Animal & Plant Health Agency

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

About Us

The Animal Plant Health Agency (APHA) is a government agency that sits within the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – DEFRA.

APHA headquarters are located in Weybridge, Surrey and we employ around 3,500 staff, based at various sites across the UK.

We have one mission which is to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of everyone in society, the environment and the economy - and every one of our employees is passionate about achieving this mission.

Why Join APHA?

David Holdsworth

Welcome Message from the Animal and Plant Health Agency Chief Executive:

Hi I'm David the CEO of APHA and if you're reading this then I'm hoping you apply to become part of our world leading organisation and that we will be working together in the not too distant future!

More than ever before the health of our environment, plants, animals and bees matters. If you join us, you will become part of an amazing, diverse team on the frontline in researching, investigating, and acting to protect the UK's animal, plant and bee health.

Your work won't just make a difference to the UK but contribute to global efforts to control and eradicate disease in plants, animals and protect global biodiversity.

Our key priorities are:

- Control and eradication of animal and plant diseases and pests, reducing the risks from new and emerging threats.
- Provide services for animal health and welfare, plant, and bee health.
- Rapidly control pest and disease outbreaks; while continuing to maintain and develop the skills and capabilities required to deliver core business and services and provide an efficient outbreak response.
- Continue to adapt and implement outbreak response plans and identify lessons from outbreaks, implementing any improvements needed.
- Provide science-based evidence and advice to inform policy makers.
- Maintain national and international specialist veterinary and scientific capability and reputation

Come join us and be part of something special making a difference everyday!

Our APHA Strategy

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES
Our APHA strategy

Our mission: To protect animal and plant health to benefit people, the economy, and the environment.

Protect

We protect the UK from animal and plant-related threats to human health, the economy and the environment.

We will do this by:

- Stopping disease and pests arriving in the country
- Preparing for and responding to emergencies, pest and disease outbreaks
- Robustly regulating animal welfare
- Minimising the impact of animal and plant-related threats on the nation's health, food security and environment
- Proactively identifying and mitigating threats to the nation's animal health, plant health, human health, food security and the environment, including those increased by climate change.

Innovate

We are an innovative organisation that enables industry to innovate and thrive.

We will do this by:

- Delivering excellent services that are simple and easy to use for our customers and our people
- Driving data and evidence-based regulation and policy that enables the UK sector to thrive
- Exploiting opportunities to use our innovations to drive up standards and create value for the taxpayer
- Driving and supporting innovation through our research and development, regulatory activities and work with industry and other partners.

Promote

We promote and assure animal health, plant health and animal welfare to support the UK's productivity and trade.

We will do this by:

- Educating and incentivising people to protect our animal and plant health
- Ensuring trust and confidence in UK animals, plants and products
- Sharing our expertise to shape global standards that drive sustainable economic growth and trade
- Growing global capability to address threats to animal and plant health at source by sharing our expertise
- Working in partnership with industry, stakeholders and others to drive better bio security and welfare.

To deliver our mission we work as One APHA, following our principles of People and Place:

People

- We value our people, develop their skills and expertise, enhance their health, safety and wellbeing, and provide an inclusive environment in which everyone can thrive
- We provide our people with the right tools to do the job
- We deliver change well and enable our people to continuously improve.

Place

- We act locally to deliver nationally, maximising the benefits of our links with the local communities we are embedded in across the UK
- We minimise our environmental impact and make APHA's operations sustainable and net zero
- We future-proof the high-tech infrastructure that underpins our ability to deliver through our Science Capability for Animal Health and change programmes.

What makes APHA a great place to work?

Our People

There are around 3,500 people working for the APHA, we are a diverse and multi-location team. It is also an exciting time to be joining the APHA as we are a growing organisation and continue to strengthen partnerships in the UK and Internationally.

Rewards

We have a Staff Recognition Scheme, and our special thanks and reward scheme provides instant recognition to staff and our in-year and annual awards ceremony reward exemplary work.

Pension

The Civil Service Pension scheme is a very valuable part of your total reward package. APHA pay 27% of the pension value. You will be given the chance to join one of two schemes.

Alpha is a Defined Benefit pension scheme based on your career-average earnings.

Partnership is a Defined Contribution pension scheme. Your pension will continue to provide valuable benefits for you and your family if you are too ill to continue to work or die before you retire.

