Candidate Information Booklet

Please read carefully

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) intends to hold an open recruitment competition for the purpose of recommending suitably qualified persons for the position of:

Competition Name: Scientific Officer I (Level 3) Marine Ecologist
Post Number: 000618

Location: EPA Regional Inspectorate, Castlebar or Dublin

Closing Date: 4.00pm on Thursday 19th November 2026

The Environmental Protection Agency is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to principles of good recruiting practice.

Engaging
Enabling
Empowering

Employing Authority:	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Position Title:	Scientific Officer I (Level 3) Marine Ecologist
Post Number:	000618
Salary Scale:	€76,202 to €92,931 (PPC Rate) per annum includes provision for two Long Service Increments after three and six years respectively on the maximum of the scale for permanent staff. (A modified scale may apply to existing public/civil servants)
Annual Leave:	27 days rising to 30 after 5 years' service
Location:	EPA Regional Inspectorate in Castlebar or Dublin
Panel Information:	A panel will be formed from which future Scientific Officer I (Level 3) Marine Ecologist vacancies may be filled in the EPA Regional Inspectorate in Castlebar or Dublin.

Our Organisation

Who We Are:

The EPA is an independent regulatory body established in 1992. Its purpose is "to protect, improve and restore our environment through regulation, scientific knowledge and working with others". The EPA has a broad environmental remit and plays a key role in environmental regulation, provision of knowledge and advocacy for the environment.

Further information in relation to the EPA is available on our website www.epa.ie

Some of our staff at work:





Key Benefits of Working at the EPA:

You will have the opportunity to carry out purposeful work that makes a difference and impacts on our society and people. Not only do we have exciting career opportunities in many

disciplines, there are also great benefits to working in the EPA. Check out some of these benefits:

Benefits package

A comprehensive benefits package is available for all staff. This includes excellent career progression opportunities with public sector pay rates, pension benefits and annual leave entitlements. We also offer a 35-hour work week which includes flexible working hours, and flexi leave for most grades. Check out the specific benefits for this role.

Blended working

The blended working model adopted by the EPA provides us with an opportunity to direct and shape the future of our work in a way that takes full advantage of this new way of working. It is one of our flexible working options and will reduce commutes, contribute to improving well-being and work-life balance.

Health and Wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of our staff is a priority for the EPA. Now more than ever we recognise the importance of caring for our mental and physical health and general wellbeing. We have an active Wellbeing Group who organise events and positive initiatives to help us stay well and create an open and supportive culture for everyone.

Continuous Professional Development

Our staff can avail of excellent learning and development opportunities, and we are fully committed to continued professional development. We offer many opportunities to develop through on the job learning, by engaging with multi-disciplinary teams across the organisation and through generous formal internal and external training. Our further education schemes include financial assistance for degrees, diplomas and masters to help you develop your career.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

We are committed to creating an environment that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion. Our workforce is made up of a wide range of employees with diverse backgrounds, circumstances and skills, they are our greatest asset. Through our EDI policy and our core values and behaviours we continue to demonstrate high standards in how we attract, develop and retain staff to ensure the commitment, engagement, wellbeing and performance of our workforce.

The role and how to apply:

Overview of the Role:

The successful candidate will fulfil the role of Scientific Officer I (Level 3) Marine Ecologist. The initial vacancy will be filled in the EPA Regional Inspectorate in Castlebar or Dublin.

The successful candidate will work in the EPA's Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Unit which undertakes monitoring and assessment of the ecological health of Ireland's surface water resource. The role will involve fieldwork, and travel away from the designated office location, monitoring transitional and coastal waters across all of Ireland, as well as laboratory work, sample and data analysis and reporting.

Reporting Arrangements: The appointee will be assigned a technical role reporting to the Senior Scientific Officer or another designated officer.

