**Information pack for appointment to the Board of the Water Industry Commission for Scotland**



The Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy is seeking to appoint up to three members to the board of the Water Industry Commission for Scotland (WICS). The Cabinet Secretary values highly the benefits of having different points of view on the board and welcomes applications from people from all walks of life.

The appointments process for this board vacancies follows the [Code of Practice for Public Appointments](https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/publication/statutory-guidance-application-2022-code-practice) and is regulated by the [Ethical Standards Commissioner.](https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/public-appointments)

**Key dates for this appointment round**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Closing date** | 12pm, Friday 4 April 2025 |
| **Sift of applications** | w/c 11 April 2025 |
| **Date applicants will hear about the outcome of their application** | w/c 14 April 2025 |
| **Interviews** | Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 April 2025  In-person at WICS’ offices: Moray House, 1st Floor, Forthside Way, Stirling, FK8 1QZ  **It is unlikely that we will be able to offer an alternative interview date.** |
| **Ministerial decision** | w/c 12 May 2025 |
| **Start date** | 15 July 2025 |

March 2025

Dear applicant

**Appointment of Members of the Water Industry Commission for Scotland**

Many thanks for your interest in becoming a Member of the Water Industry Commission for Scotland.

The Water Industry Commission is the independent economic regulator of Scotland’s Water Industry and has statutory responsibility for the promotion of the interests of water customers through the robust and independent economic regulation of Scottish Water, Scotland’s publicly owned water utility. In December 2023, the Auditor General for Scotland issued a section 22 report identifying financial management and governance issues at the Commission. Since then, the organisation has been undergoing a period of significant change. This is, therefore, an exciting opportunity to contribute to the leadership of the organisation as it continues to embed improvements whilst progressing work on the strategic review of water charges for regulatory period 2027-2033.

We are particularly keen to see applications from under-represented groups such as women, disabled people and ethnic minorities. I would like to see us have a wide range of candidates from which to choose, so I hope that you will seriously consider applying for this important role.

All the information you require to apply for this position is in the pack. If you have any questions about the role or would like to have an informal conversation about it, then please contact Jo Blewett, Deputy Director Water Industry and Corporate Operations, Scottish Government at [Jo.Blewett@gov.scot](mailto:Jo.Blewett@gov.scot).

Thank you for your interest in the role. I hope you will give serious consideration to applying.

Yours sincerely

Ronnie Hinds

Interim Chair, WICS

**Information about the role**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Remuneration** | £304.34 per member per day (non-pensionable) and reasonable expenses. |
| **Time commitment** | 1 day per week |
| **Length of appointment term** | 4 years |
| **Location of meetings** | Board meetings are held at Moray House, Stirling. Other meetings are held online. |
| **Disqualifications** | As per the Water Industry (Scotland) Act 2002, a person is disqualified from appointment, and from holding office, as a member of the Commission if that person is a member of—  (a)the House of Lords,  (b)the House of Commons,  (c)the Scottish Parliament, or  (d)the European Parliament.  A member of the Scottish Parliament cannot also hold a public appointment for public bodies listed in the schedule of [the Scottish Parliament (Disqualification) Order 2020](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2020/9780111046029/contents).  Former ministers and senior crown servants (director general level and above) should seek advice from the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (ACOBA) before applying for this role. |

**The Board of the Water Industry Commission for Scotland**

[The Water Industry Commission for Scotland (WICS)](https://wics.scot/) was established under the Water Industry Act 2002 to undertake the economic regulation of Scottish Water. The Commission is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of six members, comprising up to five non-executive members, including the Chair, and a Chief Executive. It has statutory responsibility for the promotion of the interests of Scottish Water’s customers through the robust and independent economic regulation of Scottish Water.

WICS’ principal roles are to ensure that customer charges reflect the lowest reasonable overall cost for Scottish Water to deliver the Scottish Ministers’ Objectives for the water sector; to comment on Scottish Water’s reporting of its performance, challenging Scottish Water to become more efficient and sustainable; and to facilitate the entry of retail water and sewerage providers that wish to supply non-household customers in Scotland

WICS is made up of around 25 people, comprising economists, strategists, analysts, communicators and support staff. The board provides leadership, direction and support to ensure that WICS delivers its functions effectively and efficiently.

