



Human Resources Team



Office of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Manchester / Hybrid Working

Application pack and information for candidates

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Thank you for your interest in being part of our team. It is an exciting time to be part of the HR team at PHSO, and we are looking forward to hearing from people who want to help us build and deliver an exemplary HR service. We are looking for experienced HR professionals at all levels, who are looking for an opportunity to shape the future, both of HR, and of PHSO.

There is much to be excited about and be part of:-

- helping us establish working in a new hybrid environment, with our people working in the office and at home
- implementing our new HR system in 2022 to support our people and drive better decision making
- ensuring all our people policies support new ways of working and are both clear and simple to understand
- shaping the way we recruit for the future in ways that are innovative, inclusive and effective
- working in partnership with our managers enable them to lead and develop high performing teams
- to developing our new People and OD Strategy and the team to deliver it

I am very proud to work for PHSO and the important casework the organisation delivers. We strive to constantly find ways that we can improve and do more, so having an ambitious HR function will be a fantastic enabler

I hope you find this pack useful, and I am looking forward to hearing from you

Gill Kilpatrick
Chief Operating Officer

Our vision, role and strategic aims

Our vision

Our vision is to be an exemplary public services ombudsman by providing an independent, impartial and fair complaints resolution service, while using our casework to help raise standards and improve public services.

Our role

We make final decisions on complaints that have not been resolved by the NHS in England and UK government departments, and some other UK public organisations. We do this independently and impartially.

We are not part of government, the NHS in England or a regulator. We are neither a consumer champion nor an advocacy service.

Strategy

On 16 April 2018, we published our corporate three-year strategy that sets out how we will become an exemplary ombudsman service. It sets out three objectives to achieve our vision of becoming an exemplary ombudsman service.

1. To improve the quality of our service, while remaining independent, impartial and fair

Our main focus is to complete the work we started in 2017-18 to improve our service. Building public confidence and trust in what we do remains our priority. We will then explore how we can introduce new ways of working that will help resolve cases more quickly and effectively. This will improve both the quality and timeliness of our decisions, and the overall experience for people making complaints.

We will continue to invest in our staff so they are equipped to deliver a professional casework service that remains sensitive to the complex, often tragic, issues that are brought to us.

2. To increase the transparency and impact of our casework

By the end of the three-year period, we will publish much more of our casework online to help improve public services. This includes highlighting where things have gone wrong and what organisations are doing to put them right.

We will also continue to target our insight reports so that important lessons from our casework and systemic reviews contribute to raising standards in public services.

3. To work in partnership to improve public services, especially frontline complaint handling

Helping to improve public services will be central to what we do. But we cannot succeed on our own. We must work with a range of strategic partners to improve how the public sector responds when things go wrong.

We will explore a number of options for achieving this objective, from sharing good practice to developing training material for front-line complaint handlers.

Our Structure

The PHSO Board

Chaired by the Ombudsman, the Board makes decisions about our performance, our plans, our finances and how we are delivering our strategy. The Board does not make decisions on complaints. It is made up of non-executive directors and executive directors.

Executive Team

The Executive Team is responsible for day-to-day management of the Office and makes recommendations on proposed actions to the Board. The Executive Team is accountable to the Board for implementing its decisions. It regularly monitors operational and casework performance, and is kept informed of developments in major cases.

The Audit Committee

The role of the Audit Committee is to support the Ombudsman (as Accounting Officer) and our Advisory Board in monitoring the adequacy of our corporate governance and control systems.

Working the PHSO way

| Our values | Working the PHSO way | How we do it |
|--------------|--|--|
| Independence | Doing the right thing Showing integrity | Being open, honest and authentic Listening to understand Being ethical and accountable Being professional and a role model |
| Fairness | Taking ownership and responsibility Respecting every individual | Being proactive and taking the initiative Fostering trust and empowering others Being approachable and considerate Embracing equality and diversity |
| Transparency | Communicating clearly and openly Working together | Being collaborative Inspiring confidence in our actions and decisions Being thorough and outcome focused Maximising value and minimising waste |
| Excellence | Learning and improving Achieving results | Developing our expertise and learning continuously Being open to feedback and change Delivering on our commitments and making it happen Aiming for high quality and achieving standards |

