

Information pack for the appointment of a Member to the Board of Environmental Standards Scotland

ENVIRONMENTAL **Standards Scotland** Ìrean Àrainneachdail na h-Alba

The Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy is seeking to appoint a new Member to the Board of Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS). 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 Member appointment follows the [Code of Practice for Public Appointments](#) and are regulated by the [Ethical Standards Commissioner](#).

Key dates for this appointment round

Closing date	5.00 pm on Monday, 17 November 2025.
Sift of applications	4 December 2025.
Date applicants will hear about the outcome of their application	w/b 8 December 2025.
Interviews	17 December 2025 in Environmental Standards Scotland, Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5HE It is unlikely that we will be able to offer alternative interview dates.
Ministerial recommendation	by 26 January 2026.

Parliamentary consideration	February 2026 (details to be confirmed).
Start date	1 March 2026.

20 October 2025

Dear Applicant

Appointment to the Board of Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS)

Scotland has high ambitions for its environment and for tackling climate change. Environmental Standards Scotland's (ESS) mission is to ensure that our environmental laws and standards are complied with, and their effectiveness improved.

ESS has established itself within the system of environmental governance in Scotland and the UK and looks to learn from European and global good practice. This Board position offers the opportunity to play a major role in our work, and to make a real difference to the environment now, and for future generations.

The Board and Audit and Risk Committee currently has significant experience across independent scrutiny, environmental regulation and expertise in European environmental policy and law. We are now looking to add to our capacity in strategic communications and/or public law. You will help us to help the public understand what we do and which issues we focus on.

Applicants with strong skills in the field of communications as it relates to the environment or in public law will have a rapid impact on our work. You will also help us make sure that ESS is best equipped to deliver its vision in challenging times. We recognise that these skills may have been exercised through a wide variety of contexts, including the public, private or voluntary sectors, and we welcome applications from within the UK and internationally.

We value the benefits of diverse experience and points of view on our Board. We also welcome and encourage applications from people with protected characteristics, and from those living within Scotland's island communities.

Our new Board member should be able to offer constructive challenge through strong interpersonal communication skills, be a strategic thinker, and be able to analyse evidence to inform complex decision making.

We can provide further information on our progress to date, our ambitions and the work of the Board. If you wish to discuss the work of ESS, please feel free to contact me on ESSChair@environmentalstandards.scot.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Dixon', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr Richard Dixon

Chair, Environmental Standards Scotland

Information about the Member role

Remuneration	£212.92 per day up to a maximum of £5,535.92 per annum. Reasonable expenses incurred will be reimbursed. The role is non-pensionable.
Time commitment	The time commitment for a Member averages around 0.5 day per week (26 days per year). Board meetings are currently on average every two months. In addition to this there may be time commitments around CEO, Board and staff engagement outwith Board meetings. In addition some Board Members will also take on roles on ESS Committee's.
Length of appointment term	The appointment is for four years from 1 March 2026. There is the possibility of reappointment by Ministers subject to evidence of effective performance and satisfying the skills and knowledge required at the time of reappointment and beyond. Reappointment is not automatic.
Location of meetings	ESS works on a hybrid basis. However, Board meeting are generally in-person as is the approach to staff and stakeholder engagement. 2026 meeting dates are on 6 February; 8 May; 7 August; 2 October; and 4 December 2026.

Disqualifications	A detailed list of people who may not be members of ESS can be found in Schedule 1, Paragraph 3 of the <u>UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021</u>. 3 (1) The Scottish Ministers may not appoint a person as a member if sub-paragraph (2) or (3) applies to the person. (2) This sub-paragraph applies to a person who is— (a) a member of— (i) the Scottish Parliament, (ii) the House of Commons, (iii) the House of Lords, (iv) Senedd Cymru, or (v) the Northern Ireland Assembly, (b) a member of the Scottish Government, (c) a Minister of the Crown, (d) an office-holder in the Scottish Administration, (e) an office-holder of the Crown in right of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, (f) a councillor of a local authority, (g) the holder of any other relevant elective office as defined by paragraph 1(8) of schedule 7 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, (h) a civil servant, (i) an employee of a local authority. (3) This sub-paragraph applies to a person who is or has been— (a) insolvent,
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(b) disqualified as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986,

(c) disqualified as a charity trustee under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005,

(d) disqualified under a disqualification provision analogous to either of those mentioned in paragraphs (b) and (c) anywhere in the world.

