



Department for
Business & Trade



Fair Work
Agency

Ref 436530 • SCS Pay Band 2

The Fair Work Agency, Chief Executive Officer



Closing date: 23:55 on 30.11.25



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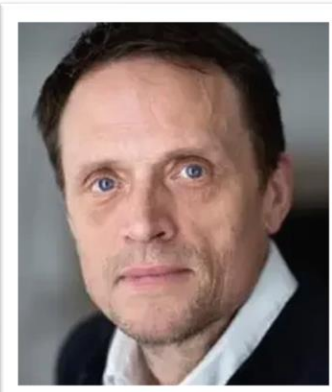
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Welcome Message

The Fair Work Agency is an Executive Agency of the Department for Business and Trade (DBT). As Chief Executive Officer, you will be responsible for providing strategic leadership and direction for the organisation and will work closely with DBT to deliver the policy objectives of Ministers.



Matthew Taylor
Chair of The Fair
Work Agency

Thank you for your interest in this vital leadership role. As the first Chair of the Fair Work Agency, I am pleased to support the recruitment of a new CEO who will be absolutely critical in building a new organisation with integrity, clarity, and purpose. This is a unique opportunity to shape the future of workplace fairness in the UK—not through policy alone, but through the practical enforcement of employment rights.

The Fair Work Agency will play a critical role in ensuring that workers are treated fairly and that employers meet their legal obligations. It will support business who want to the right thing while coming down hard on those who consistently break the rules. This work is grounded in the belief that fairness at work is essential to a thriving economy and a just society.

We are seeking a leader who combines strategic insight with operational rigour—someone who can guide a skilled and committed team, build strong relationships across sectors, and deliver meaningful improvements for victims of labour exploitation, workers and employers alike.

If you share our commitment to justice, accountability, and continuous improvement, we look forward to your application. This is a chance to make a lasting impact on the lives of millions.



Caleb Deeks & Gavin Lambert
Directors General, DBT
(Hiring Managers)

We are delighted to welcome applications for the Chief Executive Officer of the Fair Work Agency (FWA) which will be one of the most exciting jobs in government. This is a pivotal moment for employment rights in the UK, and the creation of the FWA marks a bold step forward in delivering the Government's Plan to Make Work Pay.

We are looking for an exceptional leader who can build a new institution from the ground up, shape its culture, and deliver its mission with impact. As well as bringing together existing enforcement functions, building on their work to deliver excellent operational performance, you will be a visionary leader who can shape how the organisation implements the new powers and responsibilities set out in the Employment Rights Bill.

Alongside the Chair, you will represent the FWA at the highest levels of Government while also building brilliant relationships with stakeholders ranging from charities supporting victims of serious labour exploitation through to some of the biggest employers in the country.

We strongly welcome applications from candidates from all backgrounds, with different experiences and perspectives – this is a brilliant job, and we want a brilliant candidate!

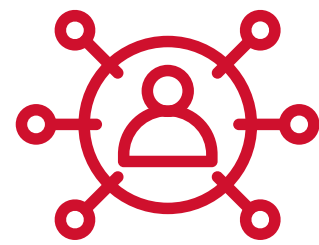
About The Fair Work Agency

Improving employment rights is a top priority for this Government. The Plan to Make Work Pay and The Employment Rights Bill currently going through Parliament is a once in a generation uplift in those rights, but there is no point increasing protections if they can't be enforced. This is why the Government is creating The Fair Work Agency (FWA).

The FWA is being established as a single, unified enforcement body for workers' rights in the UK. It will ensure that businesses who are trying to do the right thing are supported while clamping down on those who exploit their workers.

When it comes into being in April 2026, the FWA will bring together responsibility for the functions carried out by the Director of Labour Market Enforcement, the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate, the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, and HMRC's National Minimum Wage teams.

That is very much just the first stage though and Government has committed in the Employment Rights Bill that the new body will take on enforcement of a wider range of employment rights, including holiday and statutory sick pay, as well as using new powers such as the ability to bring civil proceedings on behalf of workers.

