

Public Appointments Service

Language Scheme 2017-2020

under Section 15 of the

Official Languages Act 2003

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An tSeirbhís um Cheapacháin Phoiblí
Public Appointments Service

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Chapter 1: Background

1.1 Introduction

This third Irish Language Scheme has been prepared by the Public Appointments Service (PAS), in accordance with the terms of Section 15 of the Official Languages Act 2003 ("the Act").

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

through the medium of Irish,
through the medium of English, and
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 Approach to the development of the Scheme

This Scheme is based on the guidelines of the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. As provided for in Section 13 of the Act, the Public Appointments Service published a notice, in May 2016, inviting submissions in relation to the preparation of the draft scheme from interested parties. The notice was sent by email to all staff of PAS, and was published with MeasMedia (an Irish Language website). A number of submissions were received from Conradh na Gaeilge. These and submissions for previous Scéimeanna Teanga can be seen on www.publicjobs.ie and www.postannapoibli.ie.

The content of the Scheme is based on our experience of fulfilling our commitments in the first and second Scheme, on the previous submissions made by the public and Irish language organisations, on feedback from our customers and on the practical realities of providing a service to customers through Irish. The objective of the third Language Scheme is

to continue to fulfil these commitments and when the opportunity arises, to improve on the delivery of those commitments.

The Public Appointments Service would like to thank all those who took the time to engage with this process.

1.3 Commencement date of Scheme

This Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and has effect from 10 March 2017. It will remain in force for a period of 3 years from this date, or until a new scheme has been confirmed by the Minister pursuant to Section 15 of the Act, whichever is the later.

Chapter 2 *Review of the second Irish Language Scheme*

The Public Appointments Service has a good track record in providing services through Irish. The commitments made in the first and second Scheme, to further enhance the level of service provided through the Irish language, were ambitious.

Over the past number of years Publicjobs.ie is the main channel for managing and delivering our business. Considerable investment was made to ensure that our technology systems, which provide an interface to candidates and to the general public, could accept Irish language content. Over the course of the second language scheme our IT Unit has ensured that the Irish language services provided electronically are of the same technical standard as those provided in English. A comprehensive on-line bilingual recruitment facility, which is easy to navigate and effective for both clients and candidates is available. An Irish language alias / domain name, www.postannapoibli.ie, continues to be available. There is direct access to this site, with a link to www.publicjobs.ie. An Irish language general information mailbox, eolas@postannapoibli.ie has also been set up. Disclaimers appearing at the end of emails issuing from this Office are bilingual.

Publicjobs.ie includes a wide range of general information about the Office and its resources, contact details, the competition process, and the Civil Service in general. All this information is available in both official languages. Much of the content relating to the competition process changes on a daily basis and requires daily translation. As with the first Scheme, PAS committed to provide bilingual Application Forms and Information Booklets for general service positions and certain other posts requiring Irish competence and this commitment continued and was delivered during the lifetime of the Second Scheme. The website contains a section regarding the Office's Language Scheme. This contains the Scheme itself and the submissions received.

The Office's Intranet contains a section dealing with Irish language matter. This was extended and includes a list of the staff

members competent to deal with members of the public through the medium of Irish. In addition it contains details of The Official Languages Act, The Irish Language Schemes 2005 – 2008 and 2013 – 2016, details of basic greetings in Irish - English for staff and a link to tearma.ie, an Irish on line dictionary.

Our staff were provided with information on the Office's Irish language services, together with information on the contents of the Scheme. Staff competent in Irish greetings and basic interactions were available at the primary points of contact with the public. Staff were actively encouraged to take day-time courses in Irish.

During the second scheme PAS continued with its' commitment to have staff who were competent to provide the services through Irish. Due to the downturn in the economy, the large reduction in staff numbers, it was not always possible to fulfil this commitment. However PAS continued to have a staff member who was competent in Irish, available to deal with members of the public who wished to conduct their business through Irish.

Publications relating to corporate governance, which were deemed to have the general public as part of their target audience (section 10 of the Act) – e.g. the Quality Customer Service Action Plan, the Customer Charter, the Annual Report and the Strategy Statement – were made available simultaneously in both official languages.

