



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Candidate information pack:

Chief Executive

*Safeguarding animal and plant health for the benefit
of people, the environment and the economy*

November 2024



Welcome to APHA



Thank you so much for your interest in the role of CEO of the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

To hear my personal take on the Agency and the role, please [watch this video](#).

APHA plays a crucial role in protecting the UK's biosecurity. It delivers functions that are critical to animal and plant health, and which in turn secure human health and confidence in the food supply chain. The regulatory underpinning provided by the Agency is also integral to our ability to be a successful food trading nation.

You will find APHA staff at the border, on farms, and in world-leading laboratories. All of them are delivering on our mission to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of everyone in society, the environment and the economy.

APHA is a world-leading Agency, respected around the world and at the farm gate. It is on a transformation journey, modernising and digitising its operations to continue to rise to the challenges of biosecurity risks in a global world, and the opportunities of developments in science and technology.

To lead APHA you will need to bring vision, inspirational leadership and a track record of successful operational delivery in a complex environment to make sure the Agency continues to deliver its pivotal role to the UK's biosecurity. You will be comfortable leading in a crisis.

Across Government and externally too, you will need to be able to carry the confidence of a broad variety of stakeholders.

You don't need to be a scientist or a vet, but you do need to share our commitment to the critical role APHA plays in delivering world-class services for the benefit of society, the environment and the economy.

Emily Miles

Director General, Food, Biosecurity and Trade



About APHA

Our mission: To protect animal and plant health to benefit people, the economy, and the environment.

Protect

We protect the UK from animal and plant-related threats to human health, the economy and the environment.

Innovate

We are an innovative organisation that enables industry to innovate and thrive.

Promote

We promote and assure animal health, plant health and animal welfare to support the UK's productivity and trade.

To deliver our mission we work as One APHA, following our principles of People and Place:

People

We value our people, develop their skills and expertise, enhance their health, safety and wellbeing, and provide an inclusive environment in which everyone can thrive
We provide our people with the right tools to do the job
We deliver change well and enable our people to continuously improve.

Place

We act locally to deliver nationally, maximising the benefits of our links with the local communities we are embedded in across the UK
We minimise our environmental impact and make APHA's operations sustainable and net zero
We future-proof the high-tech infrastructure that underpins our ability to deliver through our Science Capability for Animal Health and change programmes

APHA is an executive agency sponsored by the [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs](#) (Defra). APHA also provides services to the Scottish and Welsh Governments, other government departments and a range of other customers.

Our headquarters is in Weybridge, Surrey and we employ over 3000 colleagues in around 90 locations.

We are one of the most prestigious and critical organisations in the protection of the United Kingdom. More than ever the health of our environment, plants and animals matters. If you join us, you will be part of the safeguarding of animal, plant and bee health for the benefit of everyone in society, the environment and the economy. Everyone who works in APHA is passionate about achieving this mission.

Our key priorities are:

- Control and eradication of animal and plant diseases and pests, reducing the risks from new and emerging threats.
- Provide services for animal health and welfare, plant, and bee health.
- Rapidly control pest and disease outbreaks; while continuing to maintain and develop the skills and capabilities required to deliver core business and services and provide an efficient outbreak response.
- Continue to adapt and implement outbreak response plans and identify lessons from outbreaks including Bluetongue and Avian Influenza, implementing any improvements needed.
- Provide science-based evidence and advice to inform policy makers.
- Maintain national and international specialist veterinary and scientific capability and reputation.

How does APHA operate?

In APHA our work sits across four core Directorates.

