidates will be notified of interview dates and arrangements at the earliest opportunity. The onus will be on candidates to make themselves available for interview as advised.

Equality:

The Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) is an equal opportunities employer. MARA welcomes applications from all suitably qualified candidates regardless of their gender, marital status, family status, religious belief, race, age, sexual orientation, disability or membership of the Traveller community.

Reasonable Accommodation:

Any candidate requiring any accommodation for interview or other elements of the selection process should notify us at MARA@osborne.ie so that appropriate arrangements can be made. All information disclosed will be kept confidential.

Security Clearance:

You may be required to complete and return a Garda eVetting form should you come under consideration for appointment. This form will be forwarded to An Garda Síochána for security checks on all Irish and Northern Irish addresses at which you resided.

If you have resided / studied in countries outside of the Republic of Ireland for a consecutive period of 12 months or more after the age of 18, it is mandatory for you to furnish a Police Clearance Certificate from those countries. You will need to provide a separate Police Clearance Certificate for each country you have resided in. The clearance must be dated after the date you left the country. It is your responsibility to seek security clearances in a timely fashion as they can take some time. You cannot be appointed without this information being provided and deemed satisfactory by MARA.

Candidates should be aware that any information obtained in the Garda Vetting process can be made available to the employing authority.

Candidates will be responsible for any expense incurred in connection with obtaining any Police Clearance Certificates

Panel:

Following the interview stage, MARA will hold a panel of candidates listed in order of merit. This panel may also be used to fill future temporary posts. Not all those interviewed may be placed on the panel. A panel will be established from which appointments may be made which will expire 18 months from the date of interview or when it has been exhausted, whichever is sooner. Candidates will be advised of the outcome of the competition as soon as possible after the interview process. Candidates not appointed at the expiry of the panel will have no claim to appointment thereafter because of having been on the panel.

Relevant Checks:

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to a position, the HR team complete all relevant checks. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline or having accepted it, relinquish it, MARA may at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment and this will be based on the results of this selection process.

MARA is not obliged to appoint any candidate arising from this competition.

Please note that any offer of employment made to a successful candidate may be subject to satisfactory:

- Reference verification,
- Qualification verification,
- Vetting – where applicable

At the reference verification stage, referees sought will include your current employer and your next most recent employer.

Conditions of Service

Salary

The Assistant Principal salary scale (rates effective from 1 August 2025) is as follows:

(PPC Scale) €81,475, €84,475, €87,518, €90,569, €93,617 €95,375 €98,449 (LSI 1) €101,535 (LSI 2)***

Long Service Increments may be payable after 3 years (LSI1) and 6 years (LSI2) satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale. ** *Pay scale wef 1 August 2025.*

Starting pay for new entrants will be at the minimum point of the scale. For those who transfer from the public service, Circular 08/2019 'Revised arrangements applying to starting pay', will apply. Rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government Policy.

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy.

The PPC pay rate applies when the individual is required to pay a Personal Pension Contribution (otherwise known as a main scheme contribution) in accordance with the rules of their main/personal superannuation

scheme. This is different to a contribution in respect of membership of a Spouses' and Children's scheme, or the Additional Superannuation Contributions (ASC).

A different rate will apply where the appointee is not required to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

This rate will apply where the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6 April 1995 or is newly recruited to the Civil Service and is required to make a personal pension contribution.

Different terms and conditions may apply if immediately before appointment you are a current serving civil/public servant.

Note: Salary for the purposes of calculation of superannuation benefits may differ from the above depending on individual circumstances.

Payment Arrangements

Payment will be made fortnightly in arrears by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) into a bank account of an officer's choice. Payment cannot be made until a BIC code and IBAN number and bank sort code has been supplied to the Personnel Section of the relevant Department or Office. Statutory deductions from salary will be made as appropriate by the Department / Office.

An officer will agree that any overpayment of salary, allowances, or expenses will be repaid by you in accordance with Circular 07/2018: Recovery of Salary, Allowances, and Expenses Overpayments made to Staff Members / Former Staff Members / Pensioners.

Location

The usual place of work for this role and any role arising from any panel established under this competition will be MARA, Menapia House, Drinagh Business Park, Co. Wexford, Y35 RF29.

Hours of Attendance

Hours of attendance will amount to not less than 35 hours net per week. The successful candidate will be required to work additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations.

Outside Employment: The position will be full-time, and the appointee shall not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business which conflicts in any way with his/her official duties, impairs performance or compromises his/her integrity.

Annual Leave

The annual leave allowance for the position of the Head of Policy will be 30 days per annum. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave in the public sector, is based on a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays

The Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 (as amended)

The terms of the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

Probation:

On appointment, the successful candidate will serve an 11-month probationary period. Prior to the end of this probationary period, a decision will be made on substantive appointment to the position.