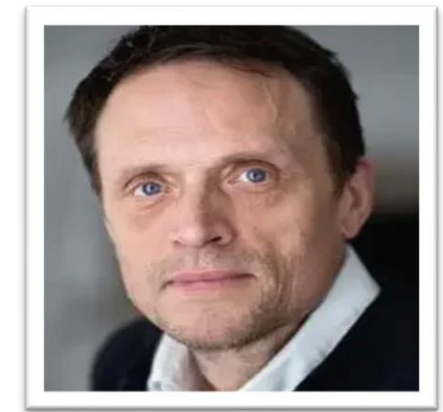


The role

This is a once in a generation opportunity to shape and lead a body that will be at the very heart of transforming the world of work for millions of people. As the Chief Executive of this new Agency, your role will be critical to shaping the FWA's early direction and ensuring it makes a real, positive difference to the lives of working people.

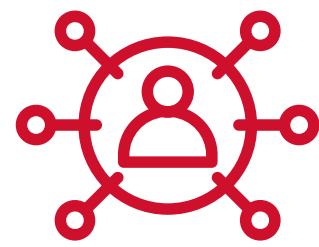
You will provide visionary leadership to promote fair employment practices, uphold workplace rights, ensure the Agency delivers its wide-ranging statutory functions effectively and lead the ongoing transformation of the organisation. With a starting budget of over £65m per year you will ensure the agency delivers value for money, focusing resources where they will have the most impact and constantly innovating to improve performance. You will be critical to working up plans for the Agency's further expansion, working with the Chair and Advisory Board who will help shape the FWA strategy going forward.

One of the really exciting things about this role is the breadth of responsibilities the FWA will have – it will have a sharp focus on protecting workers from serious labour abuse but also needs to work to support the vast majority of businesses who are trying to do the right thing to comply with the law. The CEO will be absolutely critical in ensuring that the FWA leadership has the full confidence of all of the many stakeholders who will need to be fully engaged if the agency is to meet Ministers' expectations.



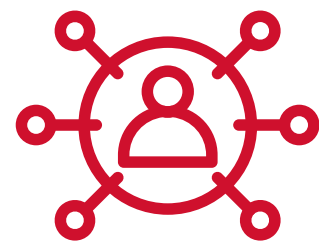
Please find a link below where Matthew shares more information about the role of the CEO for FWA.

[Interview with FWA Chair, Matthew Taylor](#)



Key Responsibilities

- **Strategic Leadership and Transformation:** Working with the Chair and Advisory Board to set and deliver the long-term strategy for the FWA, ensuring alignment with government policy. You will drive the transition from multiple enforcement bodies to a single, unified agency, planning for phase two expansion of powers and responsibilities as set out in the Employment Rights Bill.
- **Statutory Powers and Enforcement:** You will ensure that the powers of the body are used appropriately. This includes supporting businesses to become compliant in the first instance, while also deploying robust, intelligence-led enforcement where this is necessary. You will also play a critical role in the development and then deployment of new powers.
- **Financial Stewardship:** Manage a substantial budget, ensuring value for public money, compliance with government financial and accountability frameworks, and delivery of high standards of integrity and transparency. As the FWA grows the CEO will need to play a critical role in developing ways of assessing the value for money of different interventions, particularly critical given the range of activities (from upstream compliance work through to traditional enforcement) the agency will be responsible for.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Build and maintain strong, balanced relationships with stakeholders, including government, employers, workers, trade unions, and independent experts across the whole range of the agency's responsibilities. You will ensure effective engagement through the Advisory Board and act as the public face of the agency in national forums.



Key Responsibilities

- **Culture and People:** Champion a new, collaborative and innovative culture, uniting diverse public and civil service backgrounds who have traditionally taken different approaches to securing compliance and enforcement. You will inspire and lead a growing workforce, embedding continuous improvement and a drive for innovation across the agency.
- **Governance and Accountability:** Serve as principal advisor to the Advisory Board, supporting robust governance and ensuring compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. You will be personally accountable for safeguarding public funds and for the agency's operational effectiveness.
- **Operational Excellence and Risk Management:** Oversee all aspects of operational management, including financial controls, HR, and service delivery. You will identify and manage risks to the agency's operations, reputation, and statutory compliance, ensuring the FWA is effective from day one and ready for future growth.



