



An tSeirbhís um Cheapacháin Phoiblí
Public Appointments Service

Candidate Information Booklet

Technical Agricultural Officer
Department of Agriculture, Food and the
Marine

Competition I.D.: 20149106

Closing Date for Applications

3pm Thursday 20 August 2020

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is committed to a policy of equal opportunity. The Public Appointments Service will run this competition in compliance with the Code of Practice for 'Appointment to positions in the Civil Service and Public Service' prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) - available on www.cpsa.ie

Helpdesk Email Address: TAO2020@publicjobs.ie

Introduction

Background

The mission of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is to serve the government and people of Ireland by leading, developing and regulating the agri-food sector, protecting public health and optimising social, economic and environmental benefits.

The agri-food sector encompasses all primary agriculture, forestry and the food processing industry, including seafood.

The Department's mission is encapsulated in the following four goals:

- **Agri-Food and Fisheries Policy, Development and Trade:** Progressing, in collaboration with relevant sectors and State Bodies, the further development of the agri-food and marine sector including the achievement of Food Harvest 2020 targets.
- **Food Safety, Animal Health and Welfare and Plant Health:** Maintaining the highest standards of food safety, consumer protection, animal health and welfare and plant health.
- **Rural Economy, Marine and Environment:** Promoting economic, social and environmentally sustainable farming, fishing and forestry.
- **Effective Delivery of Schemes and Services:** Further enhance our human and technological capabilities to provide effective and responsive services for all clients.

The Role

Technical Agricultural Officers are employed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to carry out various functions related to services and schemes operated by the Department in addition to operating controls relating to animal welfare, public health, animal health and EU payment schemes. Technical Agricultural Officers must have a good knowledge and understanding of these services, schemes, programmes and controls as they are required to ensure that these are conducted correctly.

The following are some duties associated with the role of a Technical Agricultural Officer:

- Interacting with the public/customers on schemes and services;
- Supervision and/or monitoring of activities of food business operators and a range of meat plants and ensuring compliance with all regulations;
- Various on farm controls and business premises checks required under national and EU legislation;
- Dealing with animal welfare, public health and animal health (including disease control) in line with legislative requirements; and
- A range of other duties e.g. crop evaluation, certification duties, poultry & eggs and pesticide control.

Working Environment

Technical Agricultural Officers may be required to work in industrial conditions, e.g. meat plants and rendering plants. Technical Agricultural Officers in other work areas may carry out both office and outdoor duties. Outdoor duties may include farm inspections under the various EU Schemes. Technical Agricultural Officers may be assigned work in more than one work area of the Department, depending on seasonal and geographical demands. Officers may also be required to transfer to other locations and work areas on a temporary basis. In-service training will be provided in the various work areas.

Health & Safety

Technical Agricultural Officers must comply with the duties of employees as defined under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Technical Agricultural Officers must comply in full with all safety, health and welfare directions, policies and instructions issued by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine either centrally or by their line manager.

Special Equipment and Facilities provided in connection with the Duties

Special equipment, as required, will be provided by the Department to carry out the various duties. All staff are provided with the necessary training including health and safety training and the necessary personal protective clothing for the tasks to be carried out. Familiarity with the equipment and procedures is not necessary as training is provided. Personal protective clothing must be worn as directed.

Location Choices

During the process, you will be requested to select up to 2 locations where you would be willing to be headquartered as a Technical Agricultural Officer, listed below:

<i>Carlow</i>	<i>Cavan</i>	<i>Clare</i>	<i>Cork</i>	<i>Donegal</i>	
<i>Dublin</i>	<i>Galway</i>	<i>Kerry</i>	<i>Kildare</i>	<i>Kilkenny</i>	
<i>Laois</i>	<i>Leitrim</i>	<i>Limerick</i>	<i>Longford</i>	<i>Louth</i>	
<i>Mayo</i>	<i>Meath</i>	<i>Monaghan</i>	<i>Offaly</i>	<i>Roscommon</i>	
<i>Sligo</i>	<i>Tipperary</i>	<i>Waterford</i>	<i>Westmeath</i>	<i>Wexford</i>	<i>Wicklow</i>

- Officers accepting posts headquartered in a regional office in a particular county are required to undertake duties as directed in the counties serviced by that office.
- Once you have submitted your location choice(s), changes will not be permitted.