Health:

Candidates must be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Employee Benefits:

We value our employees and will invest in their health, welfare and safety at work and will provide an Employee Assistance Programme. We support and encourage staff to reach their full potential through education and training opportunities on and off the job. We also offer flexible hours, challenging, rewarding work and benefits that include:

- Membership of a Superannuation Scheme
- Sick Leave Scheme
- Hybrid Working
- Shorter Working Year scheme
- Maternity Leave
- Parental Leave
- Parents Leave
- Career Breaks
- Exam and Study Leave

Employer of Choice:

As an Employer of Choice the Civil Service has many flexible and family friendly policies e.g. Work-sharing, Shorter Working Year, Remote Working (operated on a 'blended' basis), etc. All elective policies can be applied for in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions and are subject to the business needs of the organisation.

The Civil Service also operates a Mobility scheme for all general service grades. This scheme provides staff with career opportunities to learn and partake in diverse roles across a range of Civil Service organisations and geographical locations.

General Information

Ethics in The Public Office:

The Ethics of Public Office Act 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act 2001 applies to this post.

Expenses:

MARA will not be responsible for any expense, including travelling expenses, candidates may incur in connection with this competition.

Canvassing:

Canvassing is prohibited and will result in disqualification from the competition.

Impersonation:

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine / or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he / she has not been appointed to a post, he / she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- where he / she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he / she shall forfeit that appointment.

Use of Recording Equipment:

MARA does not allow the unsanctioned use of any type of recording on its premises or any location where assessments/tests/interviews, etc. take place, e.g. in person interviews, video interviews, teleconference. This applies to any form of sound recording and any type of still picture or video recording, whether including sound recording or not, and covers any type of device used for these purposes.

Any person wishing to use such equipment for any of these purposes must seek written permission in advance. This policy is in place to protect the privacy of staff and customers and the integrity of our assessment material and assessment processes. Unsanctioned use of recording equipment by any person is a breach of this policy. Any candidate involved in such a breach could be disqualified from the competition.

Cancelling Competition:

MARA may at its discretion cancel this competition due to a change in business needs. Should this occur after the competition closing date applicants will be notified in writing.

Candidate Feedback:

Feedback will be provided on written request.

Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process:

Requests for a review are dealt with in accordance with the codes of practice published by the published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments. The Codes can be accessed at www.cpsa.ie.

Quality Customer Service:

We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

Confidentiality:

Please note that all personal data shall be treated as confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003 and the provisions of the EU General Data Protection Regulation.

Data Protection Acts, 1988-2018:

When your application form is received, we create a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature and should you be successful certain information you provide will be held by MARA. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2018. To make a request under the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2018, please submit your request in writing to: Data Protection Officer, MARA, Menapia House, Drinagh Business Park, Co. Wexford, ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. A fee of €6.35 should accompany your request. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, or personal cheque, made payable to MARA.

Data Protection – Recruitment Process:

Personal data is collected and processed as part of the recruitment process. This section sets out the information under the following headings:

- Personal data collected.
- Lawful basis for processing personal data.
- How your information may be shared.
- How long your information may be stored.
- Your data protection rights.

Personal Data Collection:

MARA collects personal data from prospective candidates as part of the recruitment process. In meeting its data protection obligations, MARA is committed to being accountable and transparent about how it gathers and processes this information.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) defines ‘personal data’ as meaning any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual. It defines categories of ‘personal data’ as being name, address, date of birth, etc. The GDPR also sets out ‘special categories of personal data’ for more sensitive information that include, for example, health data.

MARA conducts a competency based recruitment process. Each candidate is asked to submit an application form. This recruitment process will include checking of references. Depending on the role applied for, it may also include Garda vetting.

Lawful Basis for Processing Personal Data Consent:

MARA processes personal data provided by you in your application form during the recruitment process on the lawful basis of ‘consent’. Your consent is required in order to process any personal data provided in the application for the specific purpose of progressing an application through the recruitment process.

Contractual:

In the case of a successful candidate, personal data provided during the recruitment process may form the basis of the contract of employment.

Legal Obligation:

Personal data of prospective candidates and current employees (full-time, part-time, contract and agency) is processed on the basis that it is required for MARA’s compliance with legislation (e.g., employment legislation). MARA provides its employees with a Privacy Statement in relation to its use of employee information.

How Your Information May Be Shared:

Your information may be shared with other parties as part of the recruitment process. Where this occurs, information is shared by necessity and in confidence.

How Long Your Information May Be Stored:

MARA has a Data Retention Policy that it applies to all information it stores. This policy is updated on an ongoing basis to keep pace with all relevant legislative changes.

