UNLOCKING POTENTIAL
TRANSFORMING LIVES

SCOTTISH PRISON SERVICE

APPLICANT INFORMATION & GUIDANCE PACK

disability confident EMPLOYER

Stonewall DIVERSITY CHAMPION

Civil Service Commission

V3 – November 2019

About the SPS

The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) is an Agency of the Scottish Government, working in partnership with organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to deliver safe and secure custodial services that empower offenders to take responsibility and to fulfil their potential. We employ over 4000 people in a diverse range of professions across our 13 prisons, College, Headquarters and Central Stores.

We need professional, capable and motivated individuals who reflect Scotland's diversity to deliver effective and efficient activities and services to achieve our Mission and realise our Vision.

Whatever SPS career you embark upon, you will be a valued member of the team, helping us build a Safer Scotland for the communities we serve. We are committed to your personal and professional development and offer a wide range of career progression opportunities.

For further information, please visit our website: www.sps.gov.uk.

Our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Commitment

SPS is committed to ensuring that everyone in SPS, and those who come into contact with the organisation, including prospective candidates and job applicants, are treated fairly, with dignity and respect for human rights. SPS is committed to advancing equality of opportunity in recruitment and selection, regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, gender, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic or status. In supporting this commitment, SPS operates name blind recruitment, where possible, throughout the recruitment process.

SPS recognises the benefits of employing individuals from a range of backgrounds, as this provides the widest pool of talent and creates a workforce where creativity and valuing the difference in others thrives. SPS values the wealth of experience within the communities in which it serves and encourages applications from candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds to meet SPS' aspiration of having a workforce which is reflective of the diversity of Scottish society. Where appropriate, SPS will use positive action in recruitment and selection to ensure the organisation meets its aspirations of a workforce which reflects the communities it serves.

SPS is committed to making reasonable adjustments for disabled job applicants at all stages in the recruitment process. A disabled applicant's suitability for a post will be considered, taking into account any reasonable adjustments they would require in the post.

SPS currently has three Equality and Diversity networks for staff to join:

INSPIRE SPS STAFF DISABILITY NETWORK

prism SCOTTISH PRISON SERVICE LGBT STAFF NETWORK

WISPS WOMEN IN SPS

Name Blind Recruitment

To ensure we support our commitment, our selection approach before the interview stage is managed anonymously, commonly referred to as 'name blind' recruitment. This means that your personal details will be removed from your application during the assessment process.

Disability Confident Scheme & Reasonable Adjustments

The SPS is a member of the disability confident scheme and under the terms of the scheme, all candidates who consider themselves to be disabled in terms of the Equality Act 2010[1], and who meet the essential minimum criteria for the post, will be progressed to the next stage of the assessment process.

We will also ensure that we consider and implement any reasonable adjustments you may require to participate in the selection process or during the course of your employment, should you be successful in securing a post. Please ensure that you notify us of any reasonable adjustments requests at the earliest possible opportunity to allow us to make the necessary arrangements.

Diversity Monitoring

The application process includes a diversity monitoring section and the information you provide here will be treated in strictest confidence and will be retained by HR for monitoring purposes. It will be kept separately from your application form and will not be made available to those involved in the selection decision.

Eligibility for Employment

As a Civil Service organisation, the SPS must ensure that we are employing people entitled to work in the UK and that our employees have the honesty, integrity and values needed for government-related work.

Eligibility for employment by the SPS will be checked at the initial stages of the recruitment process and verified prior to any formal offer of employment being made. In considering your eligibility to become a Civil Servant, nationality and criminal convictions rules apply.

Nationality Rules

You can apply for any job in the SPS as long as you are a UK national or have dual nationality with one part being British. In addition, SPS posts are open to Commonwealth citizens and nationals of any member state of the European Economic Area (EEA). There are certain very limited exceptions to the general prohibition on the employment of nationals from other countries. Further information about Civil Service nationality requirements is available on the Civil Service website.