Other benefits

We have various measures in place to assist with your physical and emotional health. Our focus is on early intervention and proactivity in addressing health issues. However, should you not be well enough to attend work occupational sick pay, increasing by length of service, is available.

Paid leave for other situations including family-related leave, volunteering and reservists as well as a variety of different interest-free loans to help with commuting are also available.

Location

We want to support your wellbeing by ensuring that flexible working is at the heart of our people offer. Our flexible working policies create an environment in which managers and employees are happy and comfortable talking about flexible working options. These include where you work, when you work and how you work, These discussions help to balance the freedom to choose with the responsibility to meet business needs.

If you are successful, you will be given the opportunity to discuss your working arrangements with your new manager prior to the issues of a final job offer.

Civil Service Grade Structure

AA

- Typically, AAs work in a supporting administrative role. Entry level position with no management responsibility. Could be an apprentice.

AO

- Typically, AOs work within a supportive team structure and will have no line management responsibility. Could be an apprentice.
- Equivalent job titles outside of the civil service include Administrator, Office Administrator. Sales Administrator, Executive Assistant.

EO

- Typically, EOs work within a supportive team structure. First level line management for some organisations.
- Equivalent job titles outside of the civil service may be Supervisor, Senior Administrator, Office Manager.

HEO

- HEOs may have exposure to supervising a team or a specialist area to lead.
- Equivalent job titles outside of the civil service may be Supervisor, Team Leader, Senior Advisor, Office Manager.

SEO

- SEOs will often be managing a small team and may be beginning to specialise in an area.
- Equivalent job titles outside of the civil service may be Senior Team Leader, Junior Manager, Senior Supervisor.

G7

- G7s may be specialists in a particular area and will also have significant line-management responsibilities for large teams headed by several SEO and/or HEO and or EOs.
- Equivalent job titles outside of the civil service may be Manager, Deputy Operations Management or a Deputy Head of an area/specialism.

G6

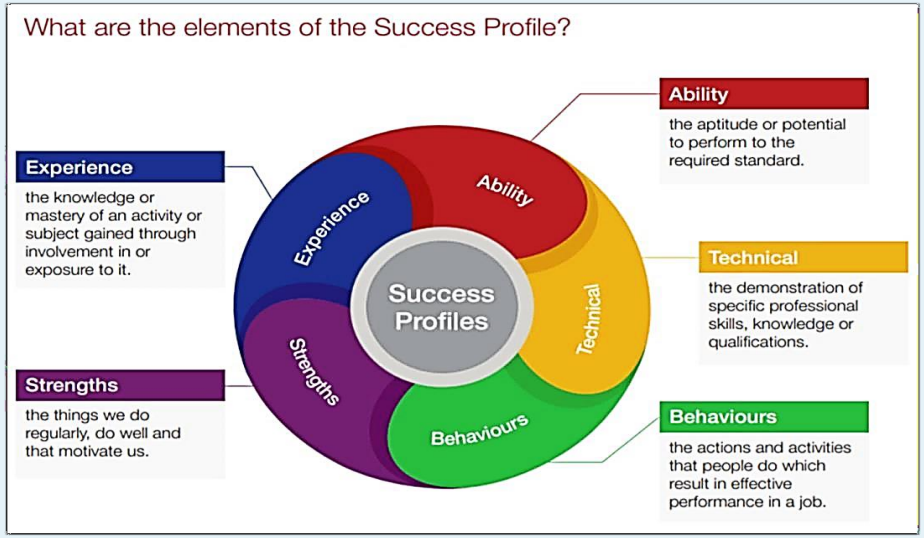
- G6s may be specialists in a particular area and will also have significant line-management responsibilities for large teams headed by several G7s.
- Equivalent job titles outside of the civil service may be Operations Management or a Senior Manager Head of an area/specialism.

The Application Process

How to apply

Your application will be assessed using the Civil Service Success Profiles recruitment framework. This framework allows us to use a combination of criteria to describe the requirements of the post to candidates. It then allows for candidates to provide evidence against those criteria during the selection process. Not all posts will make use of every criteria.

The Success Profile Framework is a flexible framework which assesses candidates against a range of selection methods, ensuring we give the best possible change of finding the right person for the job. Success Profile is made of five elements:



When applying for a role, make sure to look at the job description which will detail the elements of the Success Profiles you are being assessed against for that role.