Unsuccessful Candidates:

For those individuals who have been unsuccessful in the recruitment process, all information provided to the MARA will be retained by the MARA for a period of no more than 12 months. At the end of this period, or if you withdraw your consent, your information will be securely destroyed.

Successful Candidates:

For those individuals who have been successful in the recruitment process, all information provided to MARA will be placed on your employee file. It will be retained during the course of your employment with the organisation and for an appropriate period thereafter. At the end of this period, or if you withdraw your consent, your information will be securely destroyed.

Your Data Protection Right:

You have rights in relation to personal data collected, processed and stored by MARA. Further information is available on our website under the heading 'Data Protection and Access Requests'.

This section outlines what your data protection rights are and how to make a Data Subject Access Request to MARA. If you have any questions or would like to make a Data Subject Access Request, you may contact the Data Protection Officer at MARA. The contact details are as follows:

MARA DPO Contact Details:

Email: dataprotection@mara.gov.ie

Post: Data Protection Officer, MARA, Menapia House, Drinagh Business Park, Co. Wexford

For Further Information on Data Protection:

The website of the Data Protection Commissioner – www.dataprotection.ie or make contact with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner by phone on Telephone 1890 252231 or by email on info@dataprotection.ie

Appendix A – Capability Framework – Assistant Principal Grade

AP

Assistant Principal Officer





Building Future Readiness

Delivering excellent public policy and services requires us to embrace change and innovation. We strive to create an inclusive customer centric strategy and vision that keeps pace with environmental, social and technological changes. Adopting an agile and digital-first approach, we will continually upskill, change and improve how we do things to meet current and future demands.



Digital Focus, Innovation & Upskilling for the Future

Digital Focus

- Drives the digital-first agenda by ensuring that digital tools and IT solutions are explored and utilised

Innovation & Continuous Improvement

- Delivers and promotes innovative, creative and practical solutions, with a commitment to continuous improvement
- Tries new or different approaches and is willing to take appropriate risks, learn from mistakes and adapt

Upskilling for the Future

- Committed to building own expertise, knowledge & skills for the future
- Proactively seeks development opportunities and regularly reflects on learning experiences, with awareness of own strengths and weaknesses
- Understands what the team needs to do, to build future readiness and skills



Key Skills Examples

- Innovation
- IT and digital skills
- Continuous learning
- Systems thinking
- Process improvement
- Future forecasting



Strategy, Change & Reform

Strategic Capability & Future Focus

- Actively contributes to the development and evaluation of strategic plans, focusing on the short, medium and long term goals
- Supports the development of broader organisational and departmental policy, strategy, and objectives

Contextual Awareness & Adaptability

- Strong understanding of wider Civil Service policies and relevant developments in the Public and Private Sector
- Demonstrates awareness of changing circumstances, environment and context, with the ability to respond and adapt as necessary

Supporting Change & Reform

- Leads and supports others through change, highlighting the benefits and addressing resistance, concerns or feedback
- Supports the change and reform agenda by putting forward recommendations, implementing agreed change and focusing on improvement



Key Skills Examples

- Managing & supporting change
- Policy and strategy development
- Goal setting
- Strategy implementation
- Strategic thinking



Evidence Informed Delivery

Delivering excellent public policy and services requires us to make evidence based and well-informed judgements and decisions, prioritise objectives and effectively manage resources, using relevant information to evaluate the delivered outcome to ensure maximum benefit for the people we serve.



Delivering Excellence

Managing Work & Resources

- Manages a programme of work, taking ownership over own independent projects and also overseeing team-based work
- Effectively plans and prioritises in the face of competing demands and resource constraints, ensuring results are delivered
- Estimates, manages and allocates resources effectively

Commitment to Quality Outcomes

- Sets high standards and goals for self and others with commitment to meeting these
- Advocates for delivering excellence in customer service and customer experience and instils this on others
- Monitors efficiencies, value for money and adheres to corporate governance requirements

Learning, Responding, Evaluating & Improving

- Quickly gets up to speed with new tasks or roles, gaining an understanding of requirements, relevant information and sensitivities
- Is flexible, agile and resilient in the face of difficulty or emerging demands
- Seeks feedback and evaluates delivery against required outcomes, taking action to learn, respond and improve



Key Skills Examples

- Project management
- Risk management
- Resource allocation
- Project evaluation
- Cost-benefit analysis



Analysis, Judgement & Decision Making

Analysing & Evaluating Information

- Can quickly gather, analyse and critically evaluate data from a range of sources, to identify key information
- Ensures data is collected, analysed and utilised on a regular basis to support work and to facilitate effective decision making
- Analyses and evaluates complex verbal and numerical information in an accurate and timely manner

