



Skills Funding
Agency

Candidate pack

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Introduction and contact information

Thank you for your interest in the Skills Funding Agency Chief Technical Office and good luck with your application.

This document contains important information about our organisation, employee benefits, and how to apply.

If you have any further questions, or would like to speak to someone about any of our vacancies, please email digitalcareers@sfa.bis.gov.uk.

About us

The Skills Funding Agency is responsible for giving colleges, training providers and employers the right funding to help adults, young people, the unemployed and people with low skill levels to get the skills they need for employment. This includes:

- supporting traineeships for young people not in education, employment and training (NEET)
- running the National Apprenticeship Service which supports, funds and co-ordinates the delivery of apprenticeships and traineeships throughout England
- running the [National Careers Service](#), which gives impartial, professional advice on careers, skills and training
- overseeing and managing [24+ Advanced Learning Loans](#)
- helping offenders get into education or training using the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service

[Find out more about the Agency.](#)

Our technological reinvention

The Chief Technical Office (CTO) defines the technical blueprint for the Skills Funding Agency, delivering technologies and systems that meet the needs of our users and staff.

We're currently managing a significant transformation programme - disaggregating, re-using, optimising, sharing and modernising our technology, to improve productivity and efficiency, and reduce waste.

As part of our transformation we're:

- leading the Agency's move to common technology services (government as a platform)
- moving from single-supplier large IT contracts, to a [new multi-vendor approach](#)
- adopting a [cloud-first policy](#)
- providing desktop and network solutions to enable Agency staff to [work anytime, anywhere](#)

To help us continue our journey, we're recruiting talented, enthusiastic and passionate individuals who are excited by the challenge of transforming technological services.

Find out more

Visit our blog to find out more about the work we're doing: sfadigital.blog.gov.uk

Pension

You will be entitled to join the highly competitive Civil Service Pension Scheme, which many experts agree is one of the most generous in the UK.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies recently said that "the biggest difference between public and private sectors remains the value of employer contributions to public service pensions. These are much more generous in the public sector than in the private sector".

If you have accrued pension rights in another pension scheme, you may be eligible to transfer these rights into the Civil Service Pension Scheme.

You'll be given more information on our pension scheme before you start new job. Visit civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk for more information.

Benefits

In addition to a competitive salary and pension scheme, we also offer a generous benefits package which includes:

- season ticket loans - our offices are just a 10-minute walk from Coventry Rail Station

- free onsite parking at our Coventry office
- a generous maternity/adoption/paternity leave package

Employee Assistance Programme

Our Employee Assistance Programme is a telephone helpline and online portal. You can access these 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to get support, advice and guidance on a range of issues, including:

- legal information and advice on a range of issues, including property, consumer rights, and family matters
- financial information on matters such as benefits, taxes, budgeting and planning
- phone and face-to-face counselling

Enhance Benefits Scheme

Our Enhance Benefits Scheme allows you to choose additional benefits which suit you best. There are a wide range on offer, including:

- dental insurance
- health screening
- critical illness cover
- travel insurance
- childcare vouchers
- Cycle to Work scheme
- discounted high street and restaurant vouchers
- gym membership

You can review your selections each year or when certain personal or family situations change.

Learning, development and progression

We actively encourage our staff to develop their potential and to make full use of the many learning and development opportunities we make available.

From the day you join us, you will have a personal development plan clearly linked to your performance objectives.

All our staff have the opportunity to regularly update their core transferable skills, which are relevant across all sectors.

Being part of the wider civil service means that there are excellent opportunities for career moves and progression and there is extensive digital transformation work going on across the civil service. We are committed to promoting from within and advertise opportunities internally.

Professional qualifications and study leave

If you'd like to gain a professional qualification relevant to your role, you'll be entitled to up to 10 days study leave a year.

Hours and leave

You will normally work a five day week of 37 hours (excluding lunch hours). Your annual leave allowance will be 25 days, increasing by 1 day every year to a maximum of 30 days after five years' service.

In addition, all staff receive the Queen's Birthday privilege holiday and eight days' bank and public holidays.

Three days of your leave must be taken between the Christmas and New Year bank holidays, as our offices are closed during this period.