Top Tip

When using Success Profiles, we would recommend the **STAR** model to structure your answers. We find this allows you to best demonstrate your skills and experience, so we can get to know you.

- **Situation** (what was the setting and conditions, and what was your role)
- **Task** (what specifically needed to be done when, why, etc.)
- **Action** (what did you do in terms of your own contribution and ensuring the contribution of others, How you did it and why)
- **Result** (What the outcome was and how you contributed to it what difference did you make)

For more information on the Success Profiles framework, please follow this link Success Profiles - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

How we decide who to invite to interview

Shortlisting for interview is made based on merit. The selection panel will assess the evidence presented by all applicants against the advertised criteria and the highest scoring candidates will be invited to interview.

Candidates who pass the interview criteria but are not offered a post may be kept on a reserve list for 12 months and may be offered similar roles across the department.

Defra is committed to 'name blind' sifting. That means that identifying characteristics such as your name, gender, age, address are removed from your application until after shortlisting for interview has taken place.

A Great Place to Work

Benefits of Working for APHA

- A Civil Service pension
- Minimum of 25 days Annual Leave
- Staff Recognition Schemes
- Bicycle Loan
- Season Ticket Loan
- Employee Discounts
- Staff Wellbeing
- Learning and Development
- Give as You Earn

APHA Benefits

APHA offers an attractive and competitive benefits package, including:

Core Benefits

Basic Salary

Based on grade, skills and experience, in which salary ranges and individual salaries are subject to review each year

Pension Scheme

The default pension scheme is Alpha – a career salary average, defined benefit scheme. You build up pension at a rate of 2.32% of your pensionable earnings each year. You and your employer will contribute a percentage of your pensionable earnings (depending on how much you earn) towards your pension.

Benefits include a lump sum payable to a Death Benefit Nominee, should you pass away whilst in service.

Alternatively, you can choose to join a Partnership Defined Contribution pension scheme.

This is a scheme in which you do not have to contribute. Your employer will contribute to your pension based on your age bracket. If you do choose to contribute, then your employer will match your contribution up to an additional 3%.

Holidays

Attractive annual holiday entitlement starting at 25 days rising over 5 days to 30 days plus statutory bank holidays (pro-rata for flexible workers, i.e. part time, job share employees). We also offer 1 privilege day for the King's birthday and up to 3 volunteer days

Enhanced statutory policies

Enhanced maternity, adoption and paternity leave, and sickness absence provisions.

Training & Development

Performance Management

Individual performance plans, learning and development matched to your agreed career objectives and progression plans.

Learning & Development

A range of training courses, apprenticeships, leadership development initiatives and access to L&D materials are available, covering technical, managerial and personal skills

Examination Leave

Paid leave for exams and revision for approved studies.

Professional subscriptions

We will pay the membership fees for one relevant professional association.

Work/life Balance

Flexible Working

Flexible working patterns including job share.

Travel & Transport Benefits

A range of travel and transport benefits. Access to the cycle to work salary sacrifice scheme that enables you to buy a bike up to the value of £4k.

Shopping & Leisure Benefits

A variety of discounts at online stores and leisure experiences available via Mylifestyle.

Finance

Interest Free Loans

For season tickets and/or bicycles and safety equipment as well as tenancy deposit scheme

Financial Education Hub

Providing guidance on how to manage your finances including information on credit scores, pensions, buying your first house and getting debt-free.

Health & Wellbeing

Cycle to Work Scheme

We offer access to a salary sacrifice Cycle to Work Scheme. This means we loan you a bike for your commute as a tax-free benefit

Occupational Health

Access to Duradiamond Healthcare advisory service.

Eye Care

Free eye tests.

Employee Assistance Service

Access to Workplace Wellness available to you and your family

Sports & Social Club

Opportunity to benefit from a wide range of subsidised events and discounts.

Health Discounts

Optional discounts provided by a number of external providers and health clubs.

Local Benefits

These vary from region to region.

Special Leave

Additional paid leave is available for employees taking part in public duties, trade union activities, special/trained forces and for health & safety representatives.

Charity for Civil Servants

Provide support and advice for thousands of people, both past and present, when they need it.

Headspace

Free access to Headspace which is a mindfulness, meditation and sleep app

Give as You Earn

You can make regular deductions directly from your salary in support of a chosen charity. This is simple and tax efficient.