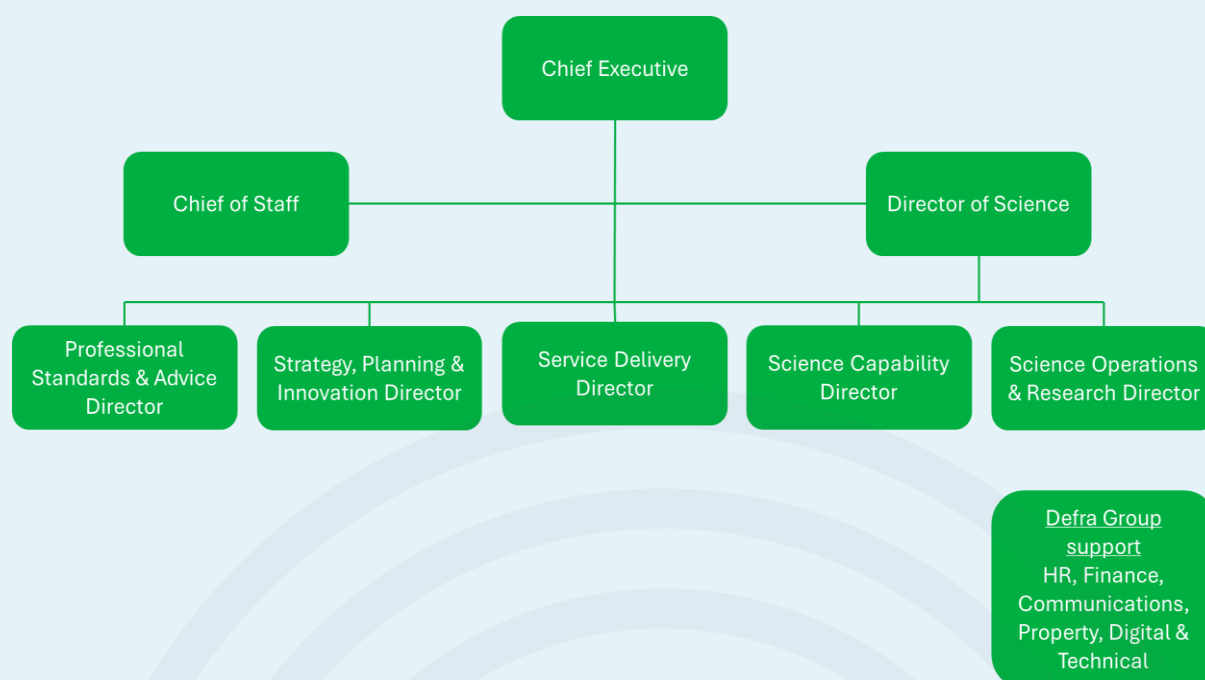
Service Delivery Directorate – our operational delivery arm which works across England, Scotland and Wales. We are responsible for international trade, regulatory affairs, compliance and enforcement. Here we also deliver our resilience and contingency planning to make sure we have the right disease outbreak preparedness in place.

Science Directorate – we provide a range of surveillance and research activities to rapidly investigate and respond to plant and animal health threats. We act as the National and International Reference Laboratory lead for a large number of infections and non-infectious animal diseases, and we provide expert scientific advice to government to help inform policy.

Strategy, Planning & Innovation Directorate – we deliver our Agency strategy, planning, performance, project and change services. This includes our annual business plan and our major transformation programme of work – Delivering Sustainable Futures which is an ambitious and exciting programme of change which is reimagining and digitising our end-to-end services for our customers and for our people.

Professional Advice & Standards Directorate – our lead for animal health technical training and standards and provision of advice and evidence to policy colleagues and the GB's Chief Veterinary Officers to formulate policy. Here we also train and regulate official Veterinary Surgeons and para-professional groups who provide services on behalf of Government.

APHA Executive Board: structure



Recent achievements



Over 417,061 export health certificates issued



Continued to play an international scientific role in the understanding of Avian Influenza in mammals across multiple continents.



Increasing Border Control posts to improve the flow of goods being imported into the UK.



Went live with a new Poultry Registration Service so that over 200,000 hen flock keepers in England and Wales can register their flocks allowing them to get live updates on Avian Influenza risk



Made enhancements to our Avian Influenza Licensing Service

We are transforming the way we work

Delivering Sustainable Futures Programme objectives

Our Delivering Sustainable Futures Programme is the vehicle for delivering the changes needed to support our strategy

It is **crucial** that APHA have a single way '**one agency approach**' to prevent working in silos, support capacity and resource planning, help deploy staff in emergency events, and to **maximise efficiencies** and the programme's success

The programme objectives include:

Delivering excellent services

Revolutionising the use of our data

Enabling efficient working by making our jobs easier

Making APHA an enjoyable and rewarding place to work

Strengthening UK innovation



The role

Job title: Chief Executive

Salary and grade:

The role is Director / Senior Civil Servant (SCS) Pay Band 2 and we expect to offer a salary of up to £140,000 for an exceptional candidate.

