



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Information Management and Governance  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

foi.officer@parliament.scot

22 December 2022

Dear Requester,

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: 2022-682380**

We acknowledge your request for the following information:

*In relation to FOI Request 2022-682219:*

*1. Re Q4, Q8 & Q10. There have been 777 applicants to pool, 89 of which have been deemed successful, with 13 fixed-term positions filled and 4 permanent positions filled to date.*

- Of the total 777 applicants, how many 'passed' the initial stage of completing the forms?*
- Of the remainder, how many passed the stage of online testing?*
- Of the remainder, how many passed the stage of submitting values-based statements?*
- (Of the remainder, the understanding is that 89 people have so-far passed the stage of panel interview and security checks, and that security-vetting is ongoing for the latest round of candidates)*
- What are the contract lengths of each of the 13 fixed-term positions that have been filled successfully?*

*2. Re Q7, Q9, Q13 & Q14. The figures available show that there have been 33 successful joiners of the pool who have not to date been offered a position at the Scottish Parliament or who have since left the pool, and that 17 fixed-term positions and 4 permanent positions were offered.*

- To date, what is the mean average length of time that candidates sit in the candidate pool, accounting for candidates who are placed in posts, candidates who have not (yet) been placed in posts or who have declined positions offered, and candidates who may have since left the pool of their own accord, based on the information available?*

3. Re Q16, specific break down of costs.

- What has been / is the cost to the Parliament of using an external firm or firms for testing of candidates applying to join the candidate pool, and how does this break down? e.g. is there a fixed cost per applicant or is costing by cohort?; is there an annual subscription charge for the services? What is the mean average cost of using the testing service(s) per candidate tested in relation to the candidate pool?

- What is the mean average (or if not known specifically, the typical) cost to the Parliament of carrying-out security vetting on each individual in relation to the candidate pool?

4. How many successful joiners of the pool (who have already passed security vetting) have been invited to remain in the pool with the understanding that further similar and comparable security vetting will be required and carried-out by the Parliament?

Your request was received on 2 December 2022 and has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOI(S)A).

We have replied to each part of your request in turn below.

**1. Re Q4, Q8 & Q10. There have been 777 applicants to pool, 89 of which have been deemed successful, with 13 fixed-term positions filled and 4 permanent positions filled to date.**

**- Of the total 777 applicants, how many 'passed' the initial stage of completing the forms?**

**- Of the remainder, how many passed the stage of online testing?**

**- Of the remainder, how many passed the stage of submitting values-based statements?**

In 2020 the process for applicants was to firstly to register and upload their CV. Next, they were asked to complete an online assessment. Online assessments only took place in 2020. Those successful at this stage were then asked to complete a statement. In 2020, 290 applicants passed online testing and provided statements.

For both recruitment exercises in 2022, 304 candidates provided statements

If, by asking "how many passed the stage of submitting values-based statements", you mean reached the next stage (i.e. interview) the answer is 118 in total.

**Of the remainder, the understanding is that 89 people have so-far passed the stage of panel interview and security checks, and that security-vetting is ongoing for the latest round of candidates.**

That is correct.

**What are the contract lengths of each of the 13 fixed-term positions that have been filled successfully?**

2 at 3 months.  
2 at 5 months  
4 at 6 months  
3 at 12 months  
2 at 18 months

**2. Re Q7, Q9, Q13 & Q14. The figures available show that there have been 33 successful joiners of the pool who have not to date been offered a position at the Scottish Parliament or who have since left the pool, and that 17 fixed-term positions and 4 permanent positions were offered.**

**- To date, what is the mean average length of time that candidates sit in the candidate pool, accounting for candidates who are placed in posts, candidates who have not (yet) been placed in posts or who have declined positions offered, and candidates who may have since left the pool of their own accord, based on the information available?**

In response to FOI Request 2022-682219 we provided information as to the average length of time taken to fill vacancies using the candidate pool, notably 3 months for the 2020 intake and 3 months for the early 2022 intake – from the date the vacancy arose to the date the candidate started in the role. Beyond this information we do not hold information in the format that you have requested which would allow us to identify the mean average length of time that candidates sit in the pool as we have no business need to collect or collate this information.