**The role of the Board Members**

As a board member, you will work with the rest of the board to ensure WICS:

* sets a clear strategy that will result in the successful carrying out of its

statutory obligations;

* has its strategy properly carried out by the Executive Team;
* sets charge limits that both protect the interests of customers in Scotland and

allows Scottish Water to meet Scottish Ministers’ objectives and provide for its

long term financial sustainability;

* monitors - together with the quality regulators (Scottish Environment Protection Agency and the Drinking Water Quality Regulator), consumer representatives and the Scottish Government – the progress that Scottish Water is making in delivering the outputs/outcomes set by Ministers and

paid for by customers;

* monitors and regulates the retail market for non-household customers to
* respond to the needs and choices of customers in the most efficient manner;
* maintains high standards of corporate governance;
* participates appropriately in the HydroNation programme.

You will also:

* prepare for, attend and contribute positively towards meetings of the Body and its committees;
* attend other meetings and seminars on behalf of the Body (as required);
* approve a statement of accounts for the Body for each financial year on the basis determined by the Scottish Ministers;
* monitor the financial position of the Body against budget allocations and key financial targets and ensure corrective action is taken where required;
* carry out other tasks that may reasonably be required.

**The selection** **panel**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Chair** | Jo Blewett, Deputy Director, Water Industry and Corporate Operations, Scottish Government |
| **Panel member** | Ronnie Hinds, Interim Chair, Water Industry Commission for Scotland |
| **Representative from the Ethical Standards Commissioner** | Matt Drynan, Public Appointments Advisor |

Please note that applicants will be asked to declare if they know any members of the selection panel. The panel will also declare if they know any applicants. Any actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be managed in line with the [Ethical Standards Commissioners Code of Practice for Public Appointments](https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/publication/code-practice-ministerial-appointments-public-bodies-scotland-march-2022-version).

**Person specification**

We are looking for **up to** **three** new members who can put their experience to good use on the board. The table below sets out the skills, knowledge, experience and attributes that we are seeking and explains how the criteria will be tested. You may have gained your experience through work, by being active in your community, in a voluntary capacity or through your own lived experience.

Please ensure your **supporting statement is no more than 2000 words**, and provides information for **all four** essential criteria.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Example indicators** | **How this will be assessed** |
| **Essential Criteria**  We are looking for individuals who can meet each of the areas listed below in the context of an economic regulatory business. Please ensure your **supporting statement is no more than 2000 words**, and provides information for **all four** essential criteria. | | |
| 1. **Seeing the bigger picture** | * experience of contributing to the development of a strategy or business plan; * identifies a comprehensive range of priorities, challenges and risks within different timeframes; can evaluate their impact from a strategic perspective; * has a clear informed picture of the long-term aim of an organisation when considering issues; * sees whole picture, rather than the part they may feel most qualified or experienced in; * questioning shows good level of understanding of organisational and other issues that have led people to form their views. | This will be assessed through your written supporting statement as part of the application process. A response is **essential.**  An **assessment exercise** and **questions at interview** will also provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate this criterion. |
| 1. **Change management** | * has direct experience of successfully managing change; * has an understanding of what is required to support change; * has an understanding of why change might not work and be able to put forward ideas on how proposals could be revised to be successful. | This will be assessed through your written supporting statement as part of the application process. A response is **essential.**  An **assessment exercise** and **questions at interview** will also provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate this criterion. |
| 1. **Governance** | * has direct experience of ensuring effective governance at senior management or board level; * is able to articulate what board responsibilities are from a fiscal and legal perspective, and can demonstrate direct involvement in implementation of good governance principles; * has an understanding of audit and risk management and is able to demonstrate effective practical application of that understanding. | This will be assessed through your written supporting statement as part of the application process. A response is **essential.**  An **assessment exercise** and **questions at interview** will also provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate this criterion. |
| 1. **Analysis and decision-making skills** | * recognises the information which is needed to make the decision; * demonstrates sound evaluation of the information with a good range of conclusions being reached, which are clearly explained; * comfortable working with both numerical and written data; * makes decisions which have had a positive impact at departmental, functional or organisational level; * uses ‘hard’ evidence as well as seeking the views of others; * able to make decisions when the information available is complicated and made up of several components which have to be analysed and assessed and may contain conflicting information or indicators; * thinks through the implications of decisions before coming to a final position. | This will be assessed through your written supporting statement as part of the application process. A response is **essential.**  An **assessment exercise** and **questions at interview** will also provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate this criterion. |

