

Candidate Brief and Job Description

Director of Education

Education and Public Services Group



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Contents

- 1. Message from Tracey Burke Education and Public Services**
- 2. Welsh Government Background**
- 3. Purpose of Post**
- 4. Key Tasks**
- 5. Person Specification**
- 6. Development Opportunities offered by the Post**
- 7. How to Apply**
- 8. Selection Process**
- 9. Terms of Appointment**

Appendices

A - Civil Service Leadership Statement

B - Civil Service Code

1. Message from Tracey Burke, Director General Education and Public Services



Thank you for your interest in the post of Director, Education, I am delighted that you want to know more.

This is a key and challenging role in the Welsh Government's senior leadership team. Education in Wales is undergoing considerable change which will require strategic and operational leadership working in a fast paced and ever changing environment.

The person appointed will need to have a proven aptitude for leadership and motivation, be able to exert influence inside and outside the Welsh Government. The Director must be skilled in managing dialogue with a wide range of partners and have excellent communication skills with the ability to empower, motivate and influence.

The Director will be supported in the role by a Chief Education Adviser who will be appointed to provide hands-on experience of the education system and a clear understanding of the needs and respective roles of learners, school staff, governors, parents, local authorities and middle tier.

The key challenge facing the Director is to lead an ambitious programme of transformational change within the sector, while ensuring that the service continues to operate smoothly. Proven experience of delivering large, complex programmes will be vital and this will have to be done with the added challenge of responding to the medium and long-term impact of COVID-19. There has been an enormous national effort and the Welsh Government and all partners have met this challenge together – stepping up

to ensure that our children and young people are supported with their wellbeing and with the ability to learn and grow. The Director will need to continue to promote learning in all forms and all scenarios in a COVID-19 context.

The corporate and managerial components of this post are considerable, as well as knowledge of the education agenda, the Director will need to be able to demonstrate significant leadership and management experience. They will also need to have experience of making policy, combined with an understanding of the legislative framework and how this feeds in to the regulation making process.

Finally, and importantly, we are looking for someone who will be a good team player as part of the senior leadership within the EPS Group, bringing a collaborative approach and an optimism for what we can achieve together.

2. Welsh Government background

The Welsh Government has an annual budget of around £18 billion and is responsible for a range of areas including health, education and skills, the economy and transport, and agriculture and the environment.

The First Minister of Wales and his Cabinet form the Welsh Government and make decisions in devolved areas of responsibility. Welsh Ministers are accountable to the Senedd Cymru/ Welsh Parliament, Wales' legislative body comprising 60 elected Members.

Welsh Ministers are supported by a workforce of around 5,000 civil servants, approximately half of whom were previously located in Cardiff, with the remainder based in Welsh Government offices across Wales. Nearly all our staff are now home working and will be doing this for the foreseeable future. The Welsh Government also has small offices in London, Brussels and an overseas network for trade and investment work. The Permanent Secretary leads the Welsh Government Civil Service and is accountable to the First Minister and Welsh Ministers.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are core values of the Welsh Government. We aim to be an exemplar employer and our work is underpinned by: a Board Equality and Diversity Champion, vibrant diversity networks supported by senior champions, setting diversity targets to improve the numbers of under-represented groups (for example, BAME and disabled staff at all levels and women at senior levels). We are committed to organisational use of the social model of disability and to making both recruitment adjustments and workplace adjustments to ensure equality for disabled staff. We have recently published our strategy on Inclusion and Diversity in Public Appointments as we are intent on increasing the diversity of the regulated and other Boards in Wales and our process of developing our Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025 setting our visions for our own employment.

The Welsh Government was elected in May 2016 and our priorities are set out in our Programme for Government, Taking Wales Forward, and our national Strategy – Prosperity for All. Our ambition is to build a Wales which is a self-confident, prosperous, healthy nation and a society which is fair to all. Some 25% of the £1bn spent by the Welsh Government comes from Welsh taxes.

The UK's exit from the EU at the end of January 2020 and the subsequent international negotiations – both on the future UK / EU relationship and on UK trade deals with other countries – have significant implications for Wales and for the work of the Welsh Government. Our constitutional relationship with the UK Government and the other Devolved Governments continues to develop. In addition, along with other public bodies in Wales, the Welsh Government is subject to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and to the Welsh Language Standards, both of which require the Civil Service to work in new and different ways to improve policy development and the services delivered to the people of Wales.

