Enquiries Assistant

Ref: 582796
Salary range: £21,087 to £24,891 pro-rated for hours worked
Location: Holyrood, Edinburgh
Working pattern: Part time - 2 days per week – one day must be Wednesday, the other day is open to negotiation

Closing date: 5pm on Thursday 11 May 2017

This is a joint post and the successful applicant will work between SPICe and Public Information and Resources (one day in each team).

SPICe
SPICe provides research, information and documentation services to the Parliament. This post is part of the Enquiries Team. The team is responsible for managing the SPICe desk and responding to enquiries off desk; and producing, editing and publishing parliamentary information on the website and intranet.

Public Information and Resources
Public Information and Resources (PIR) answers enquiries from the public about the Scottish Parliament and develops and promotes information resources. The core responsibilities of this post in PIR will be staffing the Scottish Parliament’s switchboard/telephone enquiry line and answering written enquiries in various formats.

Both SPICe and PIR are committed to providing excellent customer service.

Duties

Enquiry work
- In both offices, the work involves answering enquiries. In SPICe, these enquiries are submitted by internal customers (MSPs, MSP staff and parliamentary staff) while in PIR, the enquiries come from members of the public.
**Customer service**
- SPICe – Working on the SPICe desk on a rota basis and responding to in-person and telephone enquiries
- PIR – Staffing the Parliament’s switchboard, answering and directing calls, as appropriate
- In both offices – Liaising with customers, including managing their expectations

**Parliamentary information**
- SPICe – Maintaining, producing and publishing SPICe information sources on the website and parliamentary databases (e.g., fact sheets, MSP biographical information)
- SPICe – Contributing to the production of the Scottish Parliament statistics volume
- PIR – Involvement in resource and service development

**Contributing to the work of SPICe and PIR**
- In both offices – Other administrative tasks, as required, which may include administering and reporting on complaints and other policy processes, updating loose-leaf publications and shelving reference material

**Skills, knowledge and experience required**

You must be able to provide evidence to demonstrate the following:

1. **Enquiry handling skills**
   - ability to compile and present an enquiry response effectively in writing
   - ability to express yourself clearly and concisely on the telephone and in person
   - ability to use an appropriate method and style of communication to suit the circumstances

2. **Customer service skills**
   - ability to understand different customer needs and a flexible approach to meeting these
   - ability to work calmly under pressure
   - ability to handle challenging people effectively
   - ability to work using your own initiative if necessary to resolve issues

3. **Parliamentary and political awareness**
   - an interest in current affairs and awareness of how the Scottish Parliament works
   - ability to quickly build up and maintain knowledge relevant to your role
   - ability to work in a political environment, ensuring that confidentiality and impartiality are maintained
4. Team working skills
   - ability to form effective working relationships within your immediate team, and more widely, to achieve specific results
   - ability to work with team members to ensure an even distribution of shared tasks

5. Improvement, innovation and change
   - willingness to try new ways of working and learn new skills, including an interest in digital ways of working
   - ability to suggest improvements to working practices

Your application should provide some evidence of these qualities.

To apply, please send your application form to jobs@parliament.scot by 5 pm on Thursday 11 May 2017.

**Working Pattern**

2 days per week – one day must be Wednesday, the other day is open to negotiation

Standard working hours in both SPICE and PIR are 09.00-17.00. During parliamentary business periods, the switchboard is open 08.30-17.30, with the early and late shifts covered on a rota basis.

**Benefits**

We offer a great range of benefits including 41.5 days' leave (including public holidays), the opportunity to join the Civil Service pension arrangement and flexible working arrangements and family-friendly policies.

**Salary**

The salary range for this post is shown below which is the full-time salary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2 (Max)</th>
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<tr>
<td>£21,087</td>
<td>£22,449</td>
<td>£24,891</td>
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You will progress at the rate of one scale point per year provided you are performing your duties to the required standard. Your progression date will be the anniversary of taking up the appointment in the grade. You will be paid monthly in arrears by Bank Credit Transfer directly into your bank or building society account on the last banking day of the month.

**Other Information**

**Hours**

The way the Parliament works means that different groups of staff work varying hours and patterns. You may have to work longer hours when Parliament is sitting
and reduced hours during recess periods and you will be required to work within these arrangements.

For this reason we have very progressive flexible working hours (FWH) arrangements that can support you in your role, particularly when having to work with this type of arrangement. For example, if you have caring responsibilities or other specific needs, our policies are there to support our staff with different needs/circumstances.