Problem Solving

- Manages issues and solves problems in an informed, logical and composed manner, seeking additional information and inputs where necessary
- Effectively deals with difficult, ambiguous situations and 'on-the-spot' issues, quickly determining the best course of action

Informed Judgement & Decision Making

- Makes balanced judgements and decisions, drawing from evidence, experience and relevant policies and procedures, while also considering contextual issues or sensitivities
- Makes important, urgent or difficult decisions in an appropriate, timely and ethical manner, considering the broader implications or impact and sharing the rationale for decisions made



Key Skills Examples

- Critical research skills
- Data management and visualisation
- Data analytics
- Critical thinking



Leading and Empowering

Delivering excellent public policy and services requires us to lead in our areas of expertise, inspire others and create a clear vision. We are committed to developing, supporting, and empowering our colleagues to meet their potential and to creating a positive and inclusive work environment where everyone's contribution is valued.



Leading, Motivating & Developing

Developing, Motivating & Supporting Performance

- Ensures their team have exposure to development opportunities, strategically delegating tasks or projects and considering existing strengths and development needs
- Supports and motivates high performance by providing recognition, guidance, coaching and regular feedback
- Utilises and promotes both formal and informal performance management techniques

Vision, Purpose & Authenticity

- Creates and communicates a clear vision and goals
- Shows authenticity, passion and commitment to their work and reminds the team of the wider purpose and impact
- Leads with integrity, honesty, transparency and accountability

Empowerment, Psychological Safety & Inclusion

- Creates an inclusive, psychologically safe and open team environment
- Empowers their team by fostering autonomy, trust and honest communication
- As a leader, champions equality, diversity and inclusion, taking meaningful action through the work of their organisation and department and in supporting a diverse workforce

Social & Emotional Intelligence

- Openly prioritises the wellbeing of self and others, instilling a culture of support, empathy and consideration
- Demonstrates high self-awareness and ability to manage own emotions and behaviour, particularly in challenging situations



Key Skills Examples

- Performance management
- Coaching and providing feedback
- Managing remote or blended teams



Leading with Specialist Insight

Adding Value with Specialist Expertise

- Demonstrates a high degree of specialist expertise and knowledge in their area
- Adds value to the organisation and department by utilising their specialist expertise to meet the business needs and shape broader policy or strategy

Leading & Advocating

- Leads and provides direction, through openly sharing insights, knowledge, evidence and rationale in a non-technical manner
- Advocates and explains the value of their area or expertise and why it is necessary to prioritise
- Recognised as a thought leader or subject matter expert in their area of expertise, providing guidance, knowledge and leadership

Building Networks, Knowledge & Insights

- Gains insight and expertise through engaging with internal, external and international experts and colleagues
- Represents the organisation and department at formal and informal events, with professionalism and awareness
- Committed to continuous professional development, actively engaging in relevant courses, conferences and activities to keep knowledge up to date



Key Skills Examples

- Specialist skills in own area of expertise
- Research
- Networking



Communicating and Collaborating

Delivering excellent public policy and services requires us to work together, build relationships and collaborate enabling a joined up, whole-of-Government approach. Effective engagement and communication with our customers, clients and colleagues will enhance and build trust in our services.



Communicating & Influencing

Communicating Effectively & Listening to Understand

- Communicates and presents in a clear, professional, engaging and efficient manner, across verbal, digital and written communications
- Demonstrates understanding of own communication approach, adjusting style as appropriate for the audience
- Appreciates diversity and makes an active effort to involve different people, to bring challenge and alternative viewpoints

Influencing & Negotiation Skills

- Tactfully influences and persuades others and considers compromise when necessary
- Develops an understanding of context, sensitivities and differing perspectives, when engaging in discussions or negotiations
- Approaches difficult discussions, conflict or negotiations with respect, thoughtfulness, composure and self-assurance



Key Skills Examples

- Languages e.g. Gaelige
- Written skills
- Presenting
- Active listening
- Facilitating and chairing skills
- Influencing and storytelling



Engaging & Collaborating

Relationship Building & Stakeholder Engagement

- Utilises interpersonal skills to build and maintain working relationships within and outside of own area, team and department and organisation
- Engages and consults regularly with relevant stakeholders, managing expectations and providing insightful, open and transparent updates

Collaboration, Consultation & Cross-Functional Working

- Maximises opportunities to collaborate by asking the right questions, offering support, being proactive and showing understanding of others' objectives
- Proactively involves and consults with others, across all workplace arrangements such as remote, hybrid or blended or office-based



Key Skills Examples

- Collaboration
- Cross-functional working
- Networking
- Relationship building & interpersonal skills
- Social intelligence