Existing Civil Servants will have their salary calculated in accordance with Civil Service pay rules.

Location:

APHA is a national organisation. You may be based at the locations listed below which are either a main Defra or APHA location. Please note that there is an expectation of extensive and overnight travel - you will need to attend Weybridge, as APHA's Headquarters, on at least a weekly basis and travel to London for meetings, including with senior leaders and ministers. The agreed amount of time spent at a workplace for this post will reflect the requirement for Civil Servants to spend at least 60% of their working time in an organisation workplace with the option to work the remaining time flexibly from home. Working time spent at a workplace may include time spent at other locations including field-based operational locations, together with supplier, customer or partner locations. This is a non-contractual agreement which is consistent with common Civil Service expectations.

Options: Weybridge, York, Newcastle, Bristol, Worcester, Exeter, Cardiff, Carlisle, Stafford. Other locations may be considered subject to Defra or APHA presence and capacity.

Contract type:

This role is being offered on a permanent basis. It is expected that this role will have a minimum assignment duration of 3 years. That is the period of time we would expect you to remain in this role to enable you to deliver on agreed business outcomes. It is also designed to support you in your career and to help you to develop a depth of expertise. While we would ask you to agree to this expected duration as part of accepting any offer, it is not a contractual provision and is not written into your terms and conditions.

External candidates will be offered a permanent Defra contract. This includes employees of accredited NDPBs. Current Civil Servants will be offered the post on permanent transfer from their current department to Defra. If you are an existing civil servant appointed on promotion, you will be appointed on modernised terms and conditions.

Role description

As the CEO, you are accountable for the leadership of APHA and delivery of its objectives. You are also a critical leader within Defra, working alongside other senior leaders and chief executives to deliver collectively across the entirety of the Department.

Leadership and management

- Work with Defra and the APHA Steering Board to define and deliver the organisation's strategy, aims and objectives.
- Ensure that the organisation has the resources, skills and capability to enable it to deliver its aims and objectives.
- Lead, manage and motivate the Executive Team in their delivery of performance outcomes.
- Be an inspirational and inclusive role model to staff, exhibiting the behaviours we expect of all our people.
- Provide visible and credible leadership in a science and veterinary environment and in technical meetings, connecting with and inspiring different professions.

Delivery

- Ensure the effective delivery of APHA's key goals, across England, Scotland and Wales, including delivering on statutory and legal obligations.
- Plan, lead and manage APHA's response to disease outbreaks, ensuring visible leadership and organisational resilience.
- Act as the Senior User in the multi-year, multi-billion pound development of the National Science Centre for Animal Health property and laboratories, including overall leadership of the associated business transformation.
- Maintain and develop best practice, value for money and continued business improvement to the highest ethical and professional standards,
- Drive organisation-wide commitment to customer service excellence, transparency and value for money. This includes transforming live services, and digitally-enabled business change to significantly reform and improve business practices, outcomes for customers and cheaper services;

Finance and Governance:

- Take personal responsibility as the CEO for financial probity and regularity and value for money on APHA expenditure and internal governance.

Stakeholder Engagement and Relationships:

- Work collaboratively across the Defra Group and with the devolved administrations of Scotland and Wales, including with the Chief Vet of the UK, and also the Chief Vets of Scotland and Wales.
- Work together with Defra and partners to ensure the policy – operational policy – delivery pathway works effectively for customers.
- Represent the organisation to a complex and varied stakeholder group and promote a wide understanding of the work that APHA does and the role that it plays.

Person specification: essential criteria

- Demonstrable track record of experience in an operational leadership role in a large, complex, multidisciplinary body with evidence of success in:
 - inspiring a diverse and dispersed workforce through a period of organisational and digital transformational change,
 - delivering services and capabilities, ideally but not necessarily within a science-based environment, with excellent management of business performance; and
 - Senior level crisis management, leading with visibility and resilience.
- Demonstrable ability to set the strategic direction for an organisation whilst considering, communicating and mitigating significant operational policy and delivery risk.
- Highly effective communication and influencing skills, with the personal credibility to gain the trust of a diverse range of senior stakeholders across multiple sectors within government and outside it.
- A track record of working in genuine partnership across organisational boundaries and the ability to work effectively with a range of global partners to deliver mutual objectives.
- Significant experience of managing and delivering against a substantial and complex budget and the personal resilience to operate in a high profile and highly scrutinised environment.
- A successful record of building and leading high performing, collaborative teams within a geographically dispersed organisation with effective delegation and empowerment of colleagues.