As some of the information requested is not held by the Scottish Parliament, we have attached a notice advising of this, in line with the technical requirements of FOI(S)A.

**3. Re Q16, specific break down of costs.**

**- What has been / is the cost to the Parliament of using an external firm or firms for testing of candidates applying to join the candidate pool, and how does this break down? e.g. is there a fixed cost per applicant or is costing by cohort?; is there an annual subscription charge for the services? What is the mean average cost of using the testing service(s) per candidate tested in relation to the candidate pool?**

£2,600 was spent on online testing for the 2020 cohort. We do not hold information which breaks down this cost nor do we hold calculations of the mean cost of using the service per candidate tested.

As explained in the reply to question 1, online testing only took place for the 2020 cohort and has been not used since then.

As some of the information requested is not held by the Scottish Parliament, we have attached a notice advising of this, in line with the technical requirements of FOI(S)A.

**What is the mean average (or if not known specifically, the typical) cost to the Parliament of carrying-out security vetting on each individual in relation to the candidate pool?**

The Scottish Parliament has a subscription agreement in place to use a security vetting platform. This agreement is an unlimited usage subscription. Therefore, there is no per vetting costs for candidates put forward to the administrative pool.

**4. How many successful joiners of the pool (who have already passed security vetting) have been invited to remain in the pool with the understanding that further similar and comparable security vetting will be required and carried-out by the Parliament?**

If candidates have not taken up a position within a year, security vetting is required again. Two candidates have undertaken this requirement.

In line with the technical requirements of FOI(S)A we have provided a notice advising that the information you have requested is not held by the Scottish Parliament.

We would welcome feedback or comment on how we handled your request. Please feel free to contact the Head of Information Governance at [foi.officer@parliament.scot](mailto:foi.officer@parliament.scot)

Please find below Annex A, which explains how we handle FOI requests and reviews.

**We are currently working remotely and so would ask you to contact us by email at [foi.officer@parliament.scot](mailto:foi.officer@parliament.scot)**

Yours sincerely,

Robin Davidson  
Head of Information Governance

## REQUESTS MADE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

### How we handle FOI requests

Information on how we handle FOI requests is available on the Parliament's website at:

[Privacy notice: Information rights: Freedom of Information request handling | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

Alternatively, please contact the Public Information & Resources Team to request a copy.

<https://www.parliament.scot/contact-us>

### Review

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which we have dealt with your request for information, you can ask us to review our decision and actions. You must do this in writing (or other permanent form) within 40 working days of the date of this letter, stating the reasons for your dissatisfaction, and we will respond within 20 working days of receipt. A request for a review should be made to the Head of Information Governance:

Post: Head of Information Governance  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP  
Telephone: 0131 348 5281

We welcome calls using the Text Relay service or in British Sign Language through [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#).

E-mail: [foi.officer@parliament.scot](mailto:foi.officer@parliament.scot)

### Application to the Scottish Information Commissioner

If, on the outcome of any review, you are still dissatisfied, or if we are unable to resolve any other complaint, then you can contact the Scottish Information Commissioner:

Post: The Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews  
Fife  
KY16 9DS

Email: [www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal)

Telephone: 01334 464610

Fax: 01334 464611

Website: [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info)

A decision by the Scottish Information Commissioner may be appealed on a point of law to the Court of Session.

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### **Feedback or comment**

We would welcome feedback or comment on how we handled your request. Please contact the Head of Information Governance.

### **Data Protection**

If you wish to find out more about how we use your personal data then you can access our Privacy Notice at the following link:

[Privacy notice: Information rights: Freedom of Information request handling | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

### **Complaints**

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which we dealt with your enquiry, then you may wish to raise the matter with Public Information and Resources.

### **How to contact us**

Post: The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Telephone: 0131 348 5000  
0800 092 7500 (Public Enquiries)  
0131 348 5395 (Gàidhlig)

We also welcome calls using the Text Relay service or in British Sign Language through [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#).

E-mail: [info@parliament.scot](mailto:info@parliament.scot)