



**Local Authority
Graduate Recruitment Programme (Supplementary)**

Information Booklet for Applicants

3rd October 2018

Local Authority Graduate Recruitment Programme

INTRODUCTION

The Local Government sector in Ireland is made up of 31 Local Authorities and three Regional Assemblies. Local Authorities are the closest and most accessible form of Government to citizens. They have responsibility for delivery of a wide range of services in their local area with a focus on making cities, towns and countryside attractive places to live, work and invest. These services generally include housing; planning; infrastructure; environmental protection; and the provision of recreation and amenities and community infrastructure. Local Authorities also play a key role in supporting economic development and enterprise at a local level.

As the business, economic and social environment becomes more complex and demanding, there is an increasing need to ensure that a wider range of skills is available within each Local Authority. The sector is looking for people with the potential to take on high level responsibilities for the delivery of public services and the analysis of public policy issues to join their 3-year Graduate Development Programme.

The environment within which this role operates is very complex, and high administrative standards are required to meet the considerable challenges of the present time. Citizens and businesses rightly expect continuous improvement in services which are delivered faster, better and more cost effectively.

The graduate opportunities will arise in the following 11 Local Authorities,

- Carlow County Council
- Cork County Council
- Kildare County Council
- Kilkenny County Council
- Limerick City & County Council
- Longford County Council
- Meath County Council
- Tipperary County Council
- Waterford City & County Council

- Wexford County Council
- Wicklow County Council

Successful candidates will be graduates who have a relevant qualification and strong interest in any of the following five skills areas:

1. Economic Enterprise and Business Development
2. Project & Programme Management
3. Innovation, Strategy & Change Management
4. HR Management
5. Communications and Marketing
6. Data Analytics and data metrics

Terms & Conditions

Graduates who are successful at the final regional interview stage will be (subject to verification of the candidate's results transcripts) be offered a three-year fixed term contract. The conditions of service for the graduate recruits will be as follows,

- Salary - €29,637 (single point salary scale)
- Annual leave – 24 days
- Working hours – 37 hours net of lunch breaks

Graduates are recruited on a single point salary scale and are to be considered as analogous to local authority Grade IV administrative staff.

Further Information on Skills Areas in which the Local Authorities are looking to recruit Graduates

Each of the six skills areas and how they relate to the work of Local Authorities can be described as follows,

1. Economic Enterprise and Business Development

Local Authorities have always played a key role in supporting local enterprise and helping small and medium enterprise to grow. This is in addition to the provision of various Local Authority services to non-domestic customers. The Government, in order to leverage the experiences of both the Local Authorities and the County & City Enterprise Boards formally (in April 2014) launched the 31 Local Enterprise Offices (LEO's) in each Local Authority.

The LEO's represent a transformation of the support for small enterprise across every county. Each LEO is tasked with developing a local plan for boosting enterprise. The ambition is to maximise entrepreneurship and job creation at local level. Key targets in the local plan will be new business start-ups, business expansions and jobs created or sustained as well as wider economic impacts such as exports, mentoring, training and enterprise promotion. The Local Authorities will also bring new initiatives and opportunities for supporting local enterprise. In addition to the work of the LEOs other business units within Local Authorities are seeking to deepen their economic and business development focus.

Graduates with qualifications in and a strong interest in Economic Enterprise and Business Development can expect to improve their competency by becoming involved in the important work of these business units in developing and deepening their business community facing focus in the coming years. Applicants interested in a position with a LEO should note that if assigned to a rural local authority they will need to be in a possession of full driver's license (with no endorsements) and be able to provide their own transport as work in rural LEOs may result in work related travel within the County. Local Authority staff who use their own transport in the course work related travel are reimbursed at the prescribed public sector rates for travel & subsistence expenses.

2. Project and Programme Management

Local authorities utilise a wide variety of time defined projects in order to achieve operational and strategic goals. The adoption of single and multi-disciplinary project teams occurs in nearly all the business areas of local authorities. Projects can range from large and smaller scale capital investment infrastructure projects to organisational and business process change projects aimed at improving outputs and outcomes for the local population.

Graduates with qualifications in and a strong interest in the areas of project and programme management can expect to improve their competency by becoming part

of an existing project team or part of a start-up project team in the local authority area where they gain a placement.

3. Innovation Strategy and Change Management

In a time of widespread change local authorities, no more than any other public body in Ireland is faced with having to examine how they deliver their services and whether current practice is the best way to deliver these services and are these services really what the public wants?

The Local Government Reform Act, 2014 provides for the necessary changes to local authority functions, structures, funding, performance and governance to achieve the overall vision of a local government system that is the main vehicle for public service delivery at local level, leads economic, social and community development and represents citizens and communities effectively and accountably.

Graduates with qualifications in or a strong interest in the areas of innovation and change management can expect to improve their competency by becoming part of an existing project team or part of a start-up project team in the local authority area tasked with examining existing business processes and implementing change where they gain a placement.