Key Responsibilities will include:

- Managing and leading a Transitional and Coastal water body monitoring and assessment team in the EPA.
- Preparation, implementation, and participation in the EPA's Transitional and Coastal water body monitoring and assessment programme.
- Managing the implementation of the EPA work programme and leading on the development of associated assessment tools.
- Undertaking monitoring of transitional and coastal water bodies.
- Coordinating WFD monitoring and related tasks with other data providers such as Marine Institute.
- Ensuring the quality of the outputs from the transitional and coastal monitoring data to support effective decision making and assessments.
- Disseminating, assessing, communicating, and reporting the outputs of the ecology monitoring programme to internal and external stakeholders.
- Providing expert advice and representing the EPA in EU, OSPAR, and national expert groups on water quality.

General duties may include:

- Managing, motivating, and developing staff through a Personal Development Plan (PDP) system;
- Implementing the EPA's Safety Management System and maintaining a positive culture of health, safety and wellbeing in the team.
- Develop and deliver annual work programmes and other projects, including monitoring and evaluating progress and performance; managing staff and contractors; and budget preparation;
- Engage with research projects, initiatives and assessment processes; and

- Undertaking other duties as may occasionally be assigned.

Essential Requirements:

Candidates must have on or before **4pm on Thursday 19th November 2026:**

1. An appropriate degree (NFQ Level 8) or postgraduate qualification (NFQ Level 9/10) in Biological or Marine Science with specific experience in marine ecology.
2. A minimum of five years relevant work experience which should include significant technical experience in relation to marine aquatic ecology; including:
    a. Field based biological monitoring and classification of coastal and transitional waters.
    b. Detailed knowledge of Irish transitional and coastal ecology including taxonomic knowledge of water framework directive biological quality elements such as sea grasses, sea weeds, opportunistic macroalgae etc.
3. Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to communicate complex issues clearly and credibly to a range of audiences and deliver timely accurate scientific results.
4. Demonstrated excellent interpersonal skills with a proven track record in building effective working relationships with others to deliver timely scientific results.
5. A demonstrated record of leadership including prioritising and delivering objectives, planning, and organising resources, motivating staff to common goals, and creating a culture that values teamwork and collaboration.
6. Driving Licence - Applicants should at the date of applying hold a full valid Irish /EU licence, for Class B vehicles, or a licence acceptable to NDLS for transfer to full Irish licence.
   (https://www.ndls.ie/help/faq.html#exchange-of-foreign-driving-licences)

Desirable Requirements:

1. Experience in the assessment of ecological status of transitional and coastal water bodies under the water framework directive.

Eligibility to Compete and Certain Restrictions on Eligibility

Eligible candidates must be:

(a) A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). 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 has a stamp 4 or stamp 5 visa.

Applicants must satisfy all eligibility criteria for the role by the closing date of the competition.

The EPA will use the essential criteria to shortlist candidates and scoring will be based on the information contained in the application form for the role of **Scientific Officer I (Level 3) Marine Ecologist.**

Applicants must demonstrate, by reference to specific achievements in their career to date that they possess the qualities, skills and knowledge required for the role of **Scientific Officer I (Level 3) Marine Ecologist,** as identified in the 'Essential requirements'.

The EPA will convene an expert board to carry out the competitive stages of the selection process to the highest standard of best practice.

In addition to the specific requirements set out above, candidates **at interview** must be able to demonstrate that they possess the required competencies identified for effective performance as set out in Appendix A:

Required Competencies

- Team Leadership
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- Customer and Stakeholder Focus
- Management and Delivery of Results
- Judgement, Analysis and Decision Making
- Specialist Knowledge/Expertise and Self-development

Further information regarding competencies is available in **Appendix A**.

How to apply:

Application Forms and Candidate Information Booklets are available from the careers section on the EPA website www.epa.ie.

Please note that cover letters and CVs are not required and should not be submitted. Only applications submitted by email on the official EPA application form for this competition will be accepted. Applications will not be accepted after the closing date and late applications will be ineligible for consideration. Therefore, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have allowed adequate transmission time for receipt of your application. Applicants must ensure they retain a copy of the email submitted to including the date and time in case of any queries. Canvassing is prohibited.

Important Note: Closing Date for Applications is **4.00pm on Thursday 19th November 2026.**

Email Instructions for Submitting your Application Form:

The following naming convention should be used as your **email subject heading**:

- Post Number and Post name: e.g. 000618 Scientific Officer I (Level 3) Marine Ecologist.

