

Institute of Public Administration

Recruitment of:

Specialist in Strategic Human Resource Management and People Development

Candidate Information Booklet

November 2026

Closing date for applications: 14th December 2026 at 1pm

IPA
An Foras Riaracháin
Institute of Public Administration

About the IPA

The Organisation

Our Purpose

The Institute of Public Administration exists to support a capable, confident and effective Public Service in Ireland. Our purpose is to strengthen the capability and leadership required to meet complex demands, make sound decisions and contribute to better public services for the people of Ireland. We do this through learning and leadership development that is evidence-based, practice-led and focused on application at a whole-of-government level.

As a trusted, government-supported institution, we provide an open and inclusive space for learning, reflection and exchange across the Public Service. We bring people together across organisational and sectoral boundaries to strengthen shared understanding, professional standards and continuous improvement.

We support a Public Service that can adapt to change, work collaboratively across the system and translate policy intent into effective delivery and public value.

Find out more about the IPA at: www.ipa.ie.

Our Role in Supporting the Public Service

We play a fundamental role within Ireland's Public Service as a trusted, independent learning partner in capability and leadership development grounded in specialist knowledge and expertise. Our role is founded on long-standing academic credibility, professional expertise and a deep understanding of how public services are designed, governed and delivered in Ireland. This reflects our leadership in shaping future public-service capability development.

We engage with public servants at all stages of their careers, from early career professionals to senior leaders, across a wide range of functions and policy domains. We help build shared standards, common understanding and consistent approaches to public service challenges, while recognising the diversity of organisational contexts and responsibilities.

We bring learning into the realities of public service work. Our role is to shape learning that is credible and grounded in practice, from accredited learning to professional expertise and skills development.

Independence is central to our role. We provide a space for learning and dialogue across the Public Service, enabling open discussion and informed challenge. We do this by connecting evidence, policy intent and delivery experience in ways that strengthen collective capability.

We work closely with public service sponsors and partners who invest in learning and development. These relationships are based on trust, professionalism and a shared commitment to public value, supporting capability development that is sustained, applied and relevant to real delivery challenges.

What we offer

Competitive salary (IPA Grade 3)	Starting salary €69,375 per annum. Rising to €106,747 (14-point salary scale, the top 2 points are long service increments). Annual increase subject to satisfactory performance. Additional pay increases in line with national pay agreements Prior public sector experience will be taken into consideration in determining starting salary.
Holidays and Leave	29 days annual leave. Hybrid working – up to 2 days working from home subject to operational demands. The Institute currently has a flexible working hours attendance scheme in operation.
Central location	Based in Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4 beside dart station. Premises subject to relocation to central city-centre office in 2027/2028 (estimate).
Pension	Career-Average Defined Benefit Pension Scheme. Retirement benefits are mainly based on a percentage of your pensionable earnings throughout your public service career (Single Pension Scheme for Public Servants). Prior public sector employees (pre-2013) will be entered on to the IPA superannuation scheme.
Staff Development	Support for professional development programmes, including full fee remission for IPA academic and training programmes.
Benefits	Permanent contract. Employee supports including Employee Assistance Programme, Tax-free travel pass, Bike-to-work scheme. Social Committee. Social clubs and staff events (i.e. Book Club, Drawing Circle, Tag Rugby)

Job Description

Specialist in Strategic Human Resource Management and People Development

Grade: Grade 3

Professional Development in the IPA:

The IPA Professional Development department delivers non-accredited and professionally accredited programmes that advance the understanding, standard and practice for public servants in key skill areas.

Role Overview:

The Specialist will be part of the Strategic Human Resource Management and People Development Team, which designs and delivers professional development programmes for civil and public service organisations.

The primary focus of the role is to develop the knowledge, skills and capability of managers and HR professionals across the public sector through the design, delivery and evaluation of high-quality learning interventions. The Specialist will act as a subject matter expert, translating HRM, employee relations and employment law principles into practical learning experiences that support effective people management in client organisations.

The Specialist will ensure that all learning content reflects current employment legislation, public sector HR and industrial relations practice, and the CIPD Profession Map. The role will also contribute to programmes that support learners in progressing towards CIPD accreditation and professional membership, helping participants translate learning into recognised professional development and practice.