Essential Criteria

- An experienced senior leader with evidence of successfully managing significant organisational change in a complex organisation, including creating and embedding a new culture.
- Proven track record of delivering significant innovation, demonstrating a creative and strategic approach to solving complex challenges across organisational boundaries and empowering others to embed a culture that promotes innovation and creativity.
- Good knowledge of the sector or a proven ability to quickly adapt to a new sector or environment, grasping complex issues, systems and stakeholder landscapes at speed.
- Experience of working with a diverse set of stakeholders across organisational boundaries, including an understanding of navigating the complexities of collaboration across government and private sector organisations.
- The ability to communicate effectively, inspiring confidence and credibility with a wide range of senior stakeholders, managing competing demands, adapting your communication style to suit different perspectives and priorities.
- Financial and commercial acumen, with experience of managing large budgets and delivering value for money and improved efficiency.



Salary £100,000 - £162,500

This role has a minimum assignment duration of 3 years. This is an expectation only; it is not something which is written into your terms and conditions or indeed which the employing organisation or you are bound by.

Standard Civil Service pay principles apply to existing civil servants: Those applying on promotion will receive either a 10% increase of their current basic salary or the pay band minimum (whichever is greater), for those applying on level transfer, there would be no salary uplift, in line with Civil Service pay rules.

DBT operates a hybrid working model. This provides us with greater flexibility around when, where, and how we work, in line with business needs – making sure we are supported by our leadership, the right culture, technology and workplaces to enable us all to work at our best.

As a member of the SCS, in reflection of your leadership responsibilities, you will be required to work a minimum of 60% of your contracted hours (averaged over the month) in the office or visiting stakeholders or businesses (3 days per week pro rata) and the rest of your time working from home.



Indicative Timeline

We will try and offer flexibility, if necessary, but it may not be possible to offer alternative dates for assessments or interviews. You are therefore expected to note the below timetable, exercising flexibility through the recruitment and selection process, in order to meet the dates given. Please note that these dates may be subject to change.

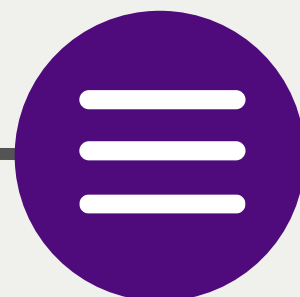
The anticipated timetable is as follows:

**23:55 Sunday,
30th, November**



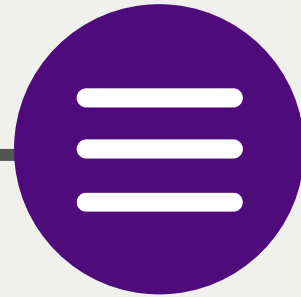
**Deadline for
applications**

**w/c 8th
December**



**Longlist results
expected by**

**w/c 5th
January**



**Shortlist results
expected by**

**14th or 15h
January**



SEE Assessment

**23rd January or
30th January**



Interviews

Selection Panel

The panel will be chaired by **Martin Spencer, Civil Service Commissioner** and will include:

- Gavin Lambert/Caleb Deeks, Directors General, DBT
- Matthew Taylor, Chair of The Fair Work Agency
- Jaee Samant, Director General, DBT

(In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to alter the membership of the panel, if this happens you will be informed at the earliest opportunity)

Please note:

Assessments are normally conducted during UK business hours, whereas interviews are likely to take place within the business hours of the role's time zone. If you are currently based in a different time zone to the role you are applying for, we will try to accommodate this but please be aware that you may need to conduct your assessments and/or interview during unsocial hours.



How to Apply

How to apply

Hays, an Executive Search firm, have been appointed to assist with this recruitment campaign. To apply for this post, you will need to submit documentation below via the following link, by no later than 23:55pm on Sunday 30th November 2025.

[Follow this link to apply](#)

If you have any issues accessing the link or questions regarding the documentation, please contact:

- Andrew Timlin: 07887777735, Andrew.Timlin@hays.com
- Owen Quant: Owen.quant@hays.com

Documentation:

1. A **CV** setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements. Please ensure you have provided reasons for any gaps within the last two years.
2. A **Supporting Statement** of around two pages of A4 explaining how you meet the requirements of the person specification as far as you are able to and please also take this opportunity to explain your motivations for applying.

Failure to submit both documents will mean the panel only have limited information on which to assess your application against the criteria in the person specification. Please ensure that both documents contain your full name.

Your Supporting Statement

This is your opportunity to give examples and show how your skills and experience fit the job requirements.

When writing a supporting statement, it is important that you:

- Read the job specification so you are clear about the job requirements. Structure your personal statement to reflect the essential criteria listed in the advert.
- Make sure you provide evidence against each of the listed criteria - i.e. 'experienced in leading high performing and diverse teams and promoting inclusivity.' When have you led a team, how large, what did you do to promote inclusivity, how did you handle diversity?
- Ensure any evidence you provide demonstrates the impact and result of your actions in that situation, provide statistical evidence where relevant.

