



Local Authority Graduate Planner Recruitment 2025

Recruitment Competition for
graduates, final-year undergraduate
and post-graduate students

Information Booklet

Applications due: 12pm on 01/07/2025



Rialtas Áitiúil Éireann
Local Government Ireland

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PART 1

Local Government Graduate Planner Recruitment campaign 2025 at a glance

We are recruiting graduates from 10 skill areas

We are recruiting suitable candidates to become Graduate Planners with 26 of the 31 City & County Councils in Ireland.

The Local Government Ireland Graduate Planner Programme offers graduate planners a rewarding and impactful career in one of 26 of Ireland's city or county councils. As a graduate planner in a city or county council, you'll be part of a dynamic, supportive and forward-thinking team that's dedicated to shaping our towns, cities and rural areas. You'll get the opportunity to work on innovative projects that positively influence the built environment, support local economies, and enhance the quality of life of local communities

Why Local Government?

As a Graduate Planner in a Local Authority, you have the opportunity to make a lasting impact on the future development of our communities. While furthering your career as a professional planner.

What does a City or County Council Planning Department do?

The planning department within Local Authorities regulate and manage development within their county boundaries. Planning departments are responsible for building sustainable communities, creating detailed plans that act as a framework to guide future development, as well as providing expert planning advice, processing planning applications, and enforcing regulations to ensure sustainable growth in our cities and towns.



Which City & County Councils will be hiring Graduate Planners

26 of the 31 City & County Councils will be hiring Graduate Planners as part of this recruitment campaign. For the purposes of the recruitment campaign the country and the 26 Councils are divided up into 5 regions. You can apply for a Graduate Planner position in only two regions. Within each region you will be able to apply for up to a maximum of 5 local authorities within each region).

Who can apply??

You can apply if you are:

- a recent graduate with an honour in a level 8 Honours degree or higher in Planning, or
- due to graduate this year and expect to achieve an honour in a level 8 Honours degree or higher

and

- entitled to work in the Republic of Ireland.

Existing local authority staff members can also apply if you hold the necessary qualifications detailed above.

Applicants should also possess the following attributes,

- Passion for shaping communities and tackling town planning challenges and a collaborative mindset
- Strong communication, analytical, and problem-solving skills

It is highly desirable that applicants should at the time of commencing employment hold a current valid unendorsed driving licence in respect of Category B vehicles and have access to your own vehicle. It should be noted by applicants that if you are assigned to a rural County Council your employer will require that you are able to undertake work related trips using your own vehicle as soon as possible after commencing employment.



Applications from people who have a disability or impairment

Applications from people with disabilities or impairments are welcome. If you require any appropriate arrangements to be put in place to ensure an effective online assessment and/or interview, please give details of the required arrangements that need to be put in place for you, when you complete the online application form.

You should note that any information you provide on the application form will be treated with the utmost confidence by the LGMA, the local authorities that will be organising the interview(s) and the local authorities to whom you will be assigned and who will ultimately be your employer.

It will only be used for the purposes of ensuring that the recruitment process best suits your needs.

Why should I apply?

Local government is a great place to start and grow your career. The main benefits to working as a Graduate Planner in a City or County Council include:

- Starting salary of €38,956 with annual increments
- 24 days annual leave per year
- Flexible work arrangements
- Comprehensive mentoring and structured development programme for career growth as a Planner in Local Government
- A structured career pathway that allows you to progress in your chosen career as a professional Planner
- Supportive work environment with a focus on well-being

What do I need to do to apply?

To apply, we suggest you do the following

- 1) Check you have the necessary qualifications for the Graduate Planner post
- 2) Select the 2 regions and the local authorities within these regions you would like to apply to work
- 3) If not an EU/EEA or UK citizen check that you have a valid visa stamp that allows you to take up employment or an employment permit to work in Ireland
- 5) Fill in the online form

We provide full details of each step later in this booklet.



PART 2

Applications and the recruitment process

The Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) is co-ordinating the Local Authority Graduate Programme recruitment campaign on behalf of the 26 individual City & County Councils in the Republic participating in this national recruitment competition. If successful, you will be offered an employment contract with an individual City or County Council

Eligibility qualifications and competence to compete

To be eligible for these vacancies, applicants must be able to show the following.

1. Graduate status

On or before the date on which a local authority makes you a formal job offer you must provide formal documentation confirming that you have recently achieved an honour in an honours degree (Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications).

2. Undergraduates and post-graduate students

At the time of application, if you are still a final-year undergraduate or postgraduate student, you can still apply and complete all stages of the application and recruitment process. If you are a final year student and yet to be assigned a grade, you will be asked on the application form to detail the award your course of study will lead to and what grade you expect to obtain when you do graduate. However, you must have proof of having achieved the required award level required (i.e.) an honour in a level 8 honours degree or masters. You must show this to the potential employer as part of the normal pre-employment checks process before they can make any job offer to you. If you can't prove at the job offer stage that you have achieved at least an honour in an honours degree or masters, a job offer will not be made.