Notwithstanding your individual working pattern, if you are employed on a full time basis, you will be contracted to work 1,631 hours per year. This is the equivalent to a 37 hour week, excluding breaks, annual leave and public and privilege holidays. If you work on a part-time basis, you will be required to work the number of hours specified in your appointment letter.

**Annual Leave**

Your annual leave allowance will be 30 days. Our annual leave year runs from 1 September to 31 August. If you take up your appointment during the course of the leave year, your annual leave allowance will be proportional.

In addition, you will also receive 11.5 days public and privilege holidays. They are normally taken at fixed times of the year. If you are required to work on a public or privilege holiday overtime arrangements will apply.

If you work on a part-time basis, your annual leave and public and privilege holiday entitlement will be pro-rated.

As with working hours, there may be restrictions on annual leave when Parliament is sitting. In any event you may not take annual leave unless it has been agreed, normally in advance, with your line manager.

**Pension**

Unless you choose otherwise we offer the opportunity to join the Civil Service pension arrangements, which include a valuable range of benefits. We will make substantial employer contributions towards your Civil Service pension. More information can be found on the Civil Service Pensions website at [www.civilservice.gov.uk/pensions](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/pensions)

**Age**

The SPCB does not operate a retirement age policy. This means that there is no upper age limit beyond which you would be automatically retired and you are free to continue in employment for as long as you wish subject to the normal rules concerning **Performance, Attendance** and **Conduct**.
Travelling and Other Expenses

We pay travelling and other expenses if you incur them whilst on official duty. However, we will not reimburse the cost of normal daily travel between home and office.

Probation

You will be on probation for six months. Confirmation of your appointment is dependent on the satisfactory completion of this probation period, taking into account your job performance, conduct and attendance.

Outside and Political Activities

As an employee of the SPCB, you may not take part in any activity that would in any way conflict with the interests of the Parliament or be inconsistent with your duties and responsibilities.

You may not take part in national political activities, although you may seek permission to take part in local political activities. If permission is granted, it will be subject to the observance of general rules relating to possible conflicts between your official responsibilities and your political activities.

Health and Safety

The SPCB is committed to promoting health and safety as a priority issue. Its aim is to take appropriate and reasonable steps to ensure that it conducts its business in such a way that employees and other people who may be affected by its work are not exposed to risks to their health and safety.

Data Protection

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998, information provided by you will be processed and stored to provide management information for recruitment and equal opportunities monitoring purposes. We will also use this information to form the basis of your personnel record if you are successful for the job. Otherwise we will not retain this information for any longer than it is needed and we would normally dispose of paper records after 6 months. You will have the right of access to any information held about you.

Suggestions

We want all applicants to feel that they have been treated fairly, even if they are not appointed. If you have any comments or suggestions about the way in which this recruitment campaign has been handled, we would really like to hear from you.
Referees

Please do not send references or testimonials with your form. If you are successful, we will approach previous and/or current employers for a reference. We can only make a formal offer of employment once we have received these references. If you have no employment history we may approach any school, college or university you have attended.

Health Assessment and Security Clearance

If you are successful at interview you will be asked to complete a health assessment form. If necessary we may ask you to attend a medical assessment. Assessments are carried out by our occupational health supplier in the Parliament building. The reason why we carry out a health assessment is to make sure that the job you have applied for is suitable for you. It is also to find out if we need to carry out any adjustments to help you do the job.

Security clearance is required for this post. If you are successful we will ask you to complete a security questionnaire. This form will explain our security vetting policy. We can only make a formal offer of employment once the security clearance process is complete.

Visa and Work Permits

There are no nationality restrictions on who the SPCB employs. You must however check whether there are any restrictions on your stay or your freedom to take or change employment in the United Kingdom before you apply for a post. If you are successful at interview we will carry make a complete enquiry into your eligibility to work in the United Kingdom.

Please note that this document is provided for information only and does not form part of the SPCB’s terms and conditions of employment.

Equal Opportunities

The Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and treatment and to eliminating unfair discrimination in its employment practices. It will seek to ensure that all job applicants and staff are treated fairly, with respect and without bias. No job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment than others because of her or his: gender; gender identity; sexual orientation, marital or family status; racial group (includes colour, race, nationality, national or ethnic origin), religion, religious belief, or a similar philosophical belief (or lack of any of these); disability (unless such treatment is objectively justified); part-time or fixed-term contract status (unless such treatment is objectively justified); and trade union membership status/activities.