Our Benefits

At PHSO our motto is ‘Live well, work well’. We want to inspire, guide and support you in being your healthiest and happiest self. In addition to offering a competitive package, we have a number of benefits that support this:

Pension

A career within the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman offers the opportunity for you to join the Civil Service Pension Scheme. This means access to:

- Guaranteed inflation proof income on retirement.
- Life assurance cover.
- Pension for dependants (Spouse, Civil, Partner, Children)
- Potential access to ill health retirement benefits (with two years’ service) should you become too ill to work.
- Options on leaving a lump sum payment, should something happen to you, through the Death Benefit Nomination.

Employee

| Annualised Rate of Pensionable Pay | Members Contribution |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| £0.00 - £23,100 | 4.60% |
| £23,101 - £56,000 | 5.45% |
| £56,101 - £150,000 | 7.35% |
| £150,001 - and above | 8.05% |

Employer

| Annualised Rate of Pensionable Pay | Employers Contribution |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| £23,000 and under | 26.60% |
| £23,001 to £45,500 | 27.10% |
| £45,501 to £77,000 | 27.90% |
| £77,001 and above | 30.30% |

Generous holidays

You will receive a generous basic holiday entitlement of 30 days. We also offer an additional 2.5 days extra-statutory holiday on top of the normal public and bank holidays.

Flexi-time

Our standard working hours are 36 hours per week over five days (Monday to Friday). The flexi-time scheme provides the flexibility for you to stagger your daily hours and the length of your lunch break each day with the only core set hours being 10 am and 12 noon and 2pm and 4pm. In addition, if you work in excess of your standard hours you can accrue up to 2 days flexi-leave each month.

Hybrid working

We are trialling hybrid working for an initial 6-month period. If you prefer, you may choose to work from home for the majority of the time and will only need to work in the office for a minimum of 2 days per week.

Gym Subsidy

If you are a member of a recognised gym and make regular monthly payments as part of your membership then you can apply for our Gym Subsidy. This is an annual allowance of £120 that is made in monthly instalments over a 12 month period to assist with the cost of your membership.

Health and lifestyle assessment

To support you in becoming and maintaining your healthiest self, we offer a free health and lifestyle assessment each year with a nurse through our Occupational Health provider.

Headspace mindfulness and wellbeing app

We provide premium access to Headspace with 1,000+ hours of content designed to help you manage stress, fall asleep, exercise mindfully and remain focused. Headspace also has child-friendly content for those of you with young families.

24/7 Employee Assistance Programme

You will be able to access this confidential and free service designed to help you deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting your home life or work life, health and general wellbeing. This includes free access to counselling, support for any legal issues that cause anxiety or distress, bereavement support, medical information and a wellbeing portal which includes interactive health assessments and 4 week self help programmes.

Learning and Development

At PHSO we are committed to the personal and professional growth of all colleagues. There are a variety of opportunities for colleagues to develop skills, knowledge and behaviours which includes e-learning or signing up to the courses available from our very own L&D's team curriculum.

Professional Membership Fees

We are keen to make sure that where colleagues are members of professional bodies that this membership continues throughout employment. We will therefore pay the annual membership fee, where membership is relevant to your role within PHSO.

Cycle to work scheme

To help you choose a healthier and more sustainable way of getting to work, you can pay for the cost of a loaned bicycle (up to a maximum value of £1000) from your gross salary. As this is a salary sacrifice scheme, you save any tax and national insurance that you would otherwise have paid on that amount. Your saving will depend on the cost of the bicycle and the tax band that you are in but you could save up to 42% of the cost of the bicycle if you are a higher rate tax payer and up to 32% as a basic rate tax payer.

Season Ticket Loans

Spreading the cost of your season ticket can help you to manage your money. We offer an advance of salary to buy a season ticket for home to office travel and/or for the cost of car parking season ticket related to home to office travel.