Your application form should be **attached** to your email using the following naming convention:

- Post number and applicant name: e.g. 000618 Mary Smith
- A typed signature may be used.

Important Note: Application forms must be completed and sent to **recruitment@epa.ie**.

Electronic applications will be accepted in Microsoft Word or a readable PDF file format. A readable PDF file format is when a Microsoft Word document is converted to a PDF document, using the 'Saved as' function in Word and selecting the file type as '.pdf'. The PDF text should appear on the screen in the correct orientation.

Candidates with Disabilities

The EPA are an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applications from candidate with disabilities. Any candidate requiring any accommodation for interview or other elements of the selection process should notify us at recruitment@epa.ie so that appropriate arrangements can be made. All information disclosed will be kept confidential.

Selection Information

The EPA will use the Information in the application form to shortlist candidates and scoring will be based on the information contained in the application form for the role of **Scientific Officer I (Level 3) Marine Ecologist.** Applicants must demonstrate, by reference to specific achievements in their career to date, that they possess the qualities, skills and knowledge required for the role.

The EPA will convene an expert board to carry out the competitive stages of the selection process to the highest standard of best practice. Interviews are likely to be held in person or virtual in **early December 2026**.

For more information in relation to the selection process please see **Appendix B.**

Important Notice

The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.

Confidentiality and Freedom of Information

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquires, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process. Personal information supplied by applicants may be stored by electronic means e.g., in a database, for use solely for the purposes of processing your candidature and should you be successful, retained by the EPA's HR Team for employment purposes. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from computer records for

general statistical purposes. The provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1988 - 2018 will be fully complied with. Candidate records are retained electronically for a period of one year.

Salary and Benefits

Remuneration:

Salary Scale: *€76,202 to €92,931 (PPC Rate) per annum includes provision for two Long Service Increments after three and six years respectively on the maximum of the scale for permanent staff.
*(A modified scale may apply to existing public/civil servants)

Candidates should note that new appointments will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Long service increments may be payable after three (LSI-1) and six (LSI-2) years of satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

Increments are normally awarded annually subject to satisfactory performance; however, payment of increments and or the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Important Note: Candidates should note that different salary terms and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is/was a serving civil or public servant.

Annual Leave

27 days rising to 30 after 5 years' service.

Tenure

The term of appointment for the role will be permanent and pensionable. The appointee will be required to serve a twelve-month probationary period. If at any time during this probation it appears that the appointee would not be suitable for final appointment, the probation will be terminated.

Hours of Attendance

Hours of attendance at work will be arranged from time to time by the EPA and will amount to 35 hours net per week. Normal working hours will be 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. with a minimum of 30 minutes for lunch. The EPA operates of a flexible working hours scheme for all staff. Flexi leave will apply to all grades up to and including Level 3.

Blended Working Policy

Blended working is part of the EPA commitment to be an employer of choice, and it supports the organisation's ability to retain and attract high-quality talent.
The EPA has a blended working model. Entitlement to blended working varies depending on the staff member's role.

Further information on the EPA's blended working model is available upon request.

Business Travel

When absent from place of work on duty appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances will be paid subject to the normal Department of Public Expenditure and Reform regulations.

Sick Leave

Pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Sick Leave Scheme.

Superannuation and Retirement

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the Civil Service at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, an appointee who has never worked in the Public Service will be offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"). Full details of the scheme are at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie.

Where the appointee has worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment or is currently on a career break or special leave with/without pay different terms may apply. The pension entitlement of such appointees will be established in the context of their public service employment history.