4. HR Management

Local Authorities are at the forefront in the ongoing process of modernisation in the public service, operating in an environment where standards and citizen expectations are very high, coupled with significantly reduced resources since 2008. The demand for quick and accurate responses, comprehensive information, greater transparency, accountability and value for money has increased and focuses attention on the most effective use of one of the key resources of the Local Authorities, their employees. A need exists within the sector to continually drive organisational performance improvement including employee contribution to such performance.

Graduates with qualifications and or a strong interest in the areas of Human Resource Management or Human Resource Development can expect to improve their competency by becoming part of an existing HR section in the Local Authority where they gain a placement.

5. Communications and Marketing

Given the necessity for change there is a need for Local Authorities to communicate the changes being undertaken and the need for such changes to the public and local business communities. Improving the effectiveness of Local Authority's communication and ensuring greater utilisation of new technologies and media to disseminate knowledge about the work and vital role of Local Authorities in local communities will be vital to improving public service delivery at the local level.

Graduates with qualifications in and a strong interest in the areas of communications, marketing and social media can expect to improve their competency by becoming part of an existing communications team or part of a start-up communications team in the Local Authority area where they gain a placement.

6. *Data Analytics and Data Metrics*

Local Authorities, in common with most other businesses are tasked with future planning for service provision. In order to effectively deliver services Local Authorities will be required to gather population and customer data in order to determine current and expected needs. Data analysis of obtained raw data and converting it into information useful for decision-making is a key component of evidence-based policy and service provision.

It is anticipated that graduates recruited in this skills stream will be involved, as part of a team, in the development of suitable metrics which can be used to report on service delivery levels.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

In order to be eligible applicants must,

1. on or before the 31 December, 2018 have recently achieved a first or second class primary (2.2 minimum) honours degree (level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications), and
2. demonstrate the competencies outlined in Appendix II

Selection for these positions involves a demanding application and assessment process that may take place over a period of time. The onus is on the candidate to ensure that they satisfy the essential eligibility requirements for these posts. Admission to the competition does not imply acceptance that a candidate is eligible to compete in the competition.

Certain Restrictions on Eligibility

Citizenship Requirement

Applicants should note that only citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) may be appointed to the advertised position, should they come under consideration. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Swiss citizens under EU agreements may also apply. Applicants must therefore meet this eligibility requirement at the time they are being considered for appointment.

Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider public service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.

Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the public service by any public service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. Thereafter the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-employment. People

who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility) and the Minister's consent will have to be secured prior to employment by any public service body.

Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government (Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013)

The Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013 introduced a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for Local Authorities. In accordance with the terms of the *Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants* dated 28 June 2012 as detailed above, it is a specific condition of that VER Scheme that persons will not be eligible for re-employment in any Public Service body [as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011 and the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012] for a period of 2 years from their date of departure under this Scheme. Thereafter, the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-employment. These conditions also apply in the case of engagement/employment on a contract for service basis (either as a contractor or as an employee of a contractor).

Declaration:

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a public service scheme of incentivised early retirement and/or the collective agreement outlined above. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

Applicants must complete the standard application form provided by the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA). The form will require that all applicants provide the following information,

- Name & contact details
- Qualifications obtained and educational history
- Details on previous employment history

- Confirmation of which vacancies in 11 local authorities (up to a maximum of 5 in each of the skills areas) you are applying for
- A short text-based description of how you believe your qualification is relevant to the skills area(s) you are applying for?
- Complete the signed declaration confirming that you haven't availed of a public service redundancy scheme or incentivised early retirement.

Once submitted applicants will be asked to undergo some or all of the following processes as part of the recruitment process,

- shortlisting based on the relevance of your qualification to the skills area being applied for;
- a competitive interview;
- any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

Candidates successful at the interview stage were to be placed on a panel(s) from which future vacancies may be filled. The panels for each of the four skills areas will be active for 12 months with individual local authorities being able to fill any vacancies which arise post commencement up to a cut-off point of 9 months.

In which local authorities do the vacancies exist?

Applicants who believe they match the eligibility criteria will be asked to indicate which of the six skills areas they wish to be considered for and select (in order of preference) those local authorities where the posts exist in the skills area they are applying for. Details of the local authorities where vacancies are available for each of the six skills area is provided in the application form.

What is the LGMA and what is its role in this recruitment competition?

The Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) is a state agency of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government established in 2012 to provide a range of services to the Local Government Sector. The LGMA provides a range of services within the context of its statutory remit, in support of co-ordinated and cost-effective delivery of Local Government services and policy.

The LGMA is an agency of Local Authorities, primarily funded by Local Authorities, and operates in the local government sector, reporting on performance as required to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

The Agency aims to meet the needs of Local Authorities and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) in delivering on the public sector reform agenda in the local government sector (particularly in terms of sectoral approaches to service delivery), researching emerging and identified issues, assisting Local Authorities in the implementation and measurement of change, and supporting, in general, enhanced performance by the local government sector.