Equal opportunities

It is important to us that we promote an open, respectful, and transparent culture made up of individuals with their own unique identities at all levels. A diverse and inclusive culture leads to better engagement, belonging, well-being, improved decision making and delivering better results. A diverse workforce allows us to better reflect the communities we serve so that we better understand the experiences of individuals who bring to complaints to us and provide them with a service that meets their requirements. We deliver our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion through our [strategy](#). Our Diversity Steering Group provides leadership oversight of this work and our Diversity Working Group takes forward actions to deliver against the objectives.

We actively encourage applications to work at PHSO from under-represented groups such as, people who are LGBT+, from Black, Asian, Mixed Ethnicity and any Other Ethnic Group backgrounds, with a disability, impairment, learning difference or long-term condition, with caring responsibilities, as well as any other under-represented group.

Our employee led networks provide opportunities for staff to participate and contribute to making PHSO an inclusive organisation. Participation is actively encouraged and supported. Our current staff networks are:

Break the Stigma - raising awareness of the importance of safeguarding mental health and wellbeing of staff in the workplace. It engenders an open culture to talk about mental health issues and is supported by a number of mental health first aiders.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum - provides peer support for colleagues to raise issues, concerns and ideas in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. It also promotes an open and inclusive culture where staff can celebrate diversity.

Pride at PHSO - promotes and represents the interests of LGBT+ staff employed at PHSO, with participating open to both LGBT+ staff and allies. The group identifies and shares good practice, raises awareness and provides support, mentoring and coaching to LGBT+ staff.

Wellbeing Ambassadors - help us to embed wellbeing activity across the organisation, supporting colleagues to use and understand the tools and resources available in our 'Live Well, Work Well' programme.

Disability

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman is a Disability Confident Employer, further information on the Disability Confident scheme and its requirements of employers can be found [here](#). Any disabled applicant who applies under the scheme and who meets the minimum selection criteria will automatically progress to the next stage of the recruitment process, which may be an assessment or interview.

By 'minimum selection criteria' we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your application form that you meet the level of qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience defined as essential for the role. A false declaration of a disability under the GIS to obtain a guaranteed interview, which results in employment, may invalidate your contract of employment. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Application and selection process

Application

Your application should be in the form of **written CV and supporting statement**

The written statement should cover no more than 2 sides of A4 paper in font size 12, demonstrating why you think you are suitable for the post, and using examples to show how your knowledge, skills and experience meets the requirements of the person specification. Any of the competencies may be tested at interview.

You should take into account the person specification and the competencies required for the role.

Applications should be submitted ahead of the following deadlines:-

Assistant Director 00:01 Monday 29th November

All other roles 00:01 Monday 13th December

First round interviews are due to take place within 2 weeks of each closing date.

Selection

CVs and responses will be considered and shortlisted. Applicants will be invited to attend an online interview using Microsoft Teams.

The initial sessions will take between 45-60 minutes and will use competency based questions to illicit concrete examples of experience that is relevant to each post.

The final selection session will be a panel session with the main sponsor and one or two additional PHSO stakeholders.

Adjustments to the selection process

The nature of the selection process is described above. If you need to have adjustments made at the interview to enable you to complete the selection process, please ensure that you state this in the disability section on the application form.

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments where possible.

Pre-employment checks

All offers of employment are conditional and subject to our pre-employment checks, including security clearance, references and a health assessment for fitness to work. If necessary, you may need to undertake a medical assessment.

Probation

Successful candidates will be on probation for ten months.

Outside activities

As a crown servant, you may not take part in any activity that would in any way impair the effectiveness of your work for the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, or engage in any occupation that may conflict with the interests of this Office or be inconsistent with your official position. Subject to these conditions, work of a minor or short-term nature (for example, vacation or after-hours work) will normally be allowed, provided you seek prior permission.

You will also be subject to certain restrictions. Standing as a candidate in Parliamentary elections is prohibited. Standing for local authority elections, canvassing on behalf of candidates, and expressing views on matters of political controversy in public speeches or publications require permission from this Office and may be refused. There is also a requirement to declare involvement in any activity where you have an actual or potential conflict of interests.

Data protection

We will record the information given for the purposes of recruitment and selection monitoring. We will process the information for the purposes of HR administration and statistical evaluation only.

Feedback

Feedback will be made available to all applicants, this will be in writing for applicants who are not longlisted for first round interview and in person for all others.