Declaration

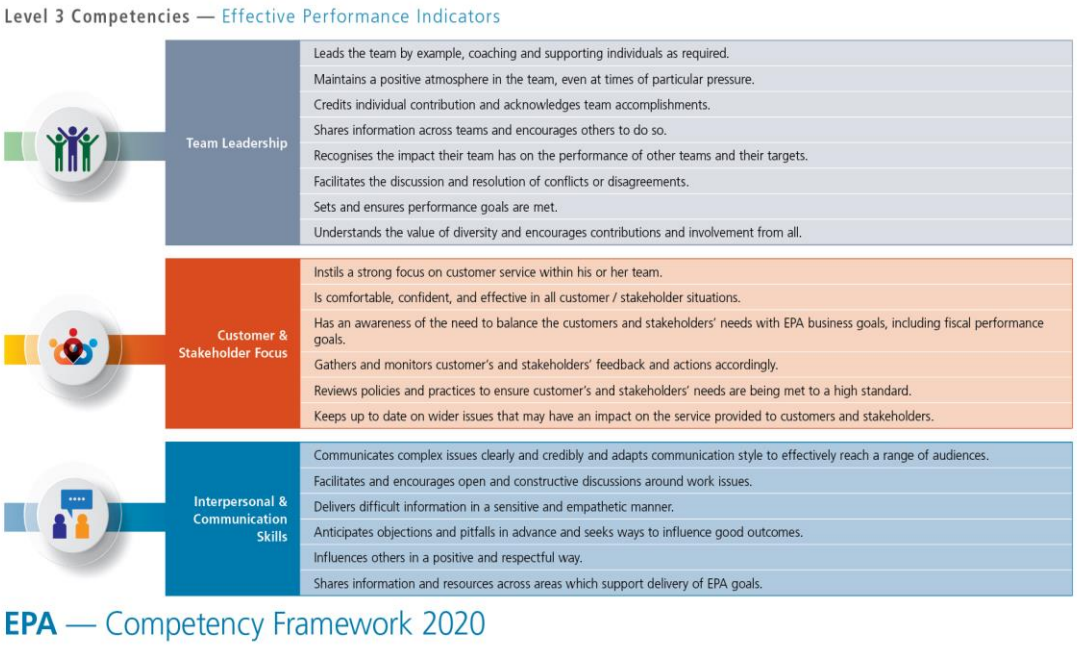
Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a Public Service Scheme of incentivised early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

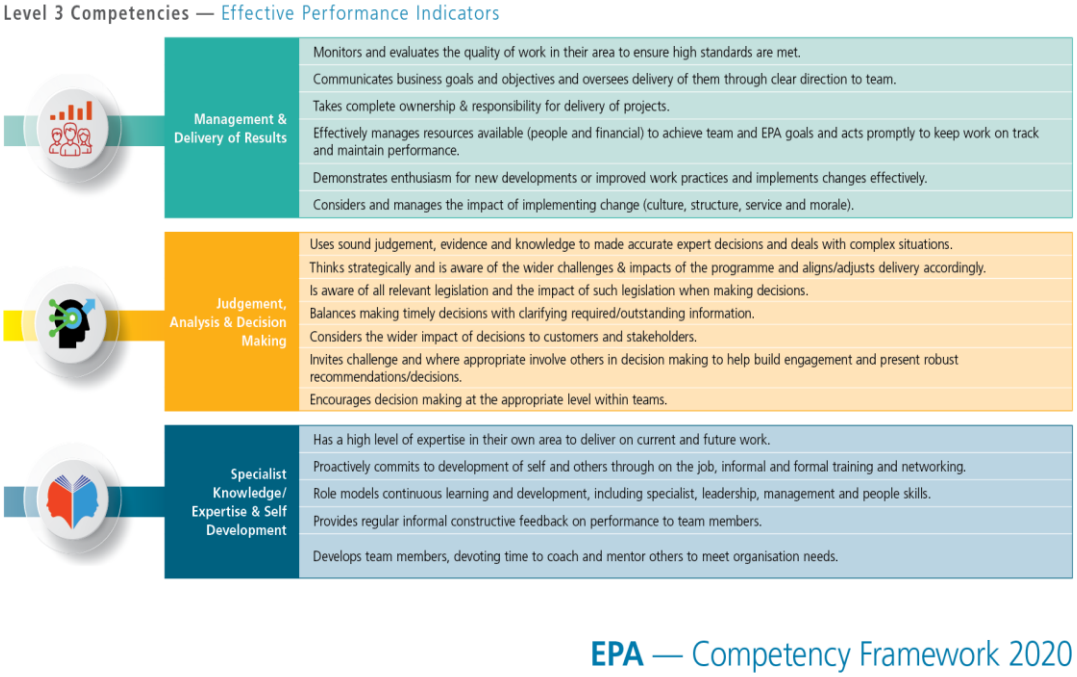
Pension Abatement

If an appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public service and that appointee is entitled to or in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during the appointee's re-employment that pension will be subject to abatement in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012.