**How to apply online**

Click the ‘apply now’ link at the top of the advert. As part of the online application process, you will need to complete the personal information section, and then [**fill out and attach as a PDF this application form**.](https://www.jobs.gov.scot/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/WICS-Members-Application-Form-Submit-by-12pm-4-Apr-2025-1.docx)

The application form provides space for the following:

1. **Personal Statement**

You have **2000 words in total** for your personal statement. You should provide examples against **each of the criteria**, clearly indicating throughout your statement which of the criteria you are evidencing. You should also seek to distribute your words evenly across each of the criteria.

1. **Tailored CV**

In addition to your supporting statement, you should also submit a **tailored CV**. This should be no more than **600 words** and tailored to the role and the criteria set out in the table above. This will be used by the panel in conjunction with the supporting statement to provide evidence against each of the criteria listed.

If you use assistive technology, please contact the Public Appointments Team for an accessible application form by email at [public.appointments@gov.scot](mailto:public.appointments@gov.scot)

**The assessment** **process**

The assessment process will happen as follows:

1. The selection panel will assess all applications against the criteria for appointment (see the person specification). **Those who demonstrate evidence that most closely meet the criteria tested at this stage will be shortlisted for interview.**
2. The selection panel will interview candidates. The questions they ask will relate directly to the criteria for appointment. In addition, you will be asked to prepare a short oral response to a board paper exercise, which will be issued to you in advance.
3. The selection panel will also ask questions relevant to the fit and proper person test (see below) which will include questions about the [Principles of Public Life.](https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/code-practice-ministerial-appointments-public-bodies-scotland-march-2022-version#annex-1-the-principles-of-public-life-in-scotland)
4. The selection panel will review the evidence provided and agree on which candidates have most closely met the criteria for selection and should be recommended to the appointing Minister.
5. The appointing Minister will make a decision about whom to appoint based on evidence from the selection panel. The appointing Minister may request to meet with candidates before making a final decision.
6. Appointees will be asked to complete pre-appointment checks which will include a Disclosure Check (there is no charge for this). Appointment is conditional on satisfactory completion of these.

**Fit and proper person checks**

In the context of public appointments, a fit and proper person is someone who is suitable because they meet the requirements of the role, and their past or present activities and behaviour means they are suitable. Tests are built into different stages of the appointment process to ensure that:

* Conduct to date has been compatible with the public appointment
* Membership is not barred by the body's constitution e.g., criminal record or bankruptcy (see disqualifications)
* There are no unmanageable conflicts of interest
* Political activity is declared
* There is agreement to abide by the [Principles of Public life in Scotland](https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/code-practice-ministerial-appointments-public-bodies-scotland-march-2022-version#annex-1-the-principles-of-public-life-in-scotland)
* There is confirmation that the time commitment required for the role can be met.

**Social media checks for candidates invited to interview**

The selection panel may consider publicly available information about candidates which is posted by candidates on social media. Any findings that the selection panel agree are pertinent to the role or that may call into question suitability for the appointment, credibility of the appointments process or the public body will be discussed with candidates at interview. Consideration of any issues will take place openly and transparently to establish the facts. Candidates will be given an opportunity to respond to any concerns. This information will be handled in line with the Privacy Notice for public appointments.

**Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018**

The Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 sets a ‘gender representation objective’ that a board should have 50% of non-executive members who are women.

In circumstances where there is a tie break between a woman and a man section 4(3) of the Act requires the appointing Minister to appoint the woman if doing so will result in the board achieving (or making progress towards achieving) the gender representation objective. In a tie break the appointing Minister can also chose to appoint a candidate, who is not a woman, on the basis of another characteristic or situation and can give preference to that candidate (section 4 (4) of the 2018 Act). For more information please see the [Scottish Government Guidance on the Act](https://www.gov.scot/publications/gender-representation-public-boards-scotland-act-2018-statutory-guidance-2/)