"I believe your pension is the most important benefit after your Salary that you can have when you are employed in the Civil Service. Providing you with financial security when you retire and also providing cover for your family and loved ones should the worst happen"

Dominic Arthur – Director of Civil Service Pensions Operations and Government Recruitment Services

Great member pension

- Defined Benefit Pension Scheme
- Provides a secure pension payable for life with no investment uncertainty
- Choice of a tax free lump sum
- Amongst the lowest member contributions in public sector
- Generous build rate of 2.32% of your earnings as a pension each year.

What pension could you get?

- For example if you earned £22,000 per year
- After 20 years you could have a pension of £9,280pa or a pension of £5,965pa and a tax free lump sum of £39,771
- After 40 years this could be £18,560pa, or a pension of £11,931pa and a tax free lump sum of £79,542

Generous employer contribution

- Employer contribution towards your pension is extremely generous – on average 27% of your pay
- These contributions pay for:
  - A pension for you
  - Pension for your loved ones
  - Death benefits
  - Ill health benefits

Death benefits

- Able to nominate anyone (including charities) for a Tax free lump sum in the event of your death
- Lump Sum of up to two times your pay
- Pension for your spouse/partner of around 37.5% of your pension
- Pension for eligible children

For more information on the Civil Service Pension Scheme please go to the scheme website www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We passionately believe in equality; diversity & inclusion and we match that belief with action.

Defra is committed to being an organisation in which fairness and inclusion are central to all our working relationships. At Defra we want you to have a respectful, welcoming and engaging working environment, free from discrimination regardless of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, social background, trade union activity, caring responsibilities or working pattern. We encourage applications from neurodiverse people and believe it is only through having a mix of ideas and ways of thinking that we will be able to have a culture which produces high quality work.

We have many active staff networks including Age, Mental health, Cancer, Carers, Disability, EU nationals, Ethnic Minority, Faith, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Asexual and Transgender (LGBAT+), Social Mobility, Women and Worklife Balance. They are supported by senior champions and encouraged to take an active part in the development of our organisation.

We offer career development through a range of both internal and Civil Service wide talent schemes, mentoring, sponsorship and reverse mentoring. Our senior leaders talk authentically and with passion about what they are doing personally to support equality, diversity and inclusion. We promote and support a range of flexible working patterns to enable staff to balance home and work responsibilities, and we treat people fairly irrespective of their working arrangements. The inclusion of all of our employees is very important. We want everyone who works

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We passionately believe in equality; diversity & inclusion and we match that belief with action.

At Defra to feel they belong here, and we recognise that everyone will come to us from different backgrounds and with a range of different experiences.

We will not tolerate discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or negative stereotyping. Our aim is a working environment where you feel you belong and have a voice, whatever your job or your grade.

You can read more in our Diversity & Inclusion strategy.

As a Disability Confident employer, we positively welcome applications from disabled people. We are committed to making workplace adjustments wherever possible to ensure that disabled people can participate fully not only in the recruitment and selection process but when they are appointed into their job. We offer a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for all disabled applicants who provide evidence of meeting the minimum requirements necessary for the post, as set out in this applicant pack.

Please get in touch with us at any stage of the recruitment process to discuss how we can help you whether you have a physical impairment, a mental health condition or are neurodiverse.

Once you are appointed your line manager will work with you to identify how they can put in place reasonable adjustments to enable you to carry out your work.

Things you need to know

Pre-Employment Checks
Everyone employed in the Civil Service is subject to security checks.

These security checks, known as pre-employment checks, are conducted to verify your: identity, employment history; right to work; eligibility under nationality rules; and any unspent criminal convictions.

These checks ensure that candidates are entitled to work in the UK and possess the honesty, integrity and values for government-related work.

Depending on the level of checks needed for the role, you may need to provide at least three documents so we can evidence your identity, nationality, full permanent address, signature and date of birth.