Following Stage one of the selection process, we will be in contact with regard to location choices.

Entry Requirements

Essential

Candidates must, on or before the closing date of 20th August 2020:

Hold the Leaving Certificate or a qualification that is acceptable to PAS as being of an equivalent or higher academic standard (other than any qualification submitted to meet the technical educational requirements noted below).

AND

A. Hold an Advanced Certificate in Agriculture at level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications

Or

B. Hold a qualification in Agriculture at level 7 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications

Or

C. Hold a qualification at level 6 or higher in an area such as horticulture, plant health, animal health, animal welfare or food safety that is acceptable to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine as being relevant to the role of Technical Agricultural Officer. In addition the subject matter of such qualification must include significant content relating to either Animal Husbandry **or** Crop Production.

In addition, candidates will be required to possess and demonstrate the competencies listed in Appendix B, page 20.

Desirable

- Knowledge of Irish agriculture and agri-industry;
- Knowledge of regulatory/control systems;
- Knowledge of public health and food safety;
- Good computer skills
- Possess a current full clean driving licence (Category B) and/or access to a car.

*Explanatory Note on Equivalent or Higher Qualifications

The core qualification for the role of TAO is the **Advanced Certificate in Agriculture** which provides candidates with training in both animal husbandry and crop production.

In the case of Option C above, candidates who hold an alternative qualification that is considered relevant to the role of TAO and who have studied either Animal Husbandry **Or** Crop Production at level 6 or higher, will be considered eligible to apply for this role.

Candidates who are relying on Options B or C to meet eligibility requirements are requested to submit **transcripts of their qualifications** when applying for the role (or as soon as possible after application but no later than the start of the first stage of assessment).

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will carry out all verifications with regard to any query as to the acceptability of a qualification being relevant to the role of Technical Agricultural Officer.

Eligibility to compete and certain restrictions on eligibility

Citizenship Requirements

Eligible Candidates must:

- (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; **or**
- (b) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; **or**
- (c) A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; **or**
- (d) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa **or**
- (e) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa

To qualify candidates must be eligible by the date of any job offer.

Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the Public Service by any Public Service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility)

Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are not eligible to apply for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider Public Service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years. People who availed of the VER scheme are not eligible to compete in this competition. People who availed of the VRS scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility).

Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013)

The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013 introduced a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for Local Authorities. In accordance with the terms of the *Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants* dated 28 June 2012 as detailed above, it is a specific condition of that VER Scheme that persons will not be eligible for re-employment in any Public Service body [as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011 and the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012] for a period of 2 years from their date of departure under this Scheme. These conditions also apply in the case of engagement/employment on a contract for service basis (either as a contractor or as an employee of a contractor).

Declaration:

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a Public Service scheme of incentivised early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

Role Preview - Self Assessment Questionnaire

A Self Assessment Questionnaire is included in this booklet (see Appendix A, page 19). You are encouraged to complete this if considering making an application. This is not a part of the selection process, but rather is for your own use to assist you in deciding if the role of Technical Agricultural Officer is right for you.

Application Process

Applications should be made online through www.publicjobs.ie. Candidates who have not already done so, must register as a New User to create a profile (register a new account), to do so please click on 'Login' in the top right hand corner of our website. Candidates may only have one profile on publicjobs.

Please do not confuse registering (creating a profile) with submitting an application.

Once you have created a profile you must then access the application form, complete and submit it. All sections of the application form must be fully completed, both the standard and detailed application form. Please be aware this is a two part application form, all sections of both must be fully completed, i.e. as set out in Step 1 and Step 2 in "My Applications" on the publicjobs.ie website.

If you are using the "Chrome" web browser and experiencing problems please click on the following: (Available [here](#))

Once you have submitted your application form it is suggested that you return to your publicjobs account and ensure that it has been successfully submitted via 'my applications'. At this point you should consider adding publicjobs.ie to your safe senders or contact list within your email account. This will avoid you not receiving emails because a publicjobs email has been blocked.

Only fully submitted applications will be accepted into the competition. The onus is on the candidate to fully complete the application process. Candidates are at risk of their candidature being withdrawn should they submit a blank or partially completed application. Only fully completed applications will be accepted.