The Welsh Government is a bilingual organisation; legislation is produced in both Welsh and English, and both languages have equal legal status. Welsh language skills would be a real asset for this post, although are not essential. Applicants must show an appreciation of bilingualism and share our commitment to promoting the Welsh language to achieve a

million Welsh speakers by 2050. We encourage and support staff to learn, develop and use their Welsh language skills in the workplace.

3. Purpose of Post

The Education Directorate sits within the Education and Public Services (EPS) Group. It is the largest policy Directorate in EPS consisting of approximately 260 staff across seven Divisions and seven Welsh Government offices, with a budget of £587m in 2020/21.

The Directorate provides high quality policy advice to the Minister and works with a range of partners to co-produce policies and funding programmes, strongly influenced by the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act, to implement those policies.

The Directorate is driving forward an ambitious reform agenda which has been co-constructed with the sector to raise standards, reduce the attainment gap, and deliver an education system that is a source of national pride and public confidence. The work to deliver these reforms will see, amongst other things, the introduction of a new curriculum in 2022 and the rollout of an Additional Learning Needs (ALN) transformation programme. This work is taking place within a very challenging environment created by UK-wide austerity and significantly exacerbated by the impact of Covid-19.

The reform agenda sets out a plan of action which has four enabling objectives as its basis:

Enabling objective 1: Professional learning - With our strategic partners we are committed to supporting teachers through professional learning from the time they decide to become teachers through their whole career.

Enabling objective 2: Leadership - We recognise the scale of the challenge headteachers and other leaders face as we seek to realise [Curriculum for Wales](#) and address our schools' needs in relation to COVID-19. We remain committed to a range of current and new measures and approaches to support our leaders.

Enabling objective 3: Equity, excellence and wellbeing – We continue to work closely with stakeholders to devise and implement a proactive, inclusive education system. In continuing to raise standards for all, we will prioritise support for children and young people who are vulnerable, disadvantaged or have an Additional Learning Need.

Enabling objective 4: Evaluation, improvement and accountability – We know the importance of an evaluation, improvement and accountability system that is aligned to the principles of Curriculum for Wales. We published draft evaluation, improvement and accountability arrangements in February 2019 and have engaged widely on those principles.

4. Key Responsibilities

This is a varied and challenging portfolio area, combining both policy and delivery and covering a diverse range of areas. Consequently, the role requires a high level of judgement and political sensitivity.

You will represent Welsh Government interests at senior level with our key stakeholders providing strategic leadership and direction in a number of key areas including:

- Leading the process of ensuring a shared understanding of expectations of what the programme of transformational change means for practitioners, education settings and delivery partners from 2022.
- Ensuring there is a clarity of process which enables the smooth transition from strategic vision to operational delivery.
- Providing oversight and direction to the work of a Chief Education Adviser (to be appointed following the recruitment of the Director, Education).
- Responding to the medium and longer-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing stability during uncertain times, motivating staff and creating a sense of team spirit.

5. The Person

This post is in a highly pressurised area of Government. You will be required to take decisions on priorities, managing ambiguity and complexity to deliver the organisation's commitment to achieving its goals. The judgement of the post holder will be key in helping the organisation to manage risk, whilst supporting our strategic vision of delivering results for Ministers and people in Wales.

You will be required to provide visible, supportive and strategic leadership by empowering, enabling, motivating and developing others and fostering a positive organisational culture. You will need to have experience of working in or with the public sector, along with strong interpersonal skills and the ability to develop and manage effective working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders inside and outside of government.

You will need to influence at the most senior levels, including Ministers, about potential courses of action – particularly with regard to changes in policy or business delivery. The ability to express complex issues simply and articulately is essential, as is the ability to present evidence and recommendations in a clear and compelling way. In addition, you will need to have:

Essential

- an appreciation of the needs of children and young people in Wales and their families and of the delivery of services for them, including education; and of the learning needs of the country more widely;
- a track record of delivering public sector change, ideally although not necessarily, in an educational context;
- the ability to manage a complex set of priorities and deliver effective financial, performance and programme management;

- the ability to think and act strategically and translate strategic objectives into tangible outcomes;
- wide experience of contributing to complex policy development and translating this in to operational delivery;
- the ability to demonstrate strong corporate leadership as the post holder will be expected to positively support the DG in providing cross-cutting, joined-up and visible leadership for the organisation grounded in our values;
- the ability to value the difference and diversity that individuals bring to an organisation and committed to own development and the development of others;

Desirable

- sensitivity to the political context in which the Welsh Government works and the ability to work effectively with Ministers and Cabinet advisers;
- experience of developing and sustaining positive relationships by representing policy and priorities persuasively at all levels in Wales and beyond, through negotiation and influencing individuals and organisations to broker successful partnerships;
- the ability to lead by example; be inclusive and consultative and prepared to share expertise, know-how and skills, adopting at all times a corporate approach;
- a flexible and resourceful approach to the work, able to operate effectively in a complex multi-disciplinary environment and with credibility for what you do and how you do it, rather than relying on your position or profession;
- An understanding of the legislative framework and how this feeds in to the regulation making process.