Criminal Convictions Rules

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Order 2003 (as amended), the SPS is listed as an exempted employment. The SPS is therefore entitled to ask prospective candidates to reveal spent convictions during the recruitment and/or vetting process.

During the application process, we ask for details on any criminal convictions you have, including spent and admonished convictions within the UK or abroad. It is important that you tell us about all convictions and offences, including motoring offences, regardless of the outcome. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a barrier to employment with the

[1] The Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A 'substantial disadvantage' is a disadvantage which is more than minor or trivial. 'Long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring conditions). Further guidance in relation to the meaning of disability is accessible on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website.

SPS; however failure to disclose a conviction or offence, will lead to your application being rejected, regardless of the nature of the offence or conviction.

Successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure or Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check prior to an offer of employment being confirmed.

Benefits & Support

SPS employees have access to a range of benefits and support, some of which are included below. Further information can be found on the SPS website.

Pension

SPS employees have access to a Civil Service Pension Scheme. For further information on the Civil Service pension, please visit the Civil Service pension's website.

If you already have a Civil Service pension, employment with SPS may alter your pension; a process known as 'abatement'. However, SPS will carry out checks in advance of any offer of employment to make sure you are informed if these rules affect you. Our Pay, Pensions and Relocation Team can also provide specific guidance, if required.

Career Development

We are committed to nurturing and investing in our greatest strength and resource: our people.

Depending on your role and career plans, we will help you reach your full potential. We will invest in your development and create an environment that allows you to learn and apply new skills which can include development into management roles.

Annual Leave

The SPS has a generous annual leave allowance. The annual leave year runs from 1 February to 31 January.

Service	Entitlement
Years 1 to 5 inclusive	34 days
Year 6 onwards	42 days

Your annual leave entitlement includes 12 days public & privilege days, including St. Andrews day. Annual leave is calculated on a pro-rata basis for part time staff.

Family Friendly Policies

We understand the importance of a good work-life balance and we recognise that your personal circumstances may change over time. We offer a range of options to help you achieve the right work-life balance, such as flexible working, part-time working, and career breaks.

Maternity, Paternity and Adoption

We are committed to supporting you throughout any period of pregnancy or adoption, and in your responsibilities as a parent, offering generous support and maternity and paternity leave arrangements (above the statutory minimum), while continuing to recognise the positive contribution that you make.

Childcare Vouchers

The childcare voucher scheme can help working parents make savings as well as making it easier to budget for childcare. As a working parent, you may save in the region of £1,000 per annum.

Special Leave

Special leave allows staff members to apply for time off in addition to annual leave in certain circumstances. Special leave can be granted with or without pay.

Employee Discount Scheme

We offer a range of value benefits to employees, discounts, offers and great savings on leisure, shopping, health and much more.

Car Parking Facilities

All SPS places of work have free staff car parking and cycling facilities.

Sick Leave Provision

We provide paid leave during absence. Sick leave on full pay may be granted for up to 6 months of any 12 month period and thereafter sick leave on half pay, subject to a maximum of 12 months' sick leave in any 4 year period.

Eye Care Plan

We provide free eyesight tests for staff and where prescription spectacles are needed for particular work tasks, you can choose from a range of styles without charge.

Employee Wellbeing Programme (EWP)

Balancing the demands of work and your personal life is not always easy. Our Employee Assistance Programme is a free confidential 24-hour service providing specialist support and information for you and your immediate family on life management, health information and personal support for the times when you need it most.

Lifestyle Screening

To promote and encourage healthy lifestyles our occupational health providers deliver health screening for staff once every three years.

Gym

Many of our sites offer staff gymnasiums which are free of charge to members of staff.

Cycle to Work

SPS operates a cycle to work scheme. This allows staff members to make tax and NI savings through salary sacrifice.

Application Process

In order to apply for a vacancy with the SPS, you are required to setup an online recruitment account via the careers section of our website. SPS uses an online application system for all vacancies to gather important information from you to assess your suitability for the role applied for and to communicate with you throughout the recruitment process.