The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to undertake any element of the selection process, is not to be taken as implying that the PAS or other body is satisfied that such a person fulfils the essential requirements. Only fully completed and submitted applications will be accepted into the competition.

Closing Date

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is
3.00pm on 20th August 2020

Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.

Username / Password issues

Forgotten your username or password?

If so, click on the following link:

<https://www.publicjobs.ie/candidateportal/home/forgottenDetails.do>

How to contact PAS?

If you continue to have 'User Name' or 'Password' difficulties please email PAS at TAO2020@publicjobs.ie outlining your issue and giving your name and contact details, including a telephone number, where you can be reached.

Candidates should note that support will only be available during office hours until the closing date.

It is important that you keep note of your username and password as you will need this information to access your Publicjobs.ie Message Board.

Selection Process

The selection process for this competition will comprise of a number of elements.

These may include one or more of the following:

- Completion of Online assessment test(s);
- Completion of an online Assessment Questionnaire;
- Verification test(s);
- Short listing, based on the information contained in your application form;
- Interview(s) which may include video/remote interviews;
- Presentation/Analysis exercise;
- Work sample test or any other tests or exercises that are deemed appropriate.

Applicants must successfully compete and be placed highest in order to be considered for advancement to the next stage of the selection process. The number to be called forward will be determined from time to time by PAS.

Irrespective of which location choice(s) you applied for, you may only sit the various stages of the selection process once. The scores you achieve will carry across all location choices for which you applied and for which you come under consideration.

Candidates with Disabilities

Candidates who have indicated on their application form or profile that they would like to avail of reasonable accommodations are asked to submit a psychologists/medical report. The purpose of the report is to provide PAS with information to act as a basis for determining reasonable accommodations where appropriate.

Scanned copies of these reports must be forwarded to TAO2020@publicjobs.ie by 3pm on 20th August 2020.

If you have recently applied for a competition with PAS and submitted a report, please email Amanda.kavanagh@publicjobs.ie to confirm that your report is on file.

Communication

Interaction with candidates during the selection process will primarily be conducted online. PAS will communicate with you primarily through your Publicjobs.ie Message Board. However, some correspondence may be issued by email. The onus is on the candidate to keep a regular check on your Message Board/Email Account as email notifications of updates may sometimes be filtered into

your Junk/Spam email folders (or 'Promotions' in the case of gmail). You are also advised to check all these folders regularly. The PAS accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant.

It is strongly recommended that you do not change your email address or mobile phone number in the course of this recruitment campaign, as any email/text message will be sent to the email address/telephone number originally supplied (see also paragraph below '*Publicjobs Messageboard*'). Candidates must use their own valid email address. Email addresses from third parties will not be accepted and may invalidate your application. PAS will only communicate application information with the candidate and not with any third party.

Stage 1 of the Selection Process

Online Assessment Tests

As indicated, the selection process may comprise a number of stages. Stage 1 will comprise of online assessment tests.

Candidates will have the opportunity to book their test session via the 'My Bookings' tab on their profile. Candidates who do not book their test session before the deadline will be deemed to be no longer interested in this competition and their application will receive no further consideration.

Candidates must reach the qualifying standard in all tests. Further information including 'Pre-Test Information' will issue to candidates prior to Stage 1.

Should you come under consideration to proceed to subsequent stages of the selection process, information will be forwarded to you at the appropriate time.

Selection Process Indicative Dates (Subject to change):

Closing Date	3pm on Thursday, 20 th August 2020
Candidates with special needs to forward reports by	3pm on Thursday, 20 th August 2020
Stage 1 Online tests	September 2020

Principal Conditions of Service

General

The appointment is to a permanent post in the Civil Service and is subject to the Civil Service Regulations Act 1956 to 2005, the Public Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the Civil Service.

Pay

The salary scale for this position, with effect from 1st January 2020, is as follows:

€24,712.00, €26,070.00, €26,954.00, €28,444.00, €29,934.00, €31,123.00, €32,404.00, €33,525.00, €34,953.00, €36,389.00, €37,832.00, €39,273.00, €40,718.00, €42,118.00, €44,010.00 (NMAX), €45,450.00 (LSI1), €46,883.00 (LSI2)

This rate will apply where the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed on or after 6th April 1995 and is required to make a personal pension contribution.