STRATEGIC CLUSTER – SETTING DIRECTION

Making Effective Decisions

Create clear long-term strategies focused on adding value to the citizen and making real, lasting change beyond the Civil Service

Changing and improving

Create and encourage a culture of initiative, flexibility and responsiveness, mobilising the Directorate to respond swiftly to changing priorities

Making effective decisions

Navigate and balance a range of political, national and international pressures to shape the Department's strategy and priorities

Identify and evaluate risks and options and develop Department wide strategies to manage and mitigate

PEOPLE CLUSTER – ENGAGING PEOPLE

Leading and communicating

Be highly visible and credible at the most senior levels across and outside the Civil Service, communicating purpose and direction with clarity and enthusiasm

Negotiate with and influence external partners, stakeholders and customers successfully at the highest levels

Collaborating and partnering

Drive a diverse and collaborative working culture which encourages openness, approachability and is supportive of challenge however uncomfortable

PERFORMANCE CLUSTER – DELIVERING RESULTS

Delivering value for money

Be fluent at interpreting a wide range of financial and performance information and use this to determine policy and strategy delivery

Managing a quality service

Create a culture of working with and through delivery partners to achieve outcomes, establish and negotiate service levels and deliverables

Delivering at pace

Drive a performance culture across the Department giving teams space and authority to deliver objectives whilst, resolutely holding them accountable for outcomes

6. Development Opportunities Offered by the Post

This post offers the opportunity to lead a crucial cross-cutting policy area for the Welsh Government and to work closely with Ministers, Special Advisers and senior Officials across all Welsh Government departments. You will gain experience of working in a high-profile area, building confidence and knowledge with internal and external stakeholders.

7. How to apply

We welcome applications in Welsh and English. Applications in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than those in English.

Applications should be submitted via the Welsh Government on-line system and submitted no later than **11 December 2020**. To apply, you will be asked to register for an account on the online system using an email address. It is recommended that you select an email address to which only you have access, as this will be our main method of communication with you regarding the selection process.

If you have an impairment that would prevent you from applying online, please email SCSRecruitment@gov.wales to request an alternative format, or to request a reasonable adjustment related to impairment in order to submit your application.

Anonymised Recruitment

All applications for this vacancy will be anonymised at the sift stage. The panel will take into account your personal statement and CV but, **these documents should be anonymised when you submit your application.**

Diversity information

The Welsh Government is committed to achieving a workforce that reflects the society it serves, at all levels including the most senior. Collecting this information enables us to identify whether we are recruiting from the widest possible pool of talent and check that all groups are being treated fairly throughout the process. This form will not be disclosed to anyone involved in assessing your application. If you do not wish to provide a response to a particular question, you should complete the 'Prefer not to say' option. You will not be able to submit your application if you leave any of the questions unanswered.

As part of the recruitment process, you will be asked to provide the following:

- A completed **application form**;
- **An up to date CV** setting out your career history with key responsibilities and achievements;
- A personal **statement of no longer than two sides of A4** explaining how your professional qualifications, skills, qualities and experience are suitable for the role and, in particular how you meet the person specification.

Welsh language

Welsh language skills would be a real asset for this post, although are not essential

Questions and informal discussion

If you have any questions about this role further in advance of your application, please email Tracey Burke (tracey.burke@gov.wales) who will respond to any points of information or clarification.

Online technical problems

Please email SCSRecruitment@gov.wales

8. Selection process

Overview

The Recruitment Team via the Welsh Government system will acknowledge your application and when appropriate you will be advised about the outcome of the short list meeting.

Assessments

The shortlisting meeting will take place **on 17 December 2020**. Shortlisted candidates will undergo online psychometric tests that will include numerical and verbal reasoning and a discussion with a psychologist. You will receive a link to these online tests the week commencing **4 January 2021**.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to attend a staff engagement session. These will take place on **15 January 2021**.