(4) For the purpose of sub-paragraph (3)(a), a person is or has been insolvent if—

(a) the person's estate is or has been sequestrated,

(b) the person has granted a trust deed for creditors or has made a composition or arrangement with creditors,

(c) the person is or has been the subject of any other kind of arrangement analogous to either of those mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (b) anywhere in the world.

Further to this, 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](#).

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.

Conflict of Interest

Please ensure that there are no conflicts of interest which would mean you would be unable to take up a board role with ESS. You will be asked in your application to set out details of any other involvement in public life or potential conflicts of interest, which will be explored further at interview or checked as part of the final assessment. You may find it helpful to consider the ESS Conflict of Interest Policy in the fit and proper person sections of the [Members Code of Conduct](#).

Environmental Standards Scotland

Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS) mission is to ensure that Scotland's environmental laws and standards are complied with, and their effectiveness improved, to achieve Scotland's ambitions for the environment and climate change. ESS' functions are set out in the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021 and include monitoring and investigating public authorities' compliance with environmental law, the effectiveness of the law and how it is implemented and applied in Scotland.

The [ESS Strategic Plan](#) sets out how ESS delivers on these responsibilities. This Strategic Plan has now been reviewed and a draft of ESS' new [Strategy 2026 – 2031](#) was consulted on over summer 2025 and a revised version will be submitted to the Scottish Parliament for its approval at the end of October 2025.

ESS' [Annual Report and Accounts](#) describes the reach and impact of the organisation.

ESS received a budget allocation of £3.02 million in the financial year 2024/25. Further budgetary considerations are also currently being considered related to new duties, for example those set out in the recent Natural Environment Bill [financial memorandum](#).

The staff head count as of March 2025 was 25. This core team is also supported by a range of shared services and contracts, including; HR, IT, finance, legal advice, communications, procurement and internal audit.

The Role of the Board Member

The staff team and [Board](#) of ESS are located across Scotland, with Board members also based in England and Brussels. The main ESS office is in Edinburgh and meetings are currently held both in-person and through hybrid working arrangements where required.

Using their skills, experience and networks, the new Board Member will contribute to the governance and smooth running of ESS, helping in particular to ensure that the objectives of the new Strategy are delivered over the next five years.

Further Information

For further information about the role, please contact Dr Richard Dixon, Chair of the Board of ESS at ESSChair@environmentalstandards.scot or Rebecca Peppiette, Head of Corporate Services and Communications (rebecca.peppiette@environmentalstandards.scot).

You can find out more about Environmental Standards Scotland at www.environmentalstandards.scot/

The Selection Panel

Chair	Tim Ellis, Deputy Director, Future Environment Division; Scottish Government
Panel member	Dr Richard Dixon, Chair, Environmental Standards Scotland
Independent panel member	Shonaig Macpherson CBE FRSE, President of Prosper

Please note that applicants will be asked to declare if they know any members of the selection panel. The selection 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](#).

Parliamentary Approval of the Appointment

As part of the appointment process of board members to ESS, Scottish Ministers are required to seek the approval from the Scottish Parliament of the appointment of the individual chosen as the most able by Ministers (“the nominee”).

The Ministers’ recommendation is considered by the Scottish Parliament’s [Net Zero Energy and Transport Committee](#). In submitting their recommendation, Ministers will provide a report which will include information from the nominee’s application and a summary of the evidence from the assessment process about how the nominee’s skills contribute to the requirement on the Scottish Ministers that ESS, as a whole, has experience and knowledge in the attributes set out in UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021 ([UK Withdrawal from the European Union \(Continuity\) \(Scotland\) Act 2021](#)). The Report will confirm the candidate’s suitability for public appointment, including the results of the fit and proper person test.

Following receipt of the Report the Committee may wish to meet with the nominee to discuss the recommendation. Committee may decide to meet the nominee as part of one of the meetings in its public meeting schedule which would mean the meeting is broadcast online via Scottish Parliament TV.

Following its consideration of the Ministers’ recommendation the Committee reports its findings to the Scottish Parliament. A motion for approval is then lodged separately for the Scottish Parliament to consider and vote upon in the Parliament’s chamber. The nominee is not expected to attend the parliamentary session dealing with the motion and vote.