A different rate will apply where the appointee is a civil or public servant recruited before 6th April 1995 and who **is not required** to make a Personal Pension Contribution.

Long service increments may be payable after 3(LSI1) and 6(LSI2) years satisfactory service at the maximum of the scale.

Candidates should note that entry will be at the minimum of the scale and will not be subject to negotiation and the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Increments may be awarded annually subject to satisfactory performance.

Important Note:

Different terms and conditions may apply, if, immediately prior to appointment the appointee is already a serving Civil Servant or Public Servant.

Payment will be made fortnightly in arrears by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) into a bank account of an officer's choice. Payment cannot be made until a bank account number and bank sort code has been supplied to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Statutory deductions from salary will be made as appropriate.

An officer appointed to the post of Technical Agricultural Officer will agree that any overpayment of salary, allowances, or expenses will be repaid by you in accordance with Circular 07/2018: Recovery of Salary, Allowances, and Expenses Overpayments made to Staff Members/Former Staff Members/Pensioners.

Tenure and Probation:

The successful candidate who is appointed to the post will be required to give a written undertaking that he/she will remain in the assigned post for a minimum of two years before being eligible for transfer. However, in certain circumstances the business needs of the Department may dictate that an officer be transferred earlier.

The appointment is to a permanent position as a Technical Agricultural Officer and will be subject to a probationary period of 12 months from the date of appointment. Notwithstanding this paragraph and the paragraph immediately following below, this will not preclude an extension of the probationary period in appropriate circumstances.

During the period of probation, an officer's performance will be subject to review by the appropriate supervisor(s) to determine whether the officer:

- (i) has performed in a satisfactory manner

- (ii) has been satisfactory in general conduct, and
- (iii) is suitable from the viewpoint of health with particular regard to sick leave.

Prior to completion of the probationary period a decision will be made as to whether or not the officer will be retained. This decision will be based on the officer's performance assessed against the criteria set out in (i) to (iii) above. The detail of the probationary process will be explained to the officer by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on commencement of employment.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraphs in this section, the probationary period may be terminated at any time prior to the expiry of the term of the contract by either side in accordance with the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts, 1973 to 2005.

The probationary period stands suspended where an employee is absent due to Maternity or Adoptive Leave.

In relation to absence on Parental Leave or Carers Leave, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine may require probation to be suspended if the absence is not considered to be consistent with a continuation of the probation.

Probation may be suspended in cases such as absence due to a non-recurring illness.

The employee may in these circumstances make an application to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine for an extension to the probationary period.

All appointees will serve a one-year probationary period. If an appointee who fails to satisfy the conditions of probation has been a serving civil servant immediately prior to their appointment from this competition, the issue of reversion will normally arise. In the event of reversion, an officer will return to a vacancy in their former grade in their former Department.

Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977-2005:

The Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977-2005 will not apply to the termination of this employment by reason only of the expiry of this probationary contract without it being renewed.

Duties:

The employee will be required to perform any duties appropriate to the position which may be assigned from time to time. The officer may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business which would interfere with the performance of official duties or conflict with his/her role in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Headquarters:

The employee's headquarters will be such as may be designated from time to time by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. When absent from home and headquarters on duty appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances will be paid, subject to the normal civil service regulations.

Hours of attendance:

Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time. At present they amount to 43 hours 15 minutes gross per week (37 hours net).

Annual Leave:

The annual leave allowance will be 22 days per annum rising to 23 days after 5 years' service, 24 days after 10 years' service, 25 days after 12 years' service and 26 days after 14 years' service. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave and is on the basis of a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

Health:

A candidate for and any person holding the office must be fully competent and capable of undertaking the duties attached to the office and be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

The Organisation of Working Time Act 1997:

The terms of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

Sick Leave:

Pay during properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, will apply on a pro-rata basis, in accordance with the provisions of the sick leave circulars.

Officers paying the Class A rate of PRSI will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts direct to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Payment of salary during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims for social insurance benefit to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection within the required time limits.