Please note: In applying for this position, you are acknowledging that you understand that the abatement provisions, where relevant, will apply. It is not envisaged that the employing Body will support an application for an abatement waiver in respect of appointments to this position.

Appendix A


Level 3 Competencies — Effective Performance Indicators
Team Leadership
Leads the team by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required.
Maintains a positive atmosphere in the team, even at times of particular pressure.
Credits individual contribution and acknowledges team accomplishments.
Shares information across teams and encourages others to do so.
Recognises the impact their team has on the performance of other teams and their targets.
Facilitates the discussion and resolution of conflicts or disagreements.
Sets and ensures performance goals are met.
Understands the value of diversity and encourages contributions and involvement from all.
Customer & Stakeholder Focus
Instils a strong focus on customer service within his or her team.
Is comfortable, confident, and effective in all customer / stakeholder situations.
Has an awareness of the need to balance the customers and stakeholders' needs with EPA business goals, including fiscal performance goals.
Gathers and monitors customer's and stakeholders' feedback and actions accordingly.
Reviews policies and practices to ensure customer's and stakeholders' needs are being met to a high standard.
Keeps up to date on wider issues that may have an impact on the service provided to customers and stakeholders.
Interpersonal & Communication Skills
Communicates complex issues clearly and credibly and adapts communication style to effectively reach a range of audiences.
Facilitates and encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues.
Delivers difficult information in a sensitive and empathetic manner.
Anticipates objections and pitfalls in advance and seeks ways to influence good outcomes.
Influences others in a positive and respectful way.
Shares information and resources across areas which support delivery of EPA goals.
EPA — Competency Framework 2020


Level 3 Competencies — Effective Performance Indicators
Management & Delivery of Results
Monitors and evaluates the quality of work in their area to ensure high standards are met.
Communicates business goals and objectives and oversees delivery of them through clear direction to team.
Takes complete ownership & responsibility for delivery of projects.
Effectively manages resources available (people and financial) to achieve team and EPA goals and acts promptly to keep work on track and maintain performance.
Demonstrates enthusiasm for new developments or improved work practices and implements changes effectively.
Considers and manages the impact of implementing change (culture, structure, service and morale).
Judgement, Analysis & Decision Making
Uses sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to made accurate expert decisions and deals with complex situations.
Thinks strategically and is aware of the wider challenges & impacts of the programme and aligns/adjusts delivery accordingly.
Is aware of all relevant legislation and the impact of such legislation when making decisions.
Balances making timely decisions with clarifying required/outstanding information.
Considers the wider impact of decisions to customers and stakeholders.
Invites challenge and where appropriate involve others in decision making to help build engagement and present robust recommendations/decisions.
Encourages decision making at the appropriate level within teams.
Specialist Knowledge/ Expertise & Self Development
Has a high level of expertise in their own area to deliver on current and future work.
Proactively commits to development of self and others through on the job, informal and formal training and networking.
Role models continuous learning and development, including specialist, leadership, management and people skills.
Provides regular informal constructive feedback on performance to team members.
Develops team members, devoting time to coach and mentor others to meet organisation needs.
EPA — Competency Framework 2020

Appendix B

Further Information on the EPA's Selection Process:

Application:

Application Forms and Candidate Information Booklets are available from the careers section on the EPA website www.epa.ie. Application forms must be completed and sent to recruitment@epa.ie.

Only applications submitted by email on the official EPA application form for this competition will be accepted. Applications sent to other email addresses will not be considered. Please note that cover letters and CVs are not required and should not be submitted. Canvassing is prohibited.

Please Note:

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

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

The EPA accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an Applicant. Notification to attend interview will issue at least one week in advance. Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required, will have no claim for further consideration and their candidature will be deemed to be withdrawn.

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

Candidates must produce satisfactory documentary evidence of all qualifications and visa (if applicable) claimed by them, on request. Failure to produce such documentary evidence when requested may lead to disqualification from the competition and/or termination of contract. Therefore, it is advised that you have this documentation available to you when making your application.