The standard application form includes the following sections:

- My Personal Details – including your name and contact details. This allows for the administration of the recruitment process and to keep you informed as your application progresses through the various stages.
- My Qualifications – details your qualifications and any training that are relevant to the role you have applied for.
- My Work Experience – details of your employment history with associated tasks.
- My Knowledge, Skills & Experience – details of your knowledge, skills and experience and how you match the person specification.

In some instances, you may be asked to provide your CV in support of your application but, where this is necessary, it will be clearly indicated within the application process.

Guidance on Completing the Application Form

General Guidance

- Before starting the application form, familiarise yourself with the job description, person specification and the SPS Behavioural Competency Framework and consider whether you match the essential job requirements.
- Use the word count available for each section.
- Proof read your responses – check your spelling and grammar.
- You do not need to complete your application in one sitting but please remember to save your application at regular intervals (every 10 minutes).
- Check the application closing date and time and make sure you submit your application in advance.

My Qualifications

- Under the My Qualifications section, ensure that you include all qualifications and training that are both essential and relevant to the role.
- Where there are essential qualification requirements, these need to be included under the Qualifications section, otherwise your application may not be progressed.

My Work Experience

- Under the My Work Experience section, ensure that you include details of the key tasks and responsibilities of each role that you have performed.

My Knowledge, Skills & Experience

- You will be asked to provide specific evidence based examples to demonstrate how you meet the criteria. Please ensure that you provide specific evidence.
- Ensure that your evidence and example(s) relates to the criteria being assessed. Read the requirement carefully and ensure your evidence relates to the area being assessed. You may wish to refer to the SPS Behavioural Competency Framework when developing your responses.
- Avoid using generic statements with no evidence or example to support it.
- Consider how you structure your responses, you may wish to use the following approach:

  Situation – Describe the task/event/activity (set the scene). What did you want to achieve? What were your aims/objectives?

  Behaviour – What did you do personally? How did you do it?

Outcome – What was the outcome?

Selection Process

Upon receipt of your application, you will be notified whether or not your application will be progressed to the next stage of the selection process. The selection process varies between roles but as a minimum normally includes an assessment of the application form and an interview.

Details of what the selection process will involve for the role you have applied for will be included on the vacancy advert, with further information provided to you as necessary during the selection process.

Interview Expenses

The SPS is unable to provide any travel and subsistence costs incurred by an applicant during any stage of the selection process.

Reserve List

Where the selection process identifies more appointable candidates than positions available, a reserve list may be created and used for a period of up to 12 months for future appointments to the same or similar roles without further assessment.

Pre-appointment Checks

If you are successful, we will, as part of our pre-employment vetting process, carry out enquiries into your identity, employment/academic history, nationality and immigration status, criminal record, health, and other relevant matters, to ensure that you are qualified and suitable for the appointment.

When the pre-employment enquiries are satisfactorily completed to our standard, we will then make you a formal offer of appointment and you will be expected to take up appointment as soon as possible, subject to any notice period you may have with your current employer.

Probation

We operate a probationary period for all new employees which forms part of the contract of employment.

Civil Service Values

All appointees to the Civil Service must be able to fully comply with the requirements of the Civil Service Code and are expected to carry out their role with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values which are Honesty, Integrity, Objectivity and Impartiality:

- Integrity: putting the obligations of public service above your own personal interests;
- Honesty: being truthful and open;
- Objectivity: basing your advice and decisions on rigorous analysis of the evidence; and
- Impartiality: acting solely according to the merits of the case and serving equally well Governments of different political persuasions.

The Civil Service Commission

The SPS's recruitment processes are underpinned by the principle of selection for appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. Details of how this principle should be applied can be found at the Civil Service Commission website. If you feel that your application has not been treated in accordance with the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles and you wish to make a complaint, you should write to the Senior Resourcing Manager, SPS College, Newlands Road, Brightons, Falkirk, FK2 0DE in the first instance. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you can contact the Office of the Civil Service Commission.

Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Personal information that you provide during any stage of the recruitment and selection process will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You can access our full privacy notice here.