If you have completed the online psychometric tests in the last 2 years, for a post at the same grade, it will not be necessary for you to take these tests again for this particular recruitment exercise.

Fireside Chats with the Education Minister on 18 & 21 January 2021. They will be held virtually via Microsoft teams.

Interviews

Interviews are scheduled for **27 and 28 January 2021**. They will be held virtually via Microsoft teams. Interviews will last around 45 minutes.

The Selection panel will include:

- Margaret Edwards, Civil Service Commissioner (Chair)
- Tracey Burke, Director General Education & Public Services ,Welsh Government
- Peter Kennedy, HR Director Welsh Government

Biographies

Margaret Edwards



Margaret has held senior roles in the public sector, including Chief Executive roles in the NHS, and as Director General in the Department of Health. She had a successful career with Mckesson International. Currently Margaret is Chair of the Civil Service Pension Board.

She has a track record of designing and delivering public sector reform and delivering national targets. She is particularly interested in aligning individual and corporate objectives and the design of total reward packages.

Margaret was appointed as a Civil Service Commissioner on 1 October 2017.

Tracey Burke



Tracey has been directly involved in the regeneration of Wales and Ireland for over 20 years working for the Welsh Government, Welsh Development Agency, the Irish Government, the UK Government as well as working with the European Commission.

Tracey was born in Cardiff and joined the Welsh Government in 2006 from the Welsh Development Agency. Since that time, Tracey has held posts in economic policy and transport policy, as well as a wider strategic role across the Economy, Skills and Natural Resources Group. Tracey was appointed to the post of Director General for Education and Public Services in November 2017.

Peter Kennedy



My current role is Director, Corporate Services at the Welsh Government.

I joined Welsh Government in 2004 having worked for several years within the Ministry of Defence. I spent 9 years in the RAF within aircraft maintenance and technical training roles.

I am a HR professional with many years' experience of both operational and strategic Human Resources together with experience of ICT, Health and Safety, Facilities Management and Emergency Planning.

I also have additional responsibilities as Lead Sponsor for Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies and, as the Senior Information Risk Owner.

I am married to Jenny and have two grown up children and a Granddaughter. Jenny was diagnosed 5 years ago with Multiple Sclerosis, the organisation has been incredibly supportive and flexible in helping me to achieve an effective balance between being a Senior Civil Servant and a career.

Disability Confident Interview Scheme

As part of our commitment to encouraging disabled people to apply to the Welsh Government we will offer an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum requirements for the post. Welsh Government has adopted the social model definition of disability, which recognises that barriers in society act to disable people who have impairments or health conditions or who use British Sign Language. We are committed to removing barriers so that all (or potential new) staff can perform at their best. The Equality Act 2010 uses the medical model definition of disability (“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term impact on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”).

We guarantee to interview anyone who is disabled, whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. By ‘minimum criteria’ we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you generally meet the level of competence for the role and any qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential.

If you have an impairment or health condition, or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of this recruitment process, or wish to discuss how we will support you if you were to be successful, please email scsrecruitment@gov.wales as soon as possible and a member of the team will contact you to discuss your concerns and requirements.

We are committed to the employment and career development of disabled people.

Competencies

Applicants are required to demonstrate their competency against the full range of leadership and SCS core skills identified for Senior Civil Servants as part of the Civil Service competency framework.

For further information about core competencies please access the full document via the hyper link below:

[Core Competencies](#)

All Civil Servants are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Civil Service Code, please see **APPENDIX B**

Indicative timetable

The closing date for applications: 14:00 hours on 11 December 2020

Psychometric testing – within 10 days of the shortlisted meeting

Shortlisted Meeting: 17 December 2020

Staff Engagement/Stakeholder Exercise: 15 January 2021

Fireside Chats with the Education Minister: 18 & 21 January 2021

Interview panel: 27 & 28 January 2021 and will be held remotely.

Staff Engagement/Stakeholder Exercises and Interviews will be undertaken remotely.

The above dates may be subject to change.

9. Terms of appointment

This is a permanent post, it is available to permanent UK Civil Service employees (recruited through fair and open competition) on a lateral and promotion basis. This post is also available to non-Civil Servants on a permanent basis.

Remuneration

This role is at Director level and the salary is circa £93,000 per annum.

For existing Civil Servants

If you are a substantive Director applying on a lateral transfer basis to Welsh Government you will retain your existing salary.