Applicants will not receive any job offers if they have been:

- asked to repeat exams or
- asked to resubmit elements of their final year course work so that their final results can be issued by the university or educational institute where they did the course of study

Applicants must ensure that they are in a position to commence employment when required by the employing Council. As part of your employment you must ensure that you will be able to physically attend the Council offices, on a full-time basis, to begin with.

3. Competency

You must also be able to show at interview that you have the competencies for the role of a Graduate Planner. These competencies are defined in Appendix 1 of this document.

Certain citizenship requirements that will determine whether you can apply or not.

Applicants must, by the date of any job offer, fit into one of the categories below

Citizen of the European Union

You are a citizen of one of the 27 member countries of the European Union

Citizen of EEA

You are a citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of:

- the European Union
- Iceland
- Liechtenstein
- Norway

Citizen of the UK

You are a citizen of the United Kingdom (UK)

Switzerland

You are a citizen of Switzerland as defined in the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons

Spouse or child

You are a non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or UK or Swiss citizen and have a stamp 4 visa

International protection

You are:

- a person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015, or
- a family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification, and
- someone with a stamp 4 visa

Parent or dependent

You are a non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in:

- an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland, and
- have a stamp 4 visa

Valid Department of Justice visa stamp

You must hold a valid visa stamp issued by the Department of Justice which clearly allows you to reside in the country and seek employment, for example, stamp 1g.

Existing local authority staff

If you are a current employee of a City or County Council and possess an honour in a level 8 honours degree in Planning or higher, then you can apply for the position of a Graduate Planner, as long as your current post has a salary scale that starts below the starting salary for a Graduate Planner (i.e.) €38,956.

Ex-public servants who previously availed of incentivised early retirement or a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme

You must tell us if you have previously availed of:

- a public service scheme of incentivised early retirement, and, or
- the collective voluntary redundancy scheme. This collective scheme is detailed in Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013. You must tell us if you are entitled to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment. You must also tell us where you have received a payment-in-lieu for service in any Public Service employment.

Making an application

To apply for the Local Authority Graduate Programme, go to www.localgovernmentjobs.ie/graduates and click on and fill out the online application form. The application form asks for details about you, your education and your previous periods of employment. It also asks you to choose the local authorities you are interested in applying for.

You can apply for a Graduate Planner position in more than one local authority.

Number of Councils that you can apply for	
Number of regions in which you can apply for a Graduate Planner position	Maximum number of Councils within a region to which you can apply for a Graduate Planner position
2 regions (max)	5 local authorities in each region (max)

You must select an order of priority (1 to 5 with 1 being your highest priority) for the City or County Council chosen in each of your two regions. You can choose to only apply for one region, but it does reduce your chances of securing employment as a Graduate Planner. However, you should not select a City or County Council as one of your 5 choices if you have no intention of taking up employment with that Council.

The LGMA will endeavour to ensure that following your interviews the Council you will be assigned to will match your choice of employers. However, unless you score the highest marks at the interview and are placed high up on the panel, we cannot guarantee that you will be assigned to either your no 1 or 2 choices.

Regions and City & County Councils in those regions

Dublin Region	Leinster Region
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dublin City Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kildare County Council • Carlow County Council • Wicklow County Council • Laois County Council • Louth County Council
Eastern Region	Southern Region
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cavan County Council • Kilkenny County Council • Offaly County Council • Wexford County Council • Monaghan County Council • Longford County Council • Westmeath County Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limerick City & County Council • Cork City Council • Tipperary County Council • Waterford City and County Council • Kerry County Council
Western Region	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donegal County Council • Galway City Council • Mayo County Council • Clare County Council • Leitrim County Council • Galway County Council • Roscommon County Council • Sligo County Council 	

Remember the maximum number of regions for which you can apply for a position is 2 regions. The maximum number of locations within those regions where you can apply for a position is 5 local authorities in each region. You must give an order of priority (1 to 5 with 1 being your highest priority) for the local authorities within each two regions.

If you are successful at the shortlisting stage, you will be called forward for an interview. There will be one interview for each region you apply for. So, if you chose two regions you can expect to be called for two interviews, one in each region.

It will be the responsibility of one Council in each of the 5 regions to organise the interviews on behalf of all the Councils in that region. The Council that takes responsibilities for organising the interviews for a region will be termed the regional lead authority.

Closing date for applications

You must submit your application by **12pm** on **01/07/2025**

Each applicant may only submit one application. The application is an online form, and you must complete the form in full before you submit it. The LGMA will not be able to accept any applications received after the **12pm** deadline on **01/07/2025**.

The only applications that will be considered are the completed online application forms. The LGMA will not accept any application submitted by e-mail or in the post, nor will we accept and CVs or additional supporting documents.

Online application can be made via the link to the online application portal which can be found on the following web page;

[Local Government Graduate Programme - Local Government Jobs](#)

Shortlisting of applications

If you submit your application through the online application portal prior the deadline the LGMA will acknowledge receipt of your application.

The LGMA then will carry out a shortlisting exercise to (i) identify those applicants that do not possess the required minimum eligibility criteria; and (ii) establish an order of merit for the individual applicants that will be called forward for interview in each of the 5 regions.