The role of the LGMA in this recruitment competition is to oversee the design of the competition and assist the local authorities by co-ordinating the advertising of the competition nationally and working with Grad Ireland on the targeted recruitment campaign. In addition, the LGMA will be conducting the shortlisting exercise on the applications received.

The LGMA will work with one lead local authority who's task it will be to convene the interview boards and manage the assigning of successful applicants to each of the 11 local authorities.

Appendix I

3-year Graduate Development programme

The main features and components of the three-year graduate development programme will be,

- To the greatest extent possible a block start for all graduates recruited under this supplementary competition will be adopted,
- Local induction to happen in first week or two of contract,
- Group induction/orientation (centrally delivered) in week 2 or 3 of their contract,
- 4 separate two day of skills development based on competency framework for frontline staff (regionally delivered by the Institute of Public Administration). These four regional skills sessions will be spread over the duration of the three-year programme. Details of what competencies are contained in the framework for frontline staff of which Graduates are included is shown in Appendix II.
- Structured performance reviews with assigned line manager during the duration of the three-year contract. Where the Performance Management Development System (PMDS) is in operation the performance review will follow this cycle.
- A structured review of placement between employing local authority; graduate and LGMA,
- Graduates will be enrolled in industry recognised training in their chosen skills which will be either accredited and/or lead to member of a professional body in that chosen field

In partnership with the LGMA the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) will be responsible for the provision of the centrally or regionally delivered portions of the development programme. Individual employing local authorities will be required to pay the IPA directly for the training provided to their Graduates as part of the development programme.

Industry recognised training in their chosen skills are which will be either accredited and/or lead to membership of a professional body in that chosen field

The industry recognised training element of the development programme will be delivered in Year 2 of the programme. The purpose of the industry recognised training element is to allow individual graduates to acquire specific training in their chosen field and to demonstrate their competency. Delivering this training in year 2 allows for individual local authorities to recoup some of their investment in year 2 of the employment programme.

During the programme review the LGMA will seek to determine which of the following six options best reflect the field of work which the Graduate is working in during their contract of employment with the local authority. While some allowances will be made for individuals recruited under one skills area to enrol in another of the listed courses this will only occur where their employer supports such a switch.

Graduates undertaking the development programme should be aware that the development programme does not offer a qualification at a higher QQI level than your existing qualification. The limited number of course options available to Graduates that are detailed below are recognised by industry and as such have been identified by the LGMA and IPA as the most relevant to the work likely to be undertaken by the Graduates.

Graduates who already possess a specific undergraduate or post graduate qualification in their chosen field will be accommodated (where applicable) with a route to an appropriate level of membership with a professional body through Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) with that body, where it exists. Graduates with higher levels of qualification can choose not to take up the industry recognised training course on offer to them. However, where this does occur there is no requirement on the employer to provide an alternative course of equal standing or cost. Local authorities who do wish to provide an alternative course can do so as long as the training provided satisfies the main requirement of being clearly related to the actual work undertaken by the Graduate as part of their employment with the local authority.

Industry recognised training in the six skills areas

As of October 2018, the courses being considered for the six skills areas are as follows. This however may be subject to change.

Economic Enterprise & Business Development

Cert in Business Analytics with the Business Analysts Institute Ireland (QQI level 8).

Project & Programme Management

Project Management Institute (PMI) recognised Dip in Project Management delivered by IPA (QQI level 8).

HR Management

Cert/Dip in HR Management (*QQI level 6 or 7*).

Communications & Marketing

Dip in Public Relations with the Public Relations Institute Ireland (PRII).

Or

Dip in Digital marketing with the Digital Marketing Institute.

Data Analytics & Data Metrics

The Analytics Institute's Management Diploma in Big Data and Analytics for Business.

Appendix II

Competency Model for Grade IV and analogous

Purpose and Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can demonstrate an understanding of the role played by a local authority and the type and range of work carried out by a local authority on behalf of the citizens. • Can demonstrate an understanding of how organisations implement change.
Delivering Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can demonstrate problem solving and contribution to successful solutions. • Displays the ability to understand and implement instructions as part of a team or under direct supervision. • Understands the need to use Council resources effectively. • Demonstrates the ability to deliver quality work and/or services to prescribed deadlines.
Personal Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently strives to perform at a high level. • Can listen effectively, engage in two-way dialogue with colleagues and managers and develop mutual understanding. • Understands the need to follow instructions. • Demonstrates an understanding of how their skills and knowledge can contribute positively to the efficient delivery of services to the citizen. • Can work effectively with a variety of colleagues and stakeholders.
Personal Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is personally trustworthy and can be relied upon. • Upholds the highest standards of honesty, ethics and integrity. • Maintains consistent effort when working to deadlines and can demonstrate resilience when set backs are encountered. • Demonstrates high levels of initiative, can take ownership of assigned tasks and is self-motivated and self-sufficient.