The starting pay on promotion into the Senior Civil Service will usually attract 10% increase in base pay or be at the Senior Civil Service pay band minimum, whichever is greater. Refer to the Welsh Government's starting pay on promotion policy.

Relocation Expenses

Relocation expenses of up to £8,000 may be payable.

Location

The post is Pan Wales and you may work from any of the Welsh Government Offices in Wales, although the nature of the post means that you will need to spend some time in Cardiff. There would be an expectation that you will be required to travel across Wales to meet with stakeholders and directorate staff who are dispersed. We are supportive of home working and tailoring patterns to suit individuals' circumstances.

(In the short term the majority of post holders will be based at home/working remotely).

Working hours

This post is available on a full-time or job-share basis. It is expected that if you apply as a job share partnership, this arrangement is in place when submitting your application and please make it clear on your application forms that you are applying as part of a job share partnership. We welcome applications from people who work part-time and if someone who wants to work part-time is successful, we will make proportionate adjustments to the responsibilities of the post.

Smart Working

The Welsh Government actively encourages Smart Working. This means focusing on how you use your time, and where and how you work, to meet business needs in the most productive way. This provides staff with considerable flexibility and the expectation is that teams will work from home for a high percentage of the time for the foreseeable future. Smart, flexible working is becoming a permanent feature of working life in Wales and the Welsh Government will lead the way in this.

Annual Leave

If an existing civil servant is promoted into or within the Senior Civil Service, their annual leave allowance is based on their period of continuous employment in the Civil Service, as shown below:

Length of service

- Up to 1 year - 25 days annual leave entitlement;
- 1 year - up to 2 years - 26 days annual leave entitlement;
- 2 years - up to 3 years - 27 days annual leave entitlement;
- 3 years - up to 4 years - 28 days annual leave entitlement;
- 4 years - up to 5 years - 29 days annual leave entitlement;
- 5 years or more - 30 days annual leave entitlement.

The successful candidate will be appointed on the modernised Senior Civil Service terms and conditions.

Retirement

There is no mandatory retirement age for Senior Civil Servants.

Terms and Benefits

Pension Scheme: www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk.

- Occupational Health Services, including counselling and eye care provision.
- Leave provisions including:
 - Carers' leave;
 - Paid and unpaid maternity leave;
 - Flexible paid paternity leave;
 - Flexible paid adoption leave;
 - Shared parental leave.

Conflicts of interest

Candidates must note the requirement to declare any interests they may have that might cause questions to be raised about their approach to the business of the Welsh Government.

They are required to declare any relevant business interests, share holdings, positions of authority, retainers, consultancy arrangements or other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies, both for themselves and for their spouses/partners.

The successful candidate will be required to give up any conflicting interests and his/her other business and financial interests may be published.

Official Secrets Act

The post is covered by the Official Secrets Act.

Diversity and equality

The Welsh Government is committed to providing services which embrace diversity and which promote equality of opportunity. Our goal is to ensure that these commitments are embedded in our day-to-day working practices with all our customers, colleagues and partners. The Board has an Equality Champion and receives regular updates on equality and diversity. We are committed to recruiting women, BAME and disabled people who are currently under-represented in the Senior Civil Service.

We are committed to increasing diversity, removing barriers and supporting all our staff to reach their potential. We are currently ranked 8th in the UK in the Stonewall Top 100 list of employers, we are a Stonewall Diversity Champion, a Disability Confident Level 3 (Leader) organisation and received gold status from a:gender in 2018.

Key to supporting this work and providing peer support are four Board sponsored Staff Networks (Disability Awareness and Support (DAAS); Minority Ethnic Support Network (MESN); PRISM (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex +) and Women Together.

The Civil Service Commissioners

The Welsh Government's recruitment processes are underpinned by the principle of selection for appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Principles which can be found at:

<http://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/>

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 Peter Kennedy, HR Director via email at peter.kennedy@gov.wales or in writing to Peter Kennedy HR Director, Permanent Secretary's Group Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ in the first instance.

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the Welsh Government you can contact the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners.

Security level

The successful candidate must be cleared to Security Check (SC) level before starting or posting to the job. The timescales for security clearance may vary, however, after receiving the complete paperwork it can take between 10 and 12 weeks.

Appendices

Appendix A: Civil Service Leadership Statement

The leadership statement can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-leadership-statement/civil-service-leadership-statement>

Appendix B: Civil Service Code

The Civil Service Code can be found at:

<https://beta.gov.wales/civil-service-code>