

Job Title

Senior Category Officer

Location

As per job advert

Grade and Salary

Grade SEO

National: Minimum £37,295 – maximum £41,425

London: Minimum £40,262 – maximum £44,724

Additional Benefits

Civil Service Pension (employer contribution 27%), funding for CIPS qualification and membership plus opportunities for in-year and end-of-year bonuses

Contract Type

Permanent

Job Summary

Defra group Commercial wish to appoint Senior Category Officers across a variety of teams to:

- Support and lead commercial delivery of medium to high value and risk projects (typically £100k to £5m), procurements and contract / supplier management within a market facing category team across the full commercial life cycle. The role holder will:
 - Prepare initial procurement strategies, and contribute to business plans
 - Plan and manage market engagement exercises
 - Prepare pre-tender and tender documents in collaboration with customers
 - Run tenders in accordance with Public Contracts Regulations and manage evaluations
 - Prepare recommendations for tender outcomes (Contract Award Reports) for approval via Governance Boards
 - Prepare contract management documentation in collaboration with stakeholders
- Build and sustain effective relationships with suppliers to deliver exceptional performance in cost, service and quality.
- Build and sustain effective relationships with internal customers.
- Provide day to day advice and recommendations at the appropriate level on commercial risks and issues and governance across the relevant category, taking full account of risk, exploiting commercial opportunities and maximising value for money and savings.

- Be responsible for the delivery of contracts or grants such that sustainable impacts and opportunities are identified and managed throughout the commercial lifecycle.
- Some roles will include line management responsibilities for Commercial Officers which includes setting objectives, managing performance and supporting learning and development.

Job Description

As a Senior Category Officer, you will report to a Category Manager (G7 grade). This job description is generic and may apply to all Senior Category Officer posts. You may have the opportunity to work across a number of different commercial categories within DgC.

The role holder will work with customers to deliver value effectively and innovatively so that the customer organisation outcomes and objectives can be met alongside the fulfilment of key corporate targets.

The role holder will award and monitor medium value, medium and high risk contracts in accordance with Defra's commercial policies and procedures. They will deliver propriety and value for money across the commercial life cycle.

The role will provide strategic support to the team and involve promoting commercial policies and procedures whilst influencing the final outcomes. It includes the provision of expert advice to the business on commercial issues and governance and operational support to the team.

The role holder will engage with colleagues across the country, building their Commercial network both internally and through the wider Defra network and Government Bodies.

Personal specification

We are looking for candidates who are building their commercial experience. We want you to be able to challenge and influence across complex and varied customers as well as enjoy developing innovative solutions to challenges. You will excel in building networks and see good relationships as a key part of your expertise. It is important for you to feel rewarded by having provided a high quality professional service with measurable outcomes. Finally, you will enjoy building a positive team spirit and supporting your team to deliver expert outcomes that are valued by your customers. In previous roles we expect you will have:

- Lead and supported delivery of projects including procurements and/or managing contracts or suppliers to a successful outcome.
- Formed positive working relationships with colleagues, customers and suppliers including influencing and challenging to gain the best outcome. You may have some line management experience.
- Understand regulatory frameworks, ideally some exposure to Public Contracts Regulations, working within agreed policies and processes and promoted those standards in the way you work.
- Delivered improved ways of working, business change or efficiency.
- Proactively identified risks and issues and managed plans to mitigate.

- Attended and potentially chaired meetings to gain decisions including setting agendas, leading on items and recording actions and decisions.
- Presented conclusions and made recommendations evidenced by analysed information including financial information.
- Supported colleagues, training them as appropriate to help support them with the knowledge and skills to deliver their work in an effective and efficient manner.
- Used IT systems and applications.
- Invested in your own development which might have included keeping up to date on legislation, best practice or developing industry knowledge. Hold or be prepared to study towards CIPS level 6 qualifications.

Selection process details

This vacancy is using [Success Profiles](#), and will assess your Experience and Behaviours.

Experience

The following Experience is essential to this post and will be tested at sift and interview.

- Track record of planning and successfully delivering commercial or procurement projects of a similar scale to this role.
- Making recommendations to senior colleagues based on analysis of financial and non-financial information and including identifying key risk and mitigations.
- Engaging with internal and external customers or stakeholders. Responding to and resolving issues by influencing and challenging to ensure the best result.
- Building and maintaining strong and productive working relationships with stakeholders and suppliers.
- Communicating confidently and concisely. Effectively communicating with a wide range of stakeholders (at all levels) both in a technical and non-technical environment.
- Delivering improvements to ways of working which has resulted in lasting change.

Civil Service Behaviours

The following SEO (Senior Executive Officer) Civil Service Behaviours are essential to this post. Communicating and Influencing will be assessed as part of the sift and the interview may include questions on any of the behaviours included below.

- Communicating and Influencing
- Making Effective Decisions
- Changing and Improving
- Working together

Full details on the Civil Service Behaviours Framework can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/717275/CS_Behaviours_2018.pdf

Application Process

Please submit your tailored 2-page CV demonstrating how you meet the Experience detailed above with a 250-word statement which should explain how your work experience to date has demonstrated your ability to Communicate with and Influence others.

Sift

The sift is based on an assessment of your CV and 250-word statement. Candidates who pass the sift will progress to interview.

Sift results are expected to be released end of May 2023.

Interview

If you are successful at application stage and pass the sift, you will be invited to interview where you will be assessed against the Experience and Civil Service Behaviour for this role. The interview may involve a scenario based question.

At the interview you will be asked for your preference of category work area and location.

Interviews are expected to take place mid-June 2023.

Interviews will take place using video conferencing (Microsoft Teams) and will typically last for 45 minutes.

Reasonable Adjustment

If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes.

If you need a change to be made so that you can submit your application, you should contact Hays via defra.commercial@hays.com as soon as possible before the closing date to discuss your needs.

Complete the “Assistance required” section when completing your application to tell us what changes or help you might need further on in the recruitment process. For instance, you may need wheelchair access when attending at an office, or if you’re deaf, a Language Service Professional.

Accessibility

If you are experiencing accessibility problems with any of the documentation for this role, please contact the email address in the Reasonable Adjustment section.

Further information

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Recruitment Principles and you wish to make a complaint, in the first instance, you should contact Jessica Gregory (Jessica.gregory@defra.gov.uk). If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the Department, you can [contact the Civil Service Commission](#).