For more information click [here](#)

Guidance on the use of AI

- Please review the guidance at [Artificial intelligence and recruitment | Civil Service Careers](#) to understand the acceptable use of AI for your application.
- Before you submit an application, we will ask you to confirm the information you provide is true and accurate. More details about this will be provided in the application form and we may reject applications where AI is used inappropriately at any stage of the process.



Recruitment Process

Longlist

Longlisting is made on the basis of merit, following the closure of the advert, the panel will assess the evidence presented by all applicants against the advertised essential criteria. The highest rated applicants will be invited to a pre-liminary interview with Hays.

Shortlist

Shortlisting for interview is made on the basis of merit. The selection panel will assess the evidence presented by all applicants against the advertised essential criteria and the highest rated applicants will be invited to interview.

Meeting with senior key stakeholders for FWA

If successful at shortlist, you will be invited to have a short meeting with two key senior stakeholders for FWA. This will take place mid January ahead of interview and will form part of the assessment process with feedback being shared with the interview panel.

Assessments & informal conversations

If you are shortlisted, you will be asked to take part in a 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.

Further details on what assessments will entail, can be found here: www.scs-assessments.co.uk. Full details of the assessment process will be provided to shortlisted candidates at the earliest opportunity.

You will also have the opportunity to speak to Matthew Taylor or Gavin Lambert/Caleb Deeks prior to the final interview to learn more about the role and the organisation. Please note this is not part of the formal assessment process.

Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to attend a virtual panel in order to have a more in-depth discussion of your previous experience and professional competence in relation to the criteria set out in the essential criteria.

As part of the interview, you will be asked to prepare and present a short presentation, you will be advised of the presentation topic in the interview invitation.

Selection and Feedback

Regardless of the outcome, Hays will notify all candidates as soon as possible. We will send you a copy of any report for any assessment that you may have undergone as part of the recruitment process.

Feedback will only be provided to candidates who reached interview.

Reserve List

If we receive more applications from suitable candidates than we have vacancies at this time, we may hold suitable applicants on a reserve list for 12 months, and future vacancies requiring the same skills and experience could be offered to candidates on the reserve list without a new competition. We will contact you to confirm if your application is to be held on a reserve list.

Diversity Monitoring

As part of the online application process, you will be asked a number of diversity-related questions. If you do not wish to provide a declaration on any of the particular characteristics, you will have the option to select 'prefer not to say'. The information you provide when submitting your application will help us monitor our progress towards the Civil Service becoming the most inclusive employer.

Our DBT Values



Our company values are essentially the fundamental beliefs that guide our organisation's decision-making and overall approach to business. They serve as the bedrock of the company culture, shaping how our employees interact with each other, stakeholders, and the wider world. Here's a breakdown of what company values are and their significance.



Excellent

Our work matters. It makes a difference to people's lives across the country. We combine excellence with pace to maximise the impact we have.



Confident

We have a distinctive perspective, informed by our work with business. We make a compelling case for what we want to do, and don't let obstacles get in the way.



Connected

We actively partner with businesses across the UK and across the world. We are accessible and we help them navigate Government, using our strong relationships to get things done.



Collaborative

We are one department, bringing together teams from across the UK and across the world. We ensure everyone is supported and can see how their work makes a difference.



Benefits of Working for DBT

DBT is a rewarding place to work, offering:



Job satisfaction: an almost unparalleled opportunity to make a significant contribution to UK and economic growth. An opportunity to meet and form relationships with the most senior stakeholders in a thriving and dynamic region of the world.



Unique and exciting roles within government.



Competitive salaries and benefits packages: including prestigious accommodation, support staff, personal and family travel and education support.



Learning and development opportunities.



Flexible working options.



Generous annual leave and bank holiday allowance.

[Civil Service Pension Scheme](#). Your pension is a valuable part of our reward package, with contribution rates currently up to 28.97%.



Family friendly policies including maternity, adoption or shared parental leave, available with up to 26 weeks full pay, followed by 13 weeks statutory pay and a further 13 weeks unpaid.



2 weeks full pay available for paternity leave.



An equal and diverse workplace.