Principal Duties

Programme Design & Delivery

- Design, develop and deliver learning programmes across the employee lifecycle, with particular emphasis on:
    - Probation and performance management
    - Employee engagement and development
    - Managing underperformance
    - Challenging conversations and conflict resolution
    - Disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work procedures
    - Mediation, workplace investigations and terminations
    - Equality, working time, protected disclosures and procedural fairness
- Ensure programmes reflect:
    - The CIPD Profession Map and associated standards
    - Current employment legislation and codes of practice
    - Public sector HR and industrial relations best practice

    - Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) and Labour Court procedures
    - The Civil and Public Service Capability Framework

- Deliver learning that develops understanding of:
    - WRC and Labour Court processes
    - Mediation, conciliation, adjudication and dispute resolution
    - Case preparation, documentation and claims management
    - Public sector obligations and relevant precedents

CIPD and Professional Accreditation

- Contribute to the design and delivery of programmes that support progression towards CIPD accreditation and membership.
- Act as a subject matter expert in maintaining alignment between IPA programmes and CIPD standards.
- Support learners throughout the journey from programme participation to professional recognition, including:
    - Advising on eligibility for CIPD Associate Membership
    - Supporting membership application processes where appropriate
    - Liaising with CIPD to maintain alignment with accreditation and membership requirements
- Ensure assessment, learner records and programme outcomes are appropriately documented to support accreditation, quality assurance and reporting requirements.

Client Engagement and Relationship Management

- Engage with clients to identify learning, development and consultancy requirements.
- Provide expert guidance to clients on complex HRM and IR challenges.
- Collaborate with colleagues on programme development, delivery and continuous improvement to achieve positive outcomes for clients and learners.

Other general duties

- Organise appropriate conferences, seminars, workshops and events.
- Contribute to programme administration, business cycle planning, promotion and business development activities as required.
- Undertake such other duties as may be assigned from time to time.

About the ideal candidate

Qualifications	• A third level qualification (minimum NFQ Level 8) in Human Resources, Employment Law, Business, or a closely related field (essential). • CIPD Associate, Chartered Member (MCIPD) or Chartered Fellow (FCIPD), or working towards same (essential). • Postgraduate qualification in HRM, Employment Law, Adult Education or a related field (desirable). • Professional qualification in training and development (minimum QQI Level 6) (desirable). • Qualification in mediation, conflict resolution, coaching or organisation development (desirable).
Knowledge	• Strong knowledge of HRM, employee relations and Irish employment legislation (essential). • Knowledge of Irish public sector HR and industrial relations frameworks (essential). • Knowledge of WRC and Labour Court procedures and relevant codes of practice (essential). • Knowledge of the CIPD Profession Map and professional standards and membership pathways. • Understanding of the Civil Service Capability Framework and its application in learning design. • Understanding of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights duty.
Experience	• Minimum 4 years' professional experience at an appropriate level working in role(s) centred on HR management, training, or organisational development (essential). • Demonstrated experience delivering training across multiple stages of the employee lifecycle (essential). • At least 2-3 years' experience in lecturing or training (desirable). • Experience of designing and/or delivering learning aligned to CIPD standards • Experience in curriculum design and programme development. • Experience working within or with public-sector agencies. • Demonstrable experience in managing a wide and diverse workload and competing demands and deadlines • Demonstrable experience in presentation and paper/report writing to a high standard

Skills	• Excellent training and facilitation skills including presentation and communication skills. • Ability to explain complex employment-law and IR concepts in accessible, practical terms. • Strong client-relationship management skills. • Ability to analyse data and participant feedback to improve training effectiveness. • Ability to manage group dynamics and facilitate challenging conversations. • Strong research, analytical and writing skills. • Proficiency in virtual delivery technologies (Zoom, MS Teams, Webex). • Strong working knowledge of Microsoft Office and digital learning tools.
Personal attributes	• Ability to work independently and collaboratively as part of a team. • Commitment to Institute-wide development and self-development. • Demonstrate flexibility in adapting to changing requirements. • Commitment to quality delivery, continuous improvement and client focus. • Fluent in English, with proficiency in Irish being an advantage • Approachable, with the ability to build rapport with a diverse range of participants and clients • Adaptable to diverse groups and learning environments • Willingness to travel within Ireland for training delivery
Health	• Each candidate shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service

General Conditions

This position will be filled on a permanent basis. While the position is Dublin based a considerable amount of our work is delivered in client organisations throughout Ireland and abroad on occasions. Members of the staff of the Institute may be required to attend meetings and other functions on occasions outside normal working hours.

