

# General information for job applicants

## Eligibility

If you are successful at interview the Forestry Commission will check that you are fully eligible for employment before a formal offer of appointment is made.

## Equality of opportunity

It is the policy of the Forestry Commission that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the Commission on the basis of their ability and qualifications and fitness for the work.

## Health Standard

If you are successful at interview, you will be asked to complete a health declaration. Should it be necessary, we will seek an opinion from our occupational health advisors.

## Disclosure & Rehabilitation of Offenders

Under the Forestry Commission's Child Protection policy, new recruits whose work will take them into contact with children are required to undergo either standard or enhanced vetting. Where this is required, vetting will be arranged and paid for by the Forestry Commission. All other new recruits to the Forestry Commission are required under the Government's Baseline Personal Security Standard to apply for disclosure vetting for criminal record at "basic" level. They will be required to bear the £20.00 cost of this themselves. If you are successful at interview, you will be told what level of vetting is appropriate in your case. The Forestry Commission has a written policy on the rehabilitation of offenders which is available on request. Having a criminal record need not be a bar to employment.

## Degrees

When a degree is specified as an entry requirement, the term means a degree or a comparable qualification awarded by a University in the UK or the Republic of Ireland or by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA). An overseas qualification is acceptable only if the Commission is satisfied that it is fully comparable with the required UK degree.

## Nationality

Most posts in the Forestry Commission are in the "non-reserved" category and are open to UK and EU nationals and to Commonwealth citizens. Reserved posts are open only to UK nationals. Under certain exceptional circumstances, some individuals outside these main groups may be considered for appointment. If you wish to check your eligibility please look at the nationality requirements page on the Civil Service Recruitment website - ([www.careers.civil-service.gov.uk](http://www.careers.civil-service.gov.uk)). Entry to the United Kingdom is controlled under the Immigration Act 1971. Everyone who does not have the right of abode is subject to immigration control. You should check whether there are any restrictions on your stay in the UK or your freedom to take or change employment, before you apply for a post.

## References

Should you be successful at interview, the Commission will ask your present employer, any previous employers and where appropriate, an academic referee for reports on your experience and suitability for appointment. If you have had only a single employer in the last five years, or are a school leaver, we will also seek a personal reference. For certain posts, mainly in Forest Research, we may seek references prior to interview.

## Conditions of service

The enclosed job description gives details of pay, annual leave etc. for this post. Various conditions of service and other matters which apply generally are described overleaf.

## **Relocation Expenses**

New entrants are expected to pay their own relocation expenses in taking up their first post. However, under exceptional circumstances, such as a post where few applicants are expected to apply, some limited financial help may be available. Where this is the case, it will be mentioned in the advert and/or the job description.

## **Outside Activities**

As a civil servant, you may not take part in any activity which would in any way conflict with the interests of the department or be inconsistent with your official position. Subject to these conditions, work of a minor or short-term nature (for example, vacation work or work after hours) is normally allowed, provided you seek your department's prior permission. There are also restrictions, dependant on your grade and type of work, on involvement in national and local political activities. Further information may be obtained from the Commission.

## **Retirement**

The normal retirement age is 65 at which age, if applicable, you will receive the pension benefits described in the next section. You should not count on being able to stay on beyond 65, though the Head of the Department has the discretion to retain efficient individuals according to the needs of the business.

## **Pension**

New entrants to the Civil Service will have the choice to join a high quality Civil Service pension arrangement or a money purchase scheme. Should you be successful in your job application, more details about your pension options will be made available to you a week before your start date. Alternatively you can access all information on the Civil Service web site: [www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk](http://www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk)

## **Candidates with previous Forestry Commission service**

If you have had previous employment with the Forestry Commission which ended with you leaving the service on early retirement or severance terms, you should seek advice from Pensions Branch of the Forestry Commission as to the effect that re-employment will have on your existing benefits.

## **Continued Education**

If you are under 18 (and not receiving vocational training in an industrial or technical grade), you will be encouraged to continue your general education by means of day release, block release or evening classes. The cost will be paid by the Commission, and you will not lose pay. In certain circumstances, these facilities can be extended after you reach 18. If you are 18 or over, you will be entitled to assistance in connection with studies in your own time leading to a recognised educational or professional qualification in approved subjects, provided the Commission is satisfied that you will benefit from the course.

## **Family Responsibilities**

Arrangements to help staff who wish to combine raising a family with a career in the Forestry Commission include opportunities for part-time work, flexible working hours, possibilities of unpaid leave, paid maternity leave and career breaks. For those who resign to bring up a family, there are opportunities for rejoining and retraining. (See also Reinstatement). These arrangements are mostly at the Commission's discretion and are subject to the needs of the work at any particular time.

## **Young Entrants**

If you are under 21 and have to move away from home, you may be refunded the cost of your journey and any necessary overnight accommodation when you first report for work. You will be allowed 3 assisted journeys home each year until you are 21.

## **Reinstatement of Previous Forestry Commission/Civil Service Employees**

If you were previously a permanent civil servant, had completed at least one year's satisfactory service and left under acceptable circumstances then you may be eligible for reinstatement at the Forestry Commission's discretion. Under certain circumstances, persons who have retired may also be reinstated.