The Public Appointments Service is committed to maintaining a high standard of service in the Irish language, during the lifetime of the third Scheme.

The content of the third Language Scheme is focussed on our two main customer groups - applicants for public service positions and the general public.

As a result of the improvements in the economy, the workload of the Public Appointments Service has increased significantly and is continually evolving and expanding. This Chapter sets out the measures which PAS will take over the lifetime of this Scheme to ensure a continued high standard of service in Irish to our customers. The commitments made in the Scheme relate to the competitions for which PAS has responsibility and not to those conducted by other organisations referred to in the preceding paragraph.

Internet Services - www.publicjobs.ie and www.postannapoibli.ie

The Public Appointments Service has invested heavily in the development of www.postannapoibli.ie and www.publicjobs.ie, as its primary recruitment interface. Publicjobs.ie provides a wide range of information, including general information about the Office, its resources, contact details and the Civil Service in general. This is, and will continue to be, available to candidates in the Official Language of their choice.

The on-line application facility of publicjobs.ie is comprised of the following:-

Candidate Registration: The candidate provides certain personal information such as name, address and contact information.

Job Title and Description: Details of the post being advertised. Typically, this is similar to the information about the post that appears in the recruitment advertisement.

Application Form: The official Application Form for the post allows candidates to enter Personal Details, Educational Qualifications and Employment History.

Information Booklet: Specific details of the requirements of the post, the conditions of service and the competition process are contained in the Information Booklet.

Official Place Names: In accordance with legislation, we will use the official placenames of Gaeltacht areas.

Commitments for competitions for which PAS is directly responsible

The Candidate Registration Facility is already in place in both Official Languages.

The Job Title, Job Description and Application Form will be available in both Official Languages during the application period.

Information Booklets will be available in both Official Languages for the following:

1. Open Competition Civil Service posts: Clerical Officer; Executive Officer; Higher Executive Officer; Assistant Principal Officer; Third Secretary; Administrative Officer
2. Health Service Executive Posts in Gaeltacht Counties (see Appendix D)
3. Local Authority Posts in Gaeltacht Counties (see Appendix D)
4. Posts where the Irish language is a particular requirement of the post, such as Oifigeach Logainmneacha; Aistritheoir; and Cigirí Oideachais.
5. Posts under the remit of the Department of Education and Skills.

Occasionally it may not be possible to have the Irish version of the Information Booklets available immediately a post is advertised but it will be available as soon as possible.

Competitions advertised on publicjobs.ie by external organisations

During the lifetime of this Scheme, we will continue to put measures in place to require public service organisations which advertise on publicjobs.ie to make the Job Title, Job Description and Application Form (where applicable) available in both Official Languages. This requirement will not apply to advertisements placed by European and International organisations.

Other public sector organisations, educational institutions, European and international bodies may request to advertise posts on publicjobs.ie. Frequently, the advertisements placed by external organisations significantly outnumber the advertisements for competitions run by PAS itself. Other than facilitating the placement of the advertisements, PAS has no further role in these particular competitions and no direct responsibility for the provision of associated material.

IT Unit

The IT Unit will support the Translator and the Recruitment Units in ensuring that material is available on both the Irish and English language versions of the website. Any upgrading or enhancement of publicjobs.ie will be reflected in parallel on the Irish version of the site.

Within the framework of the overall publicjobs.ie development project, the IT Unit will address any site navigation concerns for both the Irish and English versions of the site. The creation of an Irish language alias / domain name, www.postannapoibli.ie, and an Irish language general information mailbox, eolas@postannapoibli.ie has been helpful in this regard.

The IT Unit will continue to assist in the maintenance and development of the separate section devoted to Irish language matters on the Office's Intranet. Contact details on the Intranet for staff at the Primary Points of Contact will continue to be maintained and

updated. Further contact names will be added, as appropriate.

Recruitment Units

The Office will continue to provide a service, through Irish, to Irish speakers who make contact with the office and will endeavour to maintain its' level of Irish competence. We will continue to fulfil our legal obligations to reply, in Irish, to correspondence received in Irish.