The selection process

SCS2 level recruitment competitions are governed by the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles. If you are shortlisted for the assessment phase you will be provided with the details you need.

Please let us know what adjustments we can put in place to help you through the recruitment process if you have a disability. Please contact responses@russellreynolds.com for assistance.

Longlist

The panel will assess your application to select those demonstrating the best fit with the role by considering the evidence you have provided against the **essential criteria** set out in the 'Person Specification' section. Failure to address any or all of these may affect your application. Candidates selected for longlisting will be invited for a preliminary discussion to further explore their skills and experience.

Shortlist

The panel will review reports on those longlisted and will select a shortlist of candidates whose applications best demonstrate suitability for the role, by considering the evidence provided against the **essential criteria** set out in the Person Specification.

Assessments

If you are shortlisted, you will be asked to take part in a number of assessments:

- Staff Engagement Exercise

This assessment will not result in a pass or fail decision. Rather, it is designed to support the panel's decision-making and highlight areas for the panel to explore further at interview.

- Structured Stakeholder Conversation

You will meet with the Chief Veterinary Officer, Christine Middlemiss, who is a critical stakeholder for the CEO and APHA. You will discuss your leadership experience and your ability to build key relationships across the veterinary and science communities. This will not result in a pass or fail decision. It is designed to support the panel's decision-making and highlight areas for the panel to explore further at interview.

Informal discussion

If shortlisted, candidates will be offered the chance to have an informal conversation with a relevant senior stakeholder prior to interview.

Formal interview

This will be an in-person interview in London or Weybridge and will assess your capabilities against the **essential criteria** set out in the Person Specification. You may be asked to deliver a presentation, the subject of which will be provided in advance.

The panel will be chaired by Elizabeth Hambley CB, Civil Service Commissioner.

The panel may also include:

- Emily Miles, Director General Food, Biosecurity and Trade, Defra
- Elizabeth Buchanan CVO, Lead Non-Executive Director, APHA
- A senior leader from the Operational Delivery Profession

We may take references and conduct due diligence checks e.g. social media footprint for candidates who are shortlisted.

Regardless of the final outcome we will notify all candidates as soon as possible after the final interview.



How to apply

Russell Reynolds Associates have been retained by Defra to support this recruitment process. To apply for this role, please submit the below materials via email to responses@russellreynolds.com.

The closing date for applications will be 23:55 on 11th December 2024. Your application should include:

- The reference number **P2410-163L** and role title in the subject line of your email.
- A CV (maximum two sides of A4 paper) setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements. Please ensure you have provided reasons for any gaps within the last two years
- A Statement of Suitability, (no longer than two sides of A4 paper) explaining how you consider your personal skills, qualities and experience provide evidence of your suitability for the role, with reference to the **essential criteria** in the person specification.
- A **Diversity Monitoring Form**. All applicants are invited to complete this information to assist the Civil Service with monitoring its recruitment process. All data is reported in an anonymous and aggregate format and will not be seen by anyone assessing your application. This form is available [here](#).

Please ensure that your CV and your supporting statement both contain your full name.

If you do not submit both a CV and Statement of Suitability, it will mean the panel only has limited information on which to assess your application against the **essential criteria** in the person specification.

As part of the online application process, you will be asked several diversity-related questions. If you do not wish to provide a declaration on any of the characteristics, you will have the option to select 'prefer not to say'.

Candidates who are unfamiliar with the requirements of a Statement of Suitability, or who would like a confidential discussion about the role, are advised to contact our recruitment advisors, Russell Reynolds Associates at the application email address detailed above.

Application schemes:

Candidates applying under the **Disability Confident Scheme** or **Great Place to Work for Veterans** who meet the minimum essential criteria in the job specification are guaranteed an interview. **Please complete the relevant parts in the online application system if applying under either of these schemes.**

APHA also offers a Redeployment Interview Scheme to civil servants who are at risk of redundancy, and who meet the minimum requirements for the advertised vacancy.