**Common questions and answers**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Who can I contact to speak about this role?** | You can contact Jo Blewett, Deputy Director Water Industry and Corporate Operations, Scottish Government to discuss the role: [Jo.Blewett@gov.scot](mailto:Jo.Blewett@gov.scot) |
| **Who can I speak to about a disability related reasonable adjustment?** | Please contact the Public Appointments Team  Email: public.appointments@gov.scot  Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](https://contactscotland-bsl.org) |
| **I am having a problem with the application process. Who can I speak with?** | Please contact the Public Appointments Team (see contact details above). |
| **Do you have any advice for candidates attending interviews?** | Yes. More information is provided here: [Introduction - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-appointments-guide/pages/application-process/#stage2) |
| **I can’t attend the interview in person, can I attend remotely?** | Yes. You can request to attend the interview using MS teams. Please contact the Public Appointments Team (see contact details above). |
| **What does ‘appointed on merit’ mean?** | Appointed on merit means that the people who are appointed most closely meet the criteria that is sought for the board vacancy at a point in time. People are assessed on the evidence that they present in the appointments process and the findings of the fit and proper person test. |
| **What role does the Ethical Standards Commissioner (ESC) have in the appointments process?** | The ESC [regulate and monitor the public appointments process.](https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/public-appointments) The Commissioner plays a role in ensuring appointments are made on merit and use fair methods. More information about the Commissioner’s role is provided here:  [Public appointments Information leaflet | Ethical Standards Commissioner](https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/publication/public-appointments-information-leaflet) |
| **Can I apply if I am not a British citizen?** | Yes. You can apply for and be appointed to the Boards of Public Bodies if you are not a British citizen however youmust be legally entitled to work in the UK. |
| **Would remuneration for a public appointment impact on my benefits?** | Possibly. Taking up a remunerated public appointment may affect benefits payments.  This will depend on individual circumstances and you should seek advice from your benefits provider. More information is provided here: [Public appointments and welfare benefits: information - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-appointments-and-welfare-benefits-information/) |
| **Do the selection panel see information from the diversity monitoring form?** | No. Diversity monitoring information provided by applicants is not shared with the selection panel.  Information about a reasonable adjustment may be shared with the selection panel to ensure that requirements are met (e.g. if a BSL interpreter is required). |
| **Do I need to provide an email address and contact details at application stage?** | In order to meet the requirements of the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) the Scottish Government must be able to verify the credentials of applicants for public appointments should they be recommended for appointment. To ensure that this is possible all applicants must provide an address and contact details at application stage. If applicants do not provide this information their application will be rejected. |
| **How will my personal information be handled?** | All personal information will be handled with great care and in line with UK GDPR and data protection requirements. Further information can be found in the [Privacy Notice](https://www.jobs.gov.scot/privacy-notice#xd_co_f=OGY4OTA3NDktMTg4Ny00NzkxLWEyMGEtZTczYTAyN2EyZWYx~). |
| **Can I get feedback on my application or interview?** | Yes. Feedback is available on request. |
| **Is any training provided if I am offered and take up an appointment?** | Yes. Each board has their own induction process and training offer. New appointees are also invited to attend an induction day hosted by the Scottish Government. |
| **Can I apply for a Chair role on a board if I have already been a member of that board?** | Yes. Board members can serve a maximum of 8 years on one board in one role. The board Chair is considered a different role and so current and previous members can apply. |
| **Is it possible to hold more than one public appointment?** | Yes. It is possible to have more than one public appointment. You should check that you can make the time commitment for an additional appointment and that there are no unmanageable conflicts of interest. |
| **Are public appointments announced?** | Yes. Every appointment is announced here: [Public appointments: news releases - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/collections/public-appointments-announcements/)  The board may also announce new appointments on their own website and social media platforms. Information published will include a biography and details of any political activity within the last 5 years. |
| **What standards are expected of board members?** | The conduct expected of board members of Scottish public boards is set out here: [Members of devolved public bodies: model code of conduct - December 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/model-code-conduct-members-devolved-public-bodies-2/)(this includes the Principles of Public Life) |
| **How can I complain about the public appointments process?** | Further information about the complaints process for public appointments can be found here: [How to apply - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-appointments-guide/pages/complaints-process/)  Anyone concerned about public appointments can raise a complaint and have it independently investigated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner.  [Investigation process public appointments | Ethical Standards Commissioner](https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/investigation-process-public-appointments) |

**For further information**

Please contact the Public Appointments Team, Scottish Government

**Email:** [public.appointments@gov.scot](mailto:public.appointments@gov.scot)

**Phone number:** 0300 244 1898

Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](https://contactscotland-bsl.org)