Season Ticket Loan and Cycle to Work Scheme



Diversity and Inclusion in DBT

We are committed to inclusive and diverse leadership, and we welcome applications from under-represented groups and those based across the whole of the UK.

To learn more please see the [Civil Service People Plan](#) and [Civil Service D&I Strategy](#).

We treat everyone openly, fairly and equally, and we collaborate proactively with a can-do attitude, inspiring others to want to engage with us. We respect each other's views regardless of background, and we do not discriminate. We are one department, we have a shared culture across our diverse, global organisation. We celebrate our diversity of thought, coming from different backgrounds, places and experiences to deliver the best for the UK, our markets and our customers. And we are better for it.

Staff Networks

With a multitude of networks, there's something for EVERYONE. Our networks support equality and showcase examples of inclusivity across the organisation. Each one has a senior champion to ensure they are heard at the top of the organisation.

Our networks pride themselves on working together, getting under the skin of intersectionality, championing allyship and education. Turning these collaborations into action plans which lead to real change.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Department is recognised as a Disability Confident Leader. Please follow this [link](#) for information.



We are committed to attracting, recruiting and retaining disabled people and supporting them in achieving their full potential.

If you need a change, or what we call a reasonable adjustment, to be made so that you can make your application, you should contact Andrew.timlin@hays.com or Owen.quant@hays.com as soon as possible before the closing date to discuss your needs.

Furthermore, we are also able to offer reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment process at assessment and interview stage. For example, this may be a consideration around wheelchair access at interview, or adjustments for neurodiversity (e.g. ADHD, autism, dyslexia or dyspraxia) when extra time can be offered for written tests or alterations to the environment in which you're interviewed.



1. Can I apply if not currently a Civil Servant?

Yes. This role is open to suitably qualified people in the external market and to existing civil servants and those in accredited Non-Departmental Bodies.

2. Is this role suitable for part-time working?

No, this role is available for full-time, or flexible working arrangements (including pre-existing job share partnerships). If you wish to discuss your needs in more detail, please get in touch.

3. Will the role involve travel?

Regular national travel will be required for this role across FWA locations.

4. Where will the role be based?

If successful you will be based in Birmingham, Cardiff, Darlington, Edinburgh, Salford or Nottingham. Even though your role will be based from one of these offices, you will be travelling regularly.

5. Security Clearance and eligibility:

This role requires Security Clearance (SC) and you must hold/be willing to undertake clearance to this level.

This is not a reserved post. Certain posts, notably those concerned with security and intelligence, might be reserved for British citizens, but this will not normally prevent access to a wide range of developmental opportunities within the Civil Service.

6. Can I claim back any expenses incurred during the recruitment process?

No. Unfortunately we will not be able to reimburse you, except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance.

The qualifying criteria needed to apply for SC:

A resident in the UK for three out of the last five years immediately prior to your application. Please note: at least one year of this must have been a consecutive twelve-month period, unless you have served overseas with HM Forces, or in some other official capacity as a representative of His Majesty's Government, or have lived overseas as a result of your parent's or partner's Government employment.



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

The following groups are broadly eligible to apply:

- UK nationals
- Nationals of the Republic of Ireland
- Nationals of Commonwealth countries*
- Nationals from the European Union (EU), European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland with (or eligible for) status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS).
- Relevant EU, EEA, Swiss or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service
- Relevant EU, EEA, Swiss or Turkish nationals who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service
- Certain family members of the relevant EU, EEA, Switzerland and Turkish nationals

*Commonwealth citizens not yet in the UK, who have no right of abode in the UK and who do not have leave to enter the UK are ineligible to apply.

For further information on whether you are eligible to apply, please visit GOV.uk.

8. What do I do if I want to make a complaint?

The law requires that selection for appointment 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.

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 Georgia Defeo (at SCSRecruitment@businessandtrade.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 at:

<https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/contact-us/>

9. What should I do if I think I have a conflict of interest?

Candidates must note the requirement to declare any interests that might cause questions to be raised about their approach to the business of the Department. If you believe that you may have a conflict of interest, please contact Andrew Timlin, Andrew.timlin@hays.com or Owen Quant, Owen.quant@hays.com before submitting your application.

Thank You



Department for
Business & Trade

If you wish to discuss the role in more detail
before submitting an application, please
contact Hays on:



Our work is governed by the Civil Service
Commission



Andrew.timlin@hays.com