What reasonable adjustments can be made if I have a disability?

Defra is a Disability Confident Leader and therefore part of the Disability Confident Scheme (for further information on the Disability confident scheme please visit(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign>)). If you have a disability defined by the Equality Act 2010, you're eligible to be considered for the Disability Confident Scheme.

In order to qualify you must have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term negative effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities. (Further information regarding disabilities covered under the equality act please visit www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010).

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments for Disability Confident Scheme applicants and will try to remove any barriers so you are not at a disadvantage during the selection/recruitment process/ interview / assessment including; allowing extra time during selection tests; ensuring that information is provided in an accessible format or; by providing training. We are also committed to interviewing all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for the role applied for.

If you feel that you may need a reasonable adjustment to be made, or you would like to discuss the disability confident scheme in more detail please contact us in the first instance. If you wish to receive a hard copy of the information, or in an alternative format e.g. Audio, Braille or large font then please contact:

Timeline

Please note that this timeline is indicative at this stage and could be subject to change. The anticipated timetable is as follows:

Closing date	Wednesday 11 December 2024
Longlisting meeting	w/c 16 December 2024
Preliminary discussions with Russell Reynolds Associates	w/c 6 and 13 January 2025
Shortlisting meeting	w/c 13 January 2025
Assessments	w/c 20 January 2025
Panel Interviews	w/c 27 January 2025

Candidates are asked to note the above timetable, exercising flexibility through the recruitment and selection process as it may not be possible to offer any alternative dates for assessments or interviews.

What makes Defra and APHA a great place to work?

We offer an attractive and competitive benefits package. We have strong and proactive staff networks, special leave policies for hospital appointments, reasonable adjustments put in place for those who need them, and diversity talent programmes to help everyone irrespective of background, to achieve their potential.

Pension: Your pension is a valuable part of your total reward package. A competitive contributory pension scheme that you can enter as soon as you join where we will make a significant contribution to the cost of your pension; where your contributions come out of your salary before any tax is taken; and where your pension will continue to provide valuable benefits for you and your family if you are too ill to continue to work or die before you retire.

Key highlights:

Great Member Pension

Defined Benefit Pension Scheme

Provides a secure pension payable for life with no investment uncertainty
Choice of tax-free lump sum Amongst the lowest member contributions in public sector
Generous build rate of 2.3% of your earnings as a pension each year

Generous Employer Contribution

Employer contribution towards your pension is extremely generous – on average 27% of your pay
These contributions pay for:

- A pension for you
- Pension for your loved ones
- Death benefits
- Ill health benefits

Death Benefits

Able to nominate anyone (including charities) for a tax-free lump sum in the event of your death
Lump Sum of up to two times your pay

Pension for your spouse/partner of around 37.5% of your pension

Pension for eligible children

[Visit the Civil Service Pension Scheme](#) for more details.

Generous Leave and Bank Holiday Allowance: 25 days' annual leave on entry, increasing on a sliding scale to 30 days after 5 years' service. This is in addition to 8 public holidays. This will be complemented by one further day paid privilege leave entitlement.

If you are an existing civil servant appointed on promotion, you will be appointed on modernised terms and conditions.

Staff Wellbeing: We want to support your wellbeing by ensuring that flexible working is at the heart of our people offer. Our flexible working policies create an environment in which we are all happy and comfortable talking about flexible working options. These include where you work, when you work and how you work. Flexible Working Schemes allow you to vary your working day as long as you work your total hours. We also have generous paid maternity and paternity leave which is notably more than the statutory minimum offered by many other employers.

Childcare benefits: Working parents can open an online childcare account and for every £8 they pay in, the government adds £2, up to a maximum of £2000 a year for each child or £4000 for a disabled child. Parents then use the funds to pay for registered childcare. Existing employees may be able to continue to claim childcare vouchers, so please check how the policy would work for you [here](#).

Onsite facilities: Opportunity to use onsite facilities including fitness centres and staff canteens (where applicable).

Season Ticket and Bicycle Loan: Interest-free loans allowing you to spread the cost of an annual travel season ticket or a new bicycle.

Sick Pay: Occupational Sick Pay.

Professional subscriptions: We will pay the membership fees for one relevant professional association.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We passionately believe in equality, diversity & inclusion and we match that belief with action.