Graduates who are successful at the shortlisting stage will proceed to a regional interview stage.

If the LGMA receives an exceedingly high number of valid applications, then we reserve the right to call forward for interview in any of the 5 regions only a sufficient number of applicants to fill the number of vacancies in that region. We may later shortlist applicants lower down on the order of merit who were not shortlisted in the first round.

Interview

Those who are successful following shortlisting will be invited to interview. Interviews will be arranged and managed on a regional basis. The regions for interviews are:

- Dublin
- Eastern
- Leinster
- Western
- Southern

Interviews will place remotely using Microsoft Teams or some other suitable video conferencing platform provided by the regional lead authority for each of the 5 regions.

Based on the interviews, a panel of qualified candidates will be established. These candidates will then be assigned to individual local authorities.

In assigning successful candidates to local authorities, the regional lead authority will consider:

- what the candidate said was their preference when they filled in their application form
- the position on the panel/order of merit of the applicants based on their performance at interview. (The panel is the regional order of merit that is created after interview. Applicants are ranked according to the scores they are awarded as a result of their performance at interview. Applicants will be drawn from the panel in order.)

The regional lead authority will let individual applicants know to which vacancy they are being assigned.

The regional lead authority will provide a copy of the Graduate's application form to the prospective employer.

Once the local authority knows who their assigned applicant, they will undertake the normal pre-employment checks prior to issuing the contract.

The employing local authority will conduct all the necessary checks on:

- qualifications
- birth certificates
- Details of valid visa stamps/employment permit status
- Garda vetting (where required for the post)
- health
- character and references
- Details of drivers license held

These pre-employment checks will need to be completed successfully before an employment contract can be signed.

Terms and conditions of employment

Successful candidates will be offered a three-year fixed-term contract. If you are offered an employment contract, you will be expected to start in 2025.

The conditions of service for the Graduate Planner recruits will be as follows:

- Annual leave: 24 days annual leave
- Working hours: 35 hours (this does not include lunch breaks)
- Starting salary of €38,956 with annual increments for the duration of the contract (subject to satisfactory performance).

Further Employment opportunities once you are employed

Graduate Planners, once employed for at least two years in that post can apply for any advertised Assistant Planner posts that are advertised in the sector.





PART 3

Graduate Planner Development Programme

As a Graduate Planner recruit you will take part in a structured development Programme which will be delivered over the duration of your contract.

This programme has been designed to meet the demands of Graduate Planner entrants to local government. The aim of the development programme is to make sure that at the end of the three years you will have developed the necessary skills needed to advance your career on to the next level of Planner with your employer (i.e.) Assistant Planner.

Each Council will invest in the training and development of the Graduates Planners they recruit. Your employer will provide supports and experience that the Graduates will need to fulfil your potential.

Main features of the Graduate Planner development programme

The main features and components of the three-year Graduate development programme include:

- Block start for all Graduates
- Group induction and orientation (centrally delivered) once all Graduate Planners commence employment
- Enrolment in the suite of the Planning training courses developed to meet the specific needs of Local Government Planners by the sectors Planning Services Training Group (PSTG)
- Dedicated mentoring supports from senior planners
- Competency based interview preparation prior to applying for an Assistant Planner vacancy

Appendix 1 – Competencies

Competency skills and knowledge needed by Graduate Planners are as follows,

Purpose and Change

- You can demonstrate an understanding of the role played by a local authority on behalf of its citizens and the type of work related to their chosen skills area that local authorities engage in.
- You can provide an example of how your qualification and experience to date can be applied to the role of a Graduate Planner?

Delivering Results

- You can provide an example of where they had to problem solve and contribute to successful solutions of problems encountered.
- You can provide an example of where they have had to apply their academic qualification to delivering results as part of a team or as an individual.
- You can provide an example of where they have delivered quality work and/or academic project to prescribed deadlines.

Personal Performance

- You can demonstrate the ability engage in two-way dialogue with interviewers and communicate effectively.
- Display an understanding of how your skills and knowledge can contribute positively to the efficient delivery of services to the citizen.
- You can provide an example of where you have worked effectively with a variety of colleagues in a team.

Personal Effectiveness

- You can provide an example of when you have been given responsibility where others were relying upon them doing what they were asked.
- You can provide an example of where you have worked to deadlines and demonstrated resilience when setbacks were encountered.
- You can provide an example of when you have had to show high levels of initiative, ownership of an assigned tasks and demonstrated self-motivation and self-sufficiency.

In addition, interviewers will be tasked with exploring you the interviewee's knowledge and understanding of planning and how planning relates to the functions of a local Council.

Knowledge & Understanding of Skills Area being interviewed for

- Clarify with you the applicant which of your qualifications is most relevant to the skills area they have applied for? Can they explain why they believe it is relevant?
- You can display an understanding of what role the Planning section of a Council plays and what types of services does it provide to the public?
- You can identify what in your opinion is the most important part/aspect of the role of a Council's Planning Officer?
- You can provide an example of when you applied your academic learning or skills in an actual real life/work/academic situation?





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