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

Shortlisting

Normally the number of applicants exceeds the numbers required to fill existing and future vacancies to that position. This means that while you may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the EPA may decide to invite a smaller number to interview. The EPA will conduct a shortlisting process to select a group that based upon examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the role. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable, or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates who are, prima facie, better qualified and/or have more relevant experience.

An expert board will examine the application forms against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience in your application and to fully demonstrate your ability to carry out the role outlined.

Interviews

A competency interview will be the final stage of the selection process. An Interview Board will be appointed by the EPA to conduct the interviews. The interview will be based upon the EPA core competencies and the technical requirements for the role. Candidates invited for interview should familiarise themselves with the EPA competency framework for the **Level 3**. A description of the competencies is set out in Appendix A.

Appointment from Panel

Through this competition, the EPA will establish a panel of the successful candidates in order of merit. The panel will expire after a set period from its establishment (usually twelve months), or when it has been exhausted, whichever is sooner. Qualification and placement on a panel is not a guarantee of appointment to a position. Candidates not placed at the expiry of the panel will have no claim to a position thereafter because of having been on the panel.

References

Prior to confirming an appointment, the EPA will make all such enquires deemed necessary, to determine the suitability of the candidate. The EPA will only contact the referees provided in your application should you come under consideration after the interview stage. Please note, should you be successful at final interview, we will require a reference from your current employer prior to confirming appointment. Successful candidates will be required to

complete a number of clearance processes such as health declaration or medical and any other relevant checks required for the particular role. Records are retained electronically for a period of one year.

Candidates Obligations

Candidates must:

- Have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned.
- Be suitable on the grounds of character.
- Be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned

and if successful, they will not be appointed to the post unless they:

- Agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed.
- Are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position.

Candidates in the recruitment process must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information.
- canvass any person with or without inducements.
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way.
- record the interview or any feedback conversations.

Candidates who are found in breach of any of the above, will be disqualified from the campaign and any offer of employment may be revoked/terminated.
A third party must not impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process.
It is important to remember that this is a competitive process for a role where integrity is paramount. Sharing information on the selection process e.g. through social media or any other means, may result in you being disqualified from the competition.

Feedback

Feedback in relation to the selection process is available on request.

Canvassing

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

Candidate review procedures in respect of the selection process

A request for review may be made by a candidate against a decision of the Agency. The review process is split into informal and formal stages. All requests for a review will be addressed using the informal process in the first instance. If, following the informal process, a candidate is subsequently not satisfied with the outcome, they can request a formal review process.

Informal Review

A request for an informal review at shortlisting stage in the process must be made within two days of notification of the decision. This request much be submitted by email to recruitment@epa.ie. On receipt of a request, an informal reviewer will be appointed. The role of the informal reviewer is to determine whether, in their opinion, the original decision was made appropriately, on the basis of the correct information and in line with documented procedure.

On foot of a preliminary examination of the available evidence the reviewer will establish whether, in their opinion, the original decision should be upheld.

As per best practice, the role of the informal reviewer is not to reassess or remark the candidate, but rather to establish, on foot of the available information, whether they consider:

- The procedures set out for the selection process were followed correctly
- The original decision was made on the basis of correct and full information
- The original decision was made appropriately.

If the candidate is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process, they can request a formal review. The candidate must invoke the formal process within two working days of the notification of the outcome of the informal process.

Formal Review of the Selection Process

A request for a formal review must be submitted by email to recruitment@epa.ie. When making a request for a formal review, a candidate must support their request by outlining the facts they believe show that the action taken, or decision reached was wrong. A request for review may be refused if the candidate cannot support their request.

The HR unit will appoint two formal reviewers. These will be independent people who have an understanding of the recruitment and selection process. The formal review will be a more thorough examination of all relevant available information.

Following an examination of all relevant information the reviewers will issue a decision on the formal review. The reviewers will decide if the original decision was made on the basis of correct information and if documented procedure was followed. The outcome will be notified to the candidate within ten working days or within 5 days where the decision relates to a shortlisting decision.