Superannuation and Retirement:

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the Civil Service at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, an appointee who has never worked in the Public Service will be offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"). Full details of the Scheme are at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie

Where the appointee has worked in a pensionable (non-Single Scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment or is currently on a career break or special leave with/without pay different terms may apply. The pension entitlement of such appointees will be established in the context of their public service employment history.

Key provisions attaching to membership of the Single Scheme are as follows:

- Pensionable Age: The minimum age at which pension is payable is 66 (rising to 67 in 2021 and 68 in 2028 in line with changes in State Pension age).
- Retirement Age: Scheme members must retire on reaching the age of 70.
- Career average earnings are used to calculate benefits (a pension and lump sum amount accrue each year and are up-rated each year by reference to CPI).
- Post retirement pension increases are linked to CPI

Pension Abatement

- If the appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public Service and is in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during his/her re-employment that pension **will be subject to abatement** in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. **Please note: In applying for this position you are acknowledging that you understand that the abatement provisions, where relevant, will apply. It is not envisaged that the employing Department/Office will support an application for an abatement waiver in respect of appointments to this position.**

- However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil or Public Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER), the Department of Health Circular 7/2010 VER/VRS or the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government Circular letter LG(P) 06/2013, any of which renders a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements may, however be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

- **Department of Education and Skills Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007**

The Department of Education and Skills introduced an Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. It is a condition of the Early Retirement Scheme that with the exception of the situations set out in paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the relevant circular documentation, and with those exceptions only, if a teacher accepts early retirement under Strands 1, 2 or 3 of this scheme and is subsequently employed in any capacity in any area of the public sector, payment of pension to that person under the scheme will immediately cease. Pension payments will, however, be resumed on the ceasing of such employment or on the person's 60th birthday, whichever is the later, but on resumption, the pension will be based on the person's actual reckonable service as a teacher (i.e. the added years previously granted will not be taken into account in the calculation of the pension payment).

- **Ill-Health-Retirement**

Please note any person who previously retired on ill health grounds under the terms of a superannuation scheme are required to declare, at the initial application phase, that they are in receipt of such a pension to the organisation administering the recruitment competition.

Applicants will be required to attend the CMO's office to assess their ability to provide regular and effective service taking account of the condition which qualified them for IHR.

Appointment post Ill-health retirement from Civil Service

If successful in their application through the competition, the applicant should to be aware of the following:

1. If deemed fit to provide regular and effective service and assigned to a post, their civil service ill-health pension ceases.
2. If the applicant subsequently fails to complete probation or decides to leave their assigned post, there can be no reversion to the civil service IHR status, nor reinstatement of the civil service IHR pension, that existed prior to the application nor is there an entitlement to same.
3. The applicant will become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) upon appointment if they have had a break in pensionable public/civil service of more than 26 weeks.

Appointment post Ill-health retirement from public service:

1. Where an individual has retired from a public service body his/her ill-health pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement under that scheme.
2. If an applicant is successful, on appointment the applicant will be required to declare whether they are in receipt of a public service pension (ill-health or otherwise) and their public service pension may be subject to abatement.
3. The applicant will become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) upon appointment if they have had a break in pensionable public/civil service of more than 26 weeks.

Please note more detailed information in relation to pension implications for those in receipt of a civil or public service ill-health pension is available [via this link](#) or upon request to PAS.

Pension Accrual

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one pre-existing public service pension scheme (i.e. non-Single Scheme) as per the 2012 Act shall apply. This 40-year limit is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

Additional Superannuation Contribution

This appointment is subject to the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) in accordance with the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017.

For further information in relation to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme please see the following website: www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie

Secrecy, Confidentiality and Standards of Behaviour: Official Secrecy and Integrity:

During the term of the probationary contract, an officer will be subject to the Provisions of the Official Secrets Act, 1963, as amended by the Freedom of Information Acts 1997, 2003 and 2014. The officer will agree not to disclose to third parties any confidential information either during or subsequent to the period of employment.

Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour:

The appointee will be subject to the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour.

Ethics in Public Office Acts:

The Ethics in Public Office Acts will apply, where appropriate, to this appointment.

Prior approval of publications:

An officer will agree not to publish material related to his or her official duties without prior approval by the Chairperson of the Authority or by another appropriate authorised officer.