Flexible working

Flexible working is open to everyone regardless of their personal circumstances, where business or operational needs allow. We manage requests informally where possible.

We also offer a range of enhanced flexibilities¹ which mean you may:

- request a career break of between six months and three years (after at least one year's service).
- purchase additional annual leave
- request part-time working for a minimum of 12 months

¹ Please note, these are non-contractual.

Location

We're based close to Coventry city centre.

Commuting by train

Our office is just 10 minutes' walk from Coventry train station. If you're travelling to work by train, we offer interest-free season ticket loans.

A guide to commuting times is shown below.

Time to Coventry	Town/City
15 minutes or less	Leamington Spa Rugby
30 minutes or less	Banbury Birmingham Milton Keynes Northampton
45 minutes or less	Oxford Solihull Tamworth Watford West Bromwich Wolverhampton Watford
60 minutes or less	Lichfield London Euston

Commuting by car

We offer free onsite parking at our Coventry office.

The city has good road links and can be easily reached from the A45, A46, M1, M6, M40 and M42.

A number of towns and villages are less than 30 minutes' drive from our offices, including Kenilworth, Warwick, Leamington Spa and Solihull.

Birmingham, Redditch, Southam, Stratford upon Avon, Walsall and many others

are within a 45 minute drive.

How to apply

To apply, send your CV and application form to digitalcareers@sfa.bis.gov.uk, putting the job title in the subject box.

If you currently work for the civil service, or have done so within the last 12 months, you will also need to complete the [additional civil service employee form](#).

Please keep your CV to a maximum of three pages and ensure it includes your full name and contact details (address, email, daytime phone number) so we can get in touch with you.

We'll confirm we've received your application within five working days. If you haven't heard from us after this time, please get in touch.

Your completed application must be received on or before the closing date stated in the job description.

What we look for in a CV and application form

At this stage of the application process we are most interested in confirming your specialist skills and experience. Make sure that together your CV and application form show us how you meet the essential and desirable (if given) criteria of the role.

Interview stage

The aim of the interview process is to give you the best opportunity to show you are the most suitable person for the job and to ensure we make the right choice based on an objective assessment of each candidate's merits. Depending on the role we are recruiting for, you may be asked to do one or more of the following:

- an interview based on the specialist skills and experience, and the competencies (behaviours) required for the role.
- a skills ability test
- a presentation exercise
- an occupational personality questionnaire

If you are invited to interview, you will receive more information about what to expect in advance.

In preparation for interview you should familiarise yourself with our [competency framework](#) and refer to the required competencies for the role.

Equality and diversity

The Skills Funding Agency is committed to providing equal opportunities for applicants and employees, irrespective of their background or characteristics.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for candidates with the right mix of skills and potential. We select all applicants for interview based on their skill, qualifications and experience.

Application and interview adjustments

We aim to ensure that our buildings are as accessible as possible and that appropriate facilities are provided for all candidates throughout the selection process. Please let us know if you require any special arrangements at any stage of the process.

Guaranteed interview scheme

We are committed to the employment and career development of people with disabilities and will guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post.

By 'minimum criteria' we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your CV and application form which demonstrates that you generally meet the essential requirements of the role.

If you would like to apply under the guaranteed interview scheme, please indicate this on the application questions form.

Nationality and eligibility to work in the UK

To be considered for this role you must be a British Citizen, Citizen of the Commonwealth², the Republic of Ireland, or an EC National. Swiss nationals and

² Please note that 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.

some Turkish nationals are also eligible. Nationals of specified Member States of the European Free Trade Area will also be eligible, together with certain members of their families.

In addition, we can only accept your application if you are eligible to work in the UK.

If you have any questions, please contact us.

Conflict of interests

You must let us know of any interests you have that may conflict with your work at the Skills Funding Agency. These could include the business interests, share holdings, positions of authority, consultancy arrangements or connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies of you or your spouse/partner.

Security

If you are offered this role, you will be required to undergo a security check. Generally this will involve completing a simple form and providing proof of your address and identity.

Probation

New employees are normally required to serve a three month probationary period.