Our Values

Character: Each candidate must demonstrate commitment to the IPA values:

- Curiosity
- Empowerment
- Connection
- Commitment to Excellence
- Community

Our commitment to supporting our Staff

The Institute is committed to embracing opportunities for blended working, to build a dynamic, agile and responsive organisation while sustaining strong standards of performance and high levels of productivity.

A healthy work-life balance is important to us and we recognise this by offering a comprehensive range of work-life balance options and a wide variety of special leave options.

We provide access to the Cycle to Work Scheme and the Tax Saver Scheme and we have a staff wellbeing and employee assistance programme.

We are committed to providing ongoing learning and development opportunities so that you can develop to your full potential. Staff are actively encouraged to pursue further education opportunities.

Our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

As an equal opportunity employer, we are committed to implementing equal opportunities in all our employment policies and procedures.

The Institute of Public Administration values and welcomes diversity and is committed to creating a truly inclusive workplace. We aim to develop colleagues to enable them to make a full contribution to meeting the Institute's objectives, and to fulfil their own potential on merit.

We welcome and encourage job applications from candidates of all backgrounds.

Principal Conditions of Service

Remuneration

The salary scale for this position ranges from €69,375 to €106,749 (14-point scale, the top 2 points are long service increments) per annum pro rata.

Entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration will not be subject to negotiation and may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.
Different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment the appointee is already a serving Civil Servant or Public Servant.

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be payable in line with current government policy.

Tenure
This role is offered on a permanent basis. A secondment arrangement may be considered on request from another Public Sector organisation.

Location
While the position is Dublin based, a considerable proportion of our work is delivered in client organisations throughout Ireland, and abroad on occasions. Members of the staff of the Institute may be required to attend meetings and other functions on occasions outside normal working hours.

Hours of Attendance
Hours of attendance will be as fixed from time to time but will not amount to less than 35 hours per week. The successful candidate will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of their duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations.

The Institute operates a formal Blended Working model based on service/business requirements.

The Institute currently has a flexible working hour attendance scheme in operation.

Annual Leave
The Annual Leave allowance for this position is 29 days. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave in the Institute, is based on a five-day week and is exclusive of the usual public holidays.

Sick Leave
The rate of 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 Civil & Public Service sick leave circulars.

Safety & Welfare
The holder of the post shall co-operate with the terms of the Institute's Safety Statement. They shall familiarise themselves with the safety rules and procedures and adhere to same.

Training
It is a condition of employment that successful candidates will be required to participate in training programmes relevant to the skills necessary for the performance of the duties attaching to the post.

Superannuation Contribution
Membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme is compulsory for all employees except where there is membership of pre-existing public service superannuation scheme. Details will be provided to the appointee prior to appointment.

For new entrants under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme, effective from 1st January 2013, superannuation contributions are as follows: 3.5% of net

pensionable remuneration and 3% of pensionable remuneration. Pension and retirement lump sum will be based on career-average pensionable remuneration; pensions will be co-ordinated with the State Pension Contributory.

Additional Superannuation Contribution
This appointment is subject to the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) in accordance with the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. Note; ASC deductions are in addition to any pension contributions (main scheme and spouses' and children's contributions) required under the rules of your pension scheme.

Important Notice
The above 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.

Confidentiality
All enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings relating to recruitment and selection are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone outside those directly involved in the recruitment process.

Freedom of Information
Candidates can expect that all enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014.

Eligibility to Compete
Candidates must, by the date of any job offer, be:

- A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
  A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- 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
- 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.

Application & Selection

Before you proceed
Before proceeding with this phase of the selection process you should satisfy yourself that you meet the education & experience criteria for the post as set out in this booklet.

