



The Office of the Commissioner for  
Public Appointments in Scotland



Take your seat  
Scotland's public  
bodies need you

[www.publicappointments.org](http://www.publicappointments.org)

Imagine where we'd be without our public bodies.

**We'd have**

- no safe drinking water
- no National Health Service
- no national museums or galleries
- no-one controlling pollution or protecting our countryside.

Scottish Water, the ambulance service, National Museums of Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage – these are just a few of the public bodies we rely on in our everyday lives in Scotland.

And they need people like you on their boards

Public bodies are involved in a huge range of activities, from crofting to legal aid, to education, sports, tourism and social care. Some provide independent advice to the government, while others deliver public services like healthcare.

*They make an enormous contribution to the quality of our lives in Scotland.*

Public bodies are set up by government, but are independent in carrying out their day-to-day work.

Their work is overseen by a board or committee whose members are normally appointed by Ministers.

It is important that the boards of our public bodies reflect the whole of our society. They need people like you.



## What is a public appointment?

*Public appointments are key roles on the boards of public bodies.*

As non-executive posts, they are not involved with day-to-day management or operations.

As part of the board, non-executives must make sure

- ministers' policies are translated into action, and
- public resources are used effectively to deliver the service or advice the body provides.

In particular, as non-executive positions, public appointments normally involve

- making independent judgements about strategy and resources
- supporting the management in its leadership of the body
- monitoring the management's performance on behalf of the public.

## What's in it for me?

Public bodies deal with issues that affect our whole society. By applying to sit on their boards you have a chance to contribute to the way our society is run and the way public money is spent, for the benefit of everyone.

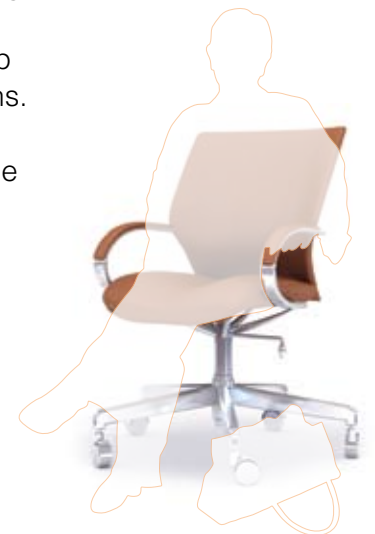
*Public appointments are a way to make your voice heard, in a place where it can really make a difference.*

They also provide excellent opportunities to broaden your own experience and networks and develop your skills.

Some appointments are paid, others are not. Even if you give your time for free, you will be able to claim reasonable expenses - such as travel expenses and carer costs - when you attend board meetings.

You may find a public appointment can help with your career development or future plans.

More than anything, board members find the experience and satisfaction they get from the role is invaluable.



## Who should apply?

*Public appointments are open to everyone.*

Any person with the right skills, knowledge and qualities for a post can be chosen through an open application process. It's no different to applying for a job. What is different is the involvement of an objective, independent person to make sure that every application is treated fairly and properly.

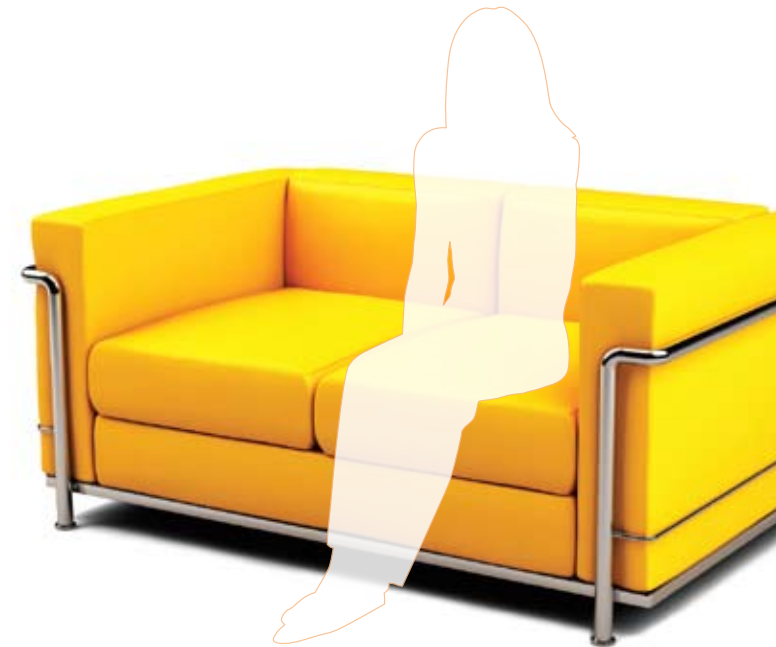
Public appointments are not given as rewards. You don't need to be well-known or politically active.

You don't need to be invited to apply and all applications are treated on an equal basis. Whatever your background, your application will be welcomed and valued.



**It's important that the boards of our public bodies reflect the whole of our society. But for that to happen, people from all perspectives, backgrounds and communities - people like you - need to apply.**

If you would like to know more about people who sit on boards - and hear what they say about their roles - you can find them in the board members section of our website at [www.publicappointments.org](http://www.publicappointments.org).



## I've never been on a board before, can I still apply?

**Yes you can.**

*Boards need a balance of expertise and perspectives.*

In practical terms, this means that for some posts it will help to have board experience, and for others it might not be important. It just depends on what's needed by a particular board at a particular time.

It's important that our public bodies reflect our diverse population. To achieve this, it is absolutely vital that we get applications from people with new ideas and fresh perspectives.

There will be certain skills and knowledge that are needed for a given post. But these could be gained through your work, hobbies, volunteering or home life. There's no set pattern you have to follow.



## I think I'd like to apply for a public appointment. What can I do to prepare?

Obviously, different roles may need different skills. But there are some general activities that will help you prepare, and might help you decide whether a board position is for you.

To encourage more people into public appointments we are offering various development opportunities, such as:

- short courses about the work of boards and the role of board members
- workshops on how to apply
- mentoring programmes

Would you like to take part?

Find out more at  
**[www.publicappointments.org](http://www.publicappointments.org)**



## Where can I find out more?

If you would like to know more about public appointments, including

- opportunities to develop your skills or experience
- useful tips on applications and interviews
- current vacancies

Please visit our website at  
**[www.publicappointments.org](http://www.publicappointments.org)**

For more information, or if you'd like information in an alternative format (such as braille or audio tape):

email us at **[diversity@publicappointments.org](mailto:diversity@publicappointments.org)**  
or call us on **0131 718 6058**

We'd love to hear from you.



The Office of the Commissioner for  
Public Appointments in Scotland

Equality and  
Human Rights  
Commission

Scotland  
[equalityhumanrights.com](http://equalityhumanrights.com)

This leaflet has been produced by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland (OCPAS) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).



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