APHA is committed to being an organisation in which fairness and inclusion are central to all our working relationships. At APHA we want you to have a respectful, welcoming and engaging working environment, free from discrimination regardless of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, social background, trade union activity, caring responsibilities or working pattern.

At Defra we are always looking to attract the very best people from the widest possible talent pool, and we are proud to be an inclusive, equal opportunities employer. As a Disability Confident Leader, we're committed to ensuring that all candidates are treated fairly throughout the recruitment process.

We offer career development through a range of both internal and Civil Service wide talent schemes, mentoring, sponsorship and reverse mentoring. Our senior leaders talk authentically and with passion about what they are doing personally to support equality, diversity and inclusion.

We promote and support a range of flexible working patterns to enable staff to balance home and work responsibilities, and we treat people fairly irrespective of their working arrangements.



Useful information

What nationality do I need to hold in order to apply?

This job is broadly open to the following groups:

- UK nationals
- nationals of the Republic of Ireland
- nationals of Commonwealth countries who have the right to work in the UK
- nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities with settled or pre-settled status under the [European Union Settlement Scheme \(EUSS\) \(opens in a new window\)](#)
- nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities who have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)
- individuals with limited leave to remain or indefinite leave to remain who were eligible to apply for EUSS on or before 31 December 2020
- Turkish nationals, and certain family members of Turkish nationals, who have accrued the right to work in the Civil Service

For more information on job nationality requirements and the right to work in the UK, see the [Civil Service Nationality rules \(opens in a new window\)](#) and the [UK Visas and Immigration rules \(opens in a new window\)](#).

Security clearance

Successful candidates for this role will be required to obtain SC clearance prior to taking up appointment.

Applicants must be currently resident in the UK and have between 3 to 10 years continuous UK residency depending on the level of Security. However, residency qualification may be reduced for certain roles and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. It is up to each person applying for a post to ensure they meet the residency criteria.

It is up to each person applying for a post at APHA Weybridge to ensure they meet the residency criteria. More information about the vetting process can be found at the following link: [National security vetting: clearance levels - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

More information about the vetting process can be found at the following link <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/security-vetting-and-clearance>

Pre-Employment Checks

Everyone employed in the Civil Service is subject to security checks. These security checks, known as pre-employment checks, are conducted to verify your: identity, employment history; right to work; eligibility under nationality rules; and any unspent criminal convictions.

These checks ensure that candidates are entitled to work in the UK and possess the honesty, integrity and values for government-related work.

Depending on the level of checks needed for the role, you may need to provide at least three documents so we can evidence your identity, nationality, full permanent address, signature and date of birth.

These would include:

- Current British Passport
- Birth Certificate - issued within 12 months of birth
- Bank, building society or credit card statement
- Current photo card driving license
- Original utility bill
- Marriage certificate/Civil Partnership certificate

Background reading

- **APHA / Defra Framework agreement** - [Animal and Plant Health Agency framework document - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- **25 Year Environment Plan** - [25 Year Environment Plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- **APHA Annual accounts 2022 – 2023** - [Animal and Plant Health Agency annual report and accounts, 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- **Wales Animal Health Welfare Implementation Plan** - [Wales Animal Health Welfare Implementation Plan \(gov.wales\)](#)
- **Scottish Veterinary Services Animal Health and Welfare overview** - [Scottish Veterinary Service \(SVS\) - Animal health and welfare - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles

Selection for appointments to the Civil Service is on merit, on the basis of fair and open competition, as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles. The Civil Service Commission has two primary functions:

- Providing assurance that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.
- Hearing and determining appeals made by Civil Servants under the Civil Service Code which sets out the Civil Service values – Honesty, Integrity, Impartiality and Objectivity.

More detailed Information can be found at the Civil Service Commission website [Civil Service Commissioners - Civil Service Commission](#).

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Recruitment Principles, and you wish to make a complaint, you should contact scscandidate.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk in the first instance.

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the Department, you can contact the Civil Service Commission: Visit the Civil Service Commission website <https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk>.



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Want to know more?

If you have any questions about the post detailed in this pack, then please contact our recruitment advisors for this role, Russell Reynolds Associates at the application address: responses@russellreynolds.com.