Political Activity:

During the term of employment the officer will be subject to the rules governing public servants and politics.

Important Notice

The foregoing represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Public Appointments Service and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend interview, or a successful result letter, is not to be taken as implying that the Public Appointments Service is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements or is not disqualified by law from holding the position.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position the PAS will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made. Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it, or if additional vacancies arise, PAS may at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

Appointments from Panels

Candidates may only be offered one offer of a position. If a candidate is offered and accepts a position, they must be available to take up that position within a reasonable time frame. A candidate will be removed from the panel once an assignment notice has issued.

Qualification and placement on a panel is not a guarantee of appointment to a position.

Declining an offer of appointment

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it, PAS or the employing organisation may at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not complete and submit the Online Test(s) before the specified date; or do not attend/undertake any subsequent stage of the selection process as requested, attend for interview or other test when and where required by the PAS or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the PAS require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Candidates are expected to provide all requested documentation to PAS, including all forms issued by PAS for completion, within five days of request. Failure to do so will result in the candidate being deemed to have withdrawn from the competition and their candidature will receive no further consideration.

Reschedule Requests

Reschedule requests will only be considered under exceptional circumstances as deemed acceptable by PAS (e.g. Bereavement/illness). Please note that PAS may request supporting documentation as evidence.

Confidentiality of Information and Materials

It is important to remember that this is a competitive process for a role where integrity is paramount. Sharing information on the selection process e.g. through social media or any other means, may result in you being disqualified from the competition.

Please note that all assessment and test materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the test material (including passages of information, questions or answer options), associated materials and/or interview related information may be reproduced or transmitted in any

form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process. Any person who contravenes this provision, or who assists another person(s) in contravening this provision, is liable to prosecution and/or civil suit for loss of copyright and intellectual property.

The importance of Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquires, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

Quality Customer Service

We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

Use of Recording Equipment

PAS does not allow the unsanctioned use of any type of recording on its premises or any location where assessments/tests/interviews, etc. take place, e.g. video interviews, teleconference. This applies to any form of sound recording and any type of still picture or video recording, whether including sound recording or not, and covers any type of device used for these purposes. Any person wishing to use such equipment for any of these purposes must seek written permission in advance. This policy is in place to protect the privacy of staff and customers and the integrity of our assessment material and assessment processes. Unsanctioned use of recording equipment by any person is a breach of this policy. Any candidate involved in such a breach could be disqualified from the competition and could be subject to prosecution under section 55 of the Public Service Management (Recruitment & Appointments) Act, 2004.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- Where she/he has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- Where she/he has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, she/he shall forfeit that appointment.

Procedures where a candidate seeks a review of a Decision taken in relation to their application

A request for review may be taken by a candidate should they be dissatisfied with an action or decision taken by the Public Appointments Service (PAS). The PAS will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of **Section 7** of the Code of Practice *Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service* published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (Commission). When making a request for a review, the candidate must support their request by outlining the facts they believe show that the action taken or decision reached was wrong. A request for review may be refused if the candidate cannot support their request.

The Commission recommends that, subject to the agreement of the candidate, where the office holder (in this instance the Chief Executive Officer of PAS) considers the matter could be resolved they should first seek to engage on an informal basis, before making use of the formal review procedure.

Procedure for Informal Review

- A request for Informal Review must be made within 5 working days of notification of the decision, and should normally take place between the candidate and a representative of the PAS who had played a key role in the selection process.
- Where the decision being conveyed relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for informal review must be received within 2 working days of the date of receipt of the decision.
- Where a candidate remains dissatisfied following any such informal discussion, he/she may adopt the formal procedures set out below.
- If the candidate wishes the matter to be dealt with by way of a formal review, he/she must do so within 2 working days of the notification of the outcome of the informal review.

Procedure for Formal Review of Selection Process

- The candidate must address his/her concerns in relation to the process in writing to the Chief Executive, outlining the facts that they believe show an action taken or decision reached was wrong.
- A request for review must be made within 10 working days of the notification of the selection decision. Where the decision relates to an interim stage of a selection process, the request for review must be received within 4 working days.
- Any extension of these time limits will only be granted in the most exceptional of circumstances and will be at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive.
- The outcome must generally be notified to the candidate within 25 working days of receipt of the request for review.