Communications
Conscia will contact you when necessary, at each stage of the competition by email. You should only submit one email address for all correspondence in relation to this competition.

It is important to note that the email address you provide when applying must be one that you can access at all times. The onus is on the applicant to inform Human Resources of any change in email address throughout the recruitment and selection campaign. This can be done by emailing ipa@consciatalent.com. The onus is also on each applicant to ensure that they are in receipt of all communication from the Institute. The Institute does not accept responsibility for communications not accessed or received by an applicant.

How to apply

Conscia will be managing all aspects of the recruitment process on behalf of Institute of Public Administration. All information on the role can be found at https://www.consciatalent.com/ipa

On this page, you can click on the relevant job title and download the Candidate Booklet and Application Form. You can also submit your completed Application Form by clicking "Apply for Job".

Applications must be made by completing an application form. Please note that CV's should not be submitted.

Selection Process

The Selection Process may include the following:

- Short-listing of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application;
- Competitive interview;
- Work sample/role play/media exercise, and any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

Please note that the Institute reserves the right to hold any part of the selection process by way of remote/video-call platform or other appropriate methodology.

Shortlisting

The Institute reserves the right to shortlist applications. The shortlisting process may take the form of either a desktop shortlisting process based on the information contained in the applications submitted or a shortlisting interview.

Where, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to the competition and the standard of knowledge, training or experience in general of such persons, the Institute considers that it would be reasonable not to admit all the persons to the competition, the Institute may admit to the competition only persons who appear likely to it to attain in the competition a standard sufficient for selection and recommendation for appointment.

The information you supply in your application will play a central part in the shortlisting process. The Institute's decision to include you on the shortlist of candidates going forward to the next stage of the process may be determined based on this information.

Interview
Interviews are envisaged to take place week commencing 4th January 2027. You may also be contacted in relation to the requirement to complete an on-line questionnaire should this be included in the selection process. The onus is on you to attend for interview on the dates and times allocated. Alternative dates and times cannot be facilitated. When attending for interview you are requested to bring photographic identification.

The interview is your opportunity to give evidence of your knowledge, skills and experience and the Institute's opportunity to assess your suitability for the role as advertised.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that the Institute is satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the role or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important therefore for you to note, the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview.

The Institute may at its discretion require candidates to attend a preliminary interview in which case admission to the competitive interview would be conditional on candidates reaching such a standard as the Institute considers appropriate in the preliminary interview.
Interviews shall be conducted by Board(s) set up by the Institute. The Board(s) will assess the merits of candidates (except insofar as they are assessed otherwise) in respect of matters referred to in the prescribed qualifications and any other relevant matters. Only candidates who reach such a standard as the Institute considers satisfactory in the competitive interview shall be considered for selection and placed on a panel. The onus is on all applicants to make themselves available for interview.

The Institute reserves the right to vary the number and sequence of each stage of the selection process as the competition progresses

Panels
A panel may be formed on the basis of the outcomes of the selection process. Candidates who are deemed appointable for the role may be approached should subsequent vacancies arise within 12 months of the interview date. Placement on any panel from this competition is no guarantee that a position will be offered. The selection process will not be concluded until such time as references have been sought and clearance checks, i.e., occupational health, and verification of education qualifications, have been carried out.

Offer of Appointment
The Institute shall require persons to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month, or as agreed. If they fail to take up the appointment within such period, or such longer period as the Institute in its absolute discretion may determine, the Institute may not appoint them.

Probationary Period
All new employees are required to satisfactorily complete a probationary period, in accordance with the 'Terms and Conditions of Employment' in their employment contract. Employees will be required to serve an initial probationary period. During this period, the employee's performance on the job and potential abilities are evaluated to determine suitability for the position. At the end of this probationary period, a formal assessment will be carried out by the employee's line manager, resulting in a decision on whether the employee has completed their probation satisfactorily.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn
Candidates who do not complete and submit any assessments before the specified date or do not attend/undertake any stage of the selection process as requested or do not furnish such evidence as requested in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Data Protection
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. The personal information (data) collected on the application form, including any attachments, (which may include the collection of sensitive personal data) is collected for the purpose of processing this application and any data collected is subject to the regulations.

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify.

The Institute will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The Institute is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.