These would include:

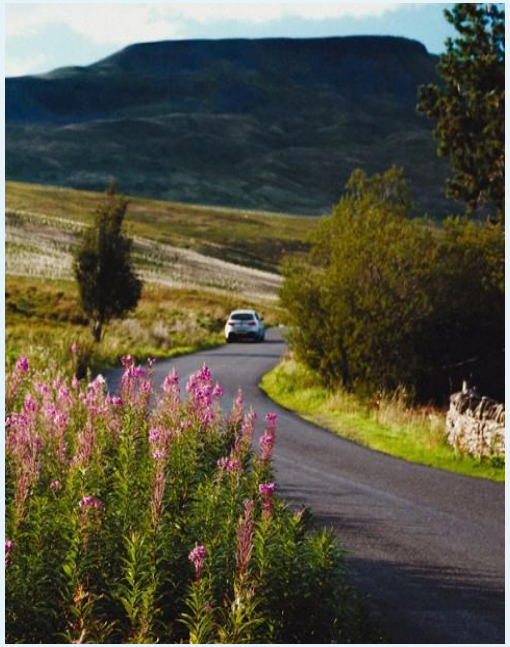
- Current British Passport
- Birth Certificate - issued within 12 months of Birth
- Bank, building society or credit card statement*
- Current photo card driving licence
- Original utility bill*
- Marriage certificate/Civil Partnership certificate
- Letter from head teacher or college principal (if under 19 years and still in full time education)

Documents marked with an * must be dated **within the last 3 months** and clearly show your current address.

The full list of acceptable documents will be provided to you if we wish to make you an offer of employment

NB Only original documents will be accepted; photocopies and online documents (e.g., bank statements, e-bills, eP60's etc.) cannot be accepted.

Some posts require higher security clearance. For example, at APHA Weybridge. Therefore, it is up to each person applying for a post at APHA Weybridge to ensure they meet the residency criteria. To meet this criteria all candidates applying must have been resident in the UK continuously for a minimum of three years. If you cannot meet this criteria CTC clearance will not be possible as this is part of pre-employment checks before taking up the post.



Things you need to know

Can I claim back any expenses incurred during the recruitment process?

No. Unfortunately we will not be able to reimburse you.

What nationality do I need to hold in order to apply?

To be eligible for employment to this role you must be a national from the following countries:

Open to the UK, Commonwealth and European Economic Area (EEA) and certain non EEA nationals. From January 2021 this job is broadly open to the following groups:

- UK nationals
- Nationals of the Republic of Ireland
- Nationals of Commonwealth countries
- European Economic Area (EEA) nationals with (or eligible for) status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)
- Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service
- Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service certain family members of the relevant(European Union) EU and Turkish nationals.

(*Commonwealth citizens not yet in the UK, who have no right of abode in the UK and who do not have leave to enter the UK are ineligible to apply.)

For further information on whether you are eligible to apply, please visit Gov.UK

What reasonable adjustments can be made if I have a disability?

DEFRA is a Disability Confident Leader and therefore part of the Disability Confident Scheme (for further information on the Disability confident scheme please visit(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign).

If you have a disability defined by the equality Act 2010 you're eligible to be considered for the Disability Confident Scheme.
In order to qualify you must have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term negative effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities (Further information regarding disabilities covered under the equality act please visit www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010).

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments for Disability Confident Scheme applicants and will try to remove any barriers so you are not at a disadvantage during the selection/recruitment process/ interview / assessment including; allowing extra time during selection tests; ensuring that information is provided in an accessible format or; by providing training. We are also committed to interviewing all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for the role applied for.
If you feel that you may need a reasonable adjustment to be made, or you would like to discuss the disability confident scheme in more detail please contact us in the first instance. If you wish to receive a hard copy of the information, or in an alternative format e.g. Audio, Braille or large font then please contact: defrarecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Things you need to know

Disability Confident Scheme for Disabled Persons

The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equal opportunities. As such, we run a Disability Confident Scheme (DCS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria. You should indicate this on your application form if you would like to be considered under this scheme.

Equal Opportunities

Defra values equality and diversity in employment. We are committed to being an organisation in which fairness and equality of opportunity is central to the approach in business and working relationships and where the organisational culture reflects and supports these values. In Defra you have the right to a working environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation regardless of race, ethnic or national origin, age, religion, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, working hours, trade union membership or trade union activity.

Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles

Selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit, on the basis of fair and open competition, as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles. The Civil Service Commission has two primary functions:

Providing assurance that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

Hearing and determining appeals made by Civil Servants under the Civil Service Code which sets out the Civil Service values – Honesty, Integrity, Impartiality and Objectivity.

More detailed information can be found at the Civil Service Commission website

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

Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Contact us

If you have any general queries or technical problems, please email:
defrarecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

If you have any questions about the post you are applying for, then please email: sciencerecruitment@apha.gov.uk quoting the reference in the subject header.