Human Resources Unit

Staff Induction - The Human Resources Unit will continue to include information on the Irish language services provided by the Office and information on the contents of this Scheme, during Induction courses, so that staff

- understand why the Office implements a bilingual policy
- understand the context and background to the policy and are fully informed about how the policy will affect their work
- understand how the Office will assist them to develop competency in the area.

Primary points of contact - The Office will continue to ensure that receptionists and switchboard operators, who are normally the first points of contact with the public, will be familiar with basic greetings in Irish and will use these greetings. The Office will ensure that arrangements are in place to put members of the public in touch, with minimum delay with an appropriate member of staff who can deal with their business, whether in Irish or English. Reception and switchboard staff will have access to a list of the staff members competent in Irish, to whom such callers may be directed. This list will also be updated on the Office Intranet.

Enhancement of Irish language capability - For staff who work at the 'Primary Points of

Contact' the Human Resources Unit will continue to source Irish language classes focussed on customer service. Training may be organised through the arrangements put in place by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, or sourced locally where resources permit. The Office will continue to facilitate staff attending Irish language classes during office hours, within constraints. Advice will continue to be given to staff in relation to the range of high-quality Irish language classes available outside office hours.

In order to make staff and customers more aware of the Irish language we will have more casual signage around the building in both official languages e.g. Doras, Bealach Amach, Ardaitheoir and in the various sections signage such as An Rannóg Chléireachais, Rannóg na gComhairleach, Aistritheoir etc.

To promote Irish informally with staff, PAS will put some common phrases in Irish and their equivalent in English on the Offices' Intranet on a regular basis.

Submissions relating to the third Irish language scheme will be considered and implemented where possible.

Irish as a required competence for appointment to positions in PAS - As was done in the case of the appointment of the Office's Translator, the Office's recruitment policy will continue to be reviewed in the context of posts within the Public Appointments Service where proficiency in the Irish language (both written and oral) is an essential requirement.

Extension of coverage to include Internal Staff – Human Resources Unit will deal bilingually with internal staff in the language of their choice.

Corporate Governance

Publications in relation to corporate governance, which are deemed to have the general public as part of their target audience

(section 10 of the Act) – e.g. the Quality Customer Service Action Plan, the Customer Charter, the Annual Report and the Strategy Statement - will continue to be made available simultaneously in both Official Languages.

Press and Information

The Office will continue to provide a spokesperson to talk to the Irish language media, such as RTE Raidió na Gaeltachta, RTE 1 and TG4, on issues of relevance to the Office, subject to reasonable advance notice being given to the Office of the time and the subject matter of the interview.

Chapter 4 Monitoring the Scheme

The Management Advisory Committee of the Public Appointments Service will keep the effective operation of the Scheme under review. Responsibility for the day-day monitoring of the Scheme rests with senior management of the organisation.

As the role of the Office evolves over time, every effort will be made to take advantage of any new opportunities to enhance the service provided, through Irish, to the public.

A review of the progress of the Scheme will be included in the Annual Report of the Public Appointments Service.

Chapter 5: Publicising the Scheme

PAS will promote the services it provides through Irish in the following manner so that its customers and staff are aware of the availability of these services. The contents of this Scheme will be publicised to the general public by means of the website and to staff by means of the Intranet.

In addition to these measures, PAS will take every opportunity in its day-to-day interactions with customers to promote and publicise the services it provides through Irish, including by:

- directly informing customers on a pro-active basis of the option of dealing with PAS through Irish, e.g. by the display of notices at Reception areas indicating the Irish language services that are available and also by prominently listing these on the website.
- footnotes on selected guidelines, leaflets and application forms, explaining that these documents are also available in Irish (in cases where bilingual material is not produced under a single cover); and
- information in publications and advertisements that the Office provides services through Irish and, accordingly, welcomes customers who wish to deal with us in Irish, according to the commitments in the Scheme.

The English language version is the original text of this Scheme. Any dispute regarding interpretation will be resolved by reference to the English language version.

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

Appendix A Overview of the Public Appointments Service

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) was established in October 2004, under the Public Service Management (Recruitment & Appointments) Act 2004 and is the central provider of recruitment, assessment and selection services for the civil service. PAS also provides recruitment and selection services to local authorities, the Health Service Executive, An Garda Síochána and other public bodies, as requested.