Complaints Process

A candidate may believe there was a breach of the Commission's Code of Practice by PAS that may have compromised the integrity of the decision reached in the appointment process. The complaints process enables candidates (or potential candidates) to make a complaint under **Section 8** to the Chief Executive Officer of PAS in the first instance, and to the Commission for Public Service Appointments subsequently on appeal if they remain dissatisfied.

- Allegations of a breach of the Code of Practice should be addressed in writing, and within a reasonable timeframe, to the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance. The complainant must outline the facts that they believe show that the process followed was wrong. The complainant must also identify the aspect of the Code they believe has been infringed and enclose any relevant documentation that may support the allegation. A complaint may be dismissed if they the complainant cannot support their allegations by setting out how the Public Appointments Service has fallen short of the principles of this Code.
- On receipt of a complaint PAS may determine to engage with the complainant on an informal basis.

For further information on the above procedures please see the Code of Practice *Appointments to Positions in the Civil and Public Service* which is available on the website of the Commission for Public Service Appointments, www.cpsa.ie

There is no obligation on the PAS to suspend an appointment process while it considers a request for a review. Please note that where a formal review of a recruitment and selection process has taken place under Section 7 of this Code of Practice, a complainant may not seek a further review of the same process under Section 8, other than in the most exceptional circumstances that will be determined by the Commission at its sole discretion.

Requests for Feedback/Test Rechecks

Feedback in relation to the selection process is available on request. Feedback and rechecks may be requested for up to six months after completion of each stage of the competition. There are no specific timeframes set for the provision of feedback.

Please note that the Review Process as set out in the Code of Practice is a separate process with specified timeframes that must be observed. Receipt of feedback is not required to invoke a review. It is not necessary for a candidate to compile a detailed case prior to invoking the review mechanism. The timeframe set out in the CPSA Code cannot be extended for any reason including the provision of feedback or the outcome of rechecks.

Contravention of the Code of Practice

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.

In addition, if a person found guilty of an offence was, or is a candidate at a recruitment process,

- they will be disqualified as a candidate and excluded from the process;
- has been appointed to a post following the recruitment process, they will be removed from that post.

Candidates' Obligations

Candidates must:

- Have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned
- Be suitable on the grounds of character
- Be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned;

and if successful, they will not be appointed to the post unless they:

- Agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed
- Are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position.

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

A third party must not impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate and
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

Other

Elements of the selection process may be undertaken by other parties. In such circumstances it will be necessary for your information to be shared between PAS and these parties in order for your application to be processed.

Candidates should note that test scores attained at any stage in this competition may carry forward, should they apply for future competitions conducted by the Public Appointments Service within a 12 month period. This will be determined by PAS on a case by case basis.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive.

When you register with publicjobs.ie or submit an application for a competition, a computer record is created in your name. Information submitted with an application is used in processing your application. Where the services of a third party are used in processing your application, it may be required to provide them with information, however all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure the security of your data. If you are successful in the recruitment and selection competition, your application may be made available to the Human Resource section of the organisation to which you have been assigned.

To make a request to access your personal data please submit your request by email to: dpo@publicjobs.ie ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record(s).

Information in relation to a candidate's personal data held by the Public Appointments Service are set out on the Data Protection page of www.publicjobs.ie.

Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes.

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify.

Appendix A

- The following questionnaire may help you to decide if the role of Technical Agricultural Officer is for you.
- The questions are not scored and are not to be returned to the Public Appointments Service. It is for your own information only.
- It is important that you answer each question honestly. If you answer 'No' to a number of questions you may want to reconsider if this is the role for you.

Question Number	Question	Yes or No
1.	I am interested in Issues relevant to the role of TAO (e.g. agriculture, horticulture, veterinary, food safety, etc) and am willing to learn and keep up to date with changes in scheme and relevant legislation in this area.	
2.	I am comfortable taking samples from animals (tissue, blood, faeces etc) and crops	
3.	I am comfortable using Information Technology and willing to learn how to use new computer packages/databases	
4.	I am thorough and accurate in my work e.g. keeping thorough and accurate records of meetings and checking documents	
5.	I complete required paperwork in a timely and accurate manner	
6.	I am willing to work in a range of environments including outdoor, office environment and industrial setting e.g. meat plants and rendering plants	
7.	I am comfortable dealing with people both face to face and on the phone	
8.	I am patient and willing to spend time explaining things to people in a way that they will understand	
9.	I am able to deliver unwelcome or negative news in a sensitive and professional way	
10.	I am able to deal with conflict and remain calm in difficult situations	
11.	I am able to write reports in a clear and logical manner	
12.	I am able to gather relevant information to make logical and objective decisions	
13.	I am able to plan and organise my work effectively and structure my workload to ensure priorities are met	
14.	I like to follow procedures strictly and take pride in doing things well.	
15.	I am willing to travel for work	

Technical Agricultural Officer Level Competencies

Effective Performance Indicators

Team work	Shows respect for colleagues and co-workers
	Develops and maintains good working relationships with others, sharing information and knowledge, as appropriate
	Offers own ideas and perspectives
	Understands own role in the team, making every effort to play his/her part
Information Management / Processing	Approaches and delivers all work in a thorough and organised manner
	Follows procedures and protocols, understanding their value and the rationale behind them
	Keeps high quality records that are easy for others to understand
	Draws appropriate conclusions from information
	Suggests new ways of doing things better and more efficiently
	Is comfortable working with different types of information, e.g. written, numerical, charts, and carries out calculations such as arithmetic, percentages etc
Delivery of Results	Takes responsibility for work and sees it through to the appropriate next level
	Completes work in a timely manner
	Adapts quickly to new ways of doing things
	Checks all work thoroughly to ensure it is completed to a high standard and learns from mistakes
	Writes with correct grammar and spelling and draws reasonable conclusions from written instructions
	Identifies and appreciates the urgency and importance of different tasks
	Demonstrates initiative and flexibility in ensuring work is delivered
	Is self-reliant and uses judgment on when to ask manager or colleagues for guidance
Customer Service & Communication Skills	Actively listens to others and tries to understand their perspectives/ requirements/ needs
	Understands the steps or processes that customers must go through and can clearly explain these
	Is respectful, courteous and professional, remaining composed, even in challenging circumstances
	Can be firm when necessary and communicate with confidence and authority
	Communicates clearly and fluently when speaking and in writing
Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development	Develops and maintains the skills and expertise required to perform in the role effectively, e.g. relevant technologies, IT systems, spreadsheets, Microsoft Office, relevant policies etc.
	Clearly understands the role, objectives and targets and how they fit into the work of the unit
	Is committed to self-development and continuously seeks to improve personal performance
Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values	Consistently strives to perform at a high level and deliver a quality service
	Serves the Government and people of Ireland
	Is thorough and conscientious, even if work is routine
	Is enthusiastic and resilient, persevering in the face of challenges and setbacks
	Is personally honest and trustworthy
	At all times, acts with integrity

Appendix C

IMPORTANT INFORMATION Terms and Conditions

Your attention is drawn to this important information. By accessing or attempting any assessment / test materials you are agreeing to be bound by the terms set out below.

1. All test and assessment materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the tests/ assessment materials (including any text, questions and/or potential answer options) or associated materials (including practice and/ or familiarisation materials) may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, printing, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process. Any person(s) who contravenes this provision, whether an applicant or other, or who assists another person(s) in contravening this provision, is liable to prosecution and/ or civil suit for loss of copyright and intellectual property.
2. Your attention is drawn the Commission for Public Service Appointment's Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service. In particular please note Section 5 - Responsibility of Candidates (see below).

Canvassing

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify them and will result in their exclusion from the appointments process.

Candidates' obligations

Candidates in the recruitment process must not:

- Knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- Canvass any person, with or without inducements
- Interfere with or compromise the process in any way.

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Penalties for failure to comply

Any person who contravenes the above provisions, or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine and/or imprisonment.

If a person found guilty of such an offence was or is a candidate in a recruitment process, then:

- Where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate
- Where he/she has been appointed subsequent to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

3. The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to undertake any element of the selection process is not to be taken as implying that the Public Appointments Service is satisfied that such a person fulfils the essential requirements.
As previously highlighted candidates must ensure that, all equipment required is installed and fully operational prior to testing.