Vision

Through our professionalism and excellence, we work in partnership with our clients, attracting and engaging great people to the Irish public service.

The programme of activities undertaken by PAS includes:

- open recruitment for positions in the Civil Service
- open recruitment for certain senior positions in the Local Authorities, the Health Service Executive, Harbour Authorities, Fisheries Boards and Education and Training Boards;
- selection of candidates for promotion within the Civil Service by means of inter-departmental competitions;
- assisting other public sector organisations with open recruitment (e.g. An Garda Síochána, the Nursing Careers Centre) and providing an application management service.
- assisting, as requested, the Top Level Appointments Committee in making senior appointments within the Civil Service by, for instance, conducting preliminary interviews.
- providing a facility to other public sector organisations, educational institutions, European and international bodies to advertise jobs on www.publicjobs.ie.

This represents a vast range of recruitment and selection activity - from clerical and administrative posts to senior managerial appointments, together with a wide variety of professional and technical recruitment.

Increasingly, our role includes training, advisory and consultancy services which complement our recruitment and selection services, viz,

- advice and support on recruitment and selection matters to client organisations and other public bodies;
- job analysis services in order to obtain accurate job-related information to guide competency-based selection processes, which are also of benefit to our client organisations for human resource development activity;
- a selection testing service;
- assessor training in selection techniques, including interviewing;
- seminars on human resource related matters;
- a research programme.

The Office is located at Chapter House, 26-30 Upper Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

Appendix B Customers and Clients of the Public Appointments Service

The Public Appointments Service recognises the following seven distinct groups of customers:

Client Organisation:

This group includes all government departments/offices, local authorities, the Health Service Executive and other public bodies who avail of the recruitment, selection and advisory services that we provide. Certain clients e.g. certain educational institutions, European and international bodies, avail of the facility to advertise jobs on www.publicjobs.ie, but conduct their own recruitment.

Applicants for Public Service Positions:

This group includes members of the public who apply for any public service position advertised by us and who are entitled to have their applications dealt with fairly, impartially and in an efficient and courteous manner.

The General Public:

Members of the public, who may or may not be interested in applying for a public service position, but who have an interest in knowing that such positions are filled in an open, transparent manner. We also have a duty to account publicly for our use of the public funds entrusted to us and to demonstrate that such monies are spent properly, sensibly and with due consideration for value for money.

Interview Board Members:

The Office relies heavily on the valuable contribution of all board members. It is essential that all possible assistance is provided to them in carrying out their task and thus ensure a positive experience while working with us.

The Board of the Public Appointments Service:

We support the Board in carrying out its functions, as set down in Section 36 (3) of the Public Service Management (Recruitment & Appointments) Act 2004.

Internal Staff:

We believe that internal staff members should be considered as customers and should be entitled, as are all customers, to expect the highest standards of service delivery in their dealings with the organisation.

The Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA):

The CPSA has established Codes of Practice by which the recruitment and selection procedures of the Public Appointments Service are regulated. The Public Appointments Service adheres to the Codes of Practice, co-operates with audits and provides feedback on the Codes as required.

The policy of the Office is to provide services in Irish to our customers to the greatest extent possible, within existing resources.

Appendix C Functional Areas of the Public Appointment Service

The following are the functional areas of the Public Appointments Service:

1. **Primary Recruitment Areas**

- Clerical Level Recruitment
- Administrative and General Graduate Recruitment
- Garda Trainee and Recruit Prison Officer
- Professional and Technical
- Senior Management Recruitment
- Senior Professional Recruitment
- Medical Consultants

2. **Related Recruitment Services**

- Assessment Services
- Translation Services
- Redeployment
- Freedom of Information
- Careers Store
- Reception
- Switchboard

3. **Corporate Support Units**

- Human Resources (internal)
- I T Unit
- Business Support and Records Management
- Finance Unit

Appendix D Gaeltacht Counties

Where reference is made to “Gaeltacht Counties” in this scheme the following counties are intended:

- Meath
- Kerry
- Cork
- Donegal
- Galway
- Mayo
- Waterford