The Report will have all personal contact details redacted. Information on protected characteristics from the Public Appointments monitoring form such as age, ethnic grouping, disability and sexual orientation etc, will not be shared. If the nominee is requested to attend a meeting with the Committee, the nominee’s contact details , email address and phone number will be shared with the Clerk to the Committee to issue the invitation and explain the arrangements for the meeting. By submitting an application for this role, applicants consent to sharing their personal data for that purpose.

Person Specification

The Cabinet Secretary is looking for a Member who can put their skills, knowledge, understanding and experience to good use on the independent Board of ESS. 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 skills through work, by being active in your community, in a voluntary capacity or through your own lived experience.

Essential Criteria	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
1 .Communication and Influencing	• excellent influencing and communications skills; • the ability to work within organisations to deliver shared outcomes; • the ability to communicate with diverse audiences.	This will be assessed at the application stage and at the interview stage. In your online application: Please demonstrate how you meet this criterion. Your response should be no more than 300 words.
2. Constructive Challenge	• the ability to effectively express views in group settings and challenge constructively; • provides clear focus in ensuring that an organisation achieves its objectives; • successful in enabling collaborative work and reaching consensus; • ability to learn from and then adapt working practices.	This will be assessed at the application stage and at the interview stage. In your online application: Please demonstrate how you meet this criterion. Your response should be no more than 300 words.
3. Analysis and Decision Making	• effective use of evidence to inform complex decision making;	This will be assessed at the application stage and at the interview stage.

	• the ability to explain complex information including legal and technical information, in a way which is understood clearly; • understanding of the importance of strategic thinking.	In your online application: Please demonstrate how you meet this criterion. Your response should be no more than 300 words.
4. Understanding of the role of ESS and its functions	• broad understanding of ESS' strategic context within the Scottish environmental landscape including the political context.	This will be assessed at the application stage and at the interview stage. In your online application: Please demonstrate how you meet this criterion. Your response should be no more than 300 words.
5. Passion for the environment	• an understanding of environmental issues and a readiness to advocate on them; • an ability to understand and provide context to ESS' role and purpose; • awareness of policy and strategy relating to climate, nature, resources or water. at local, national or international levels.	This will be assessed at the application stage and at the interview stage. In your online application: Please demonstrate how you meet this criterion. Your response should be no more than 300 words.

The Application Process

How to apply

For the online application, you should provide evidence of the essential criteria listed below:

Essential Criteria

1. Communication and Influencing
2. Constructive Challenge
3. Analysis and Decision Making
4. Understanding of the role of ESS and its functions
5. Passion for the environment

There is a limit of 300 words for each criterion.

In your online application you should also upload a two page tailored career history. This should include relevant information from your professional, personal and voluntary experience. You may wish to include:

- Dates;
- Information about the organisation;
- Information about your role and the skills you used.

We strongly recommend that you draft your answers in a word document and check that you are happy with them before copying and pasting your answers in the relevant sections of the online application. When completing the online application, you will need to enter information in all the boxes before proceeding, therefore you will need to enter 'N/A' in optional boxes that you are not providing evidence for.

Please note that you will not be able to update your answers or supporting documents once you have submitted your application. Late applications will not be accepted by the selection panel.

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

Guaranteed interviews

This appointment round will provide guaranteed interviews for disabled people who meet the criteria for the role being tested at the application stage.

The Assessment Process

The assessment process will happen as follows:

1. The selection panel will assess all application forms against the criteria for appointment (see the person specification). Those who demonstrate evidence that most closely meets 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. There will also be a further exercise where candidates will be asked to prepare and provide a short verbal presentation/statement about the difference ESS has made.
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 in Scotland](#).
4. The selection panel will review the evidence provided and agree on which candidate or candidates have most closely met the criteria for selection and should be recommended to the Cabinet Secretary.
5. The Cabinet Secretary will make a decision about whom to appoint based on evidence from the selection panel.
6. The Cabinet Secretary may request to meet with the candidate or candidates before making a final decision.
7. Once the Cabinet Secretary has made their decision, they will make a recommendation to the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero Energy and Transport Committee seeking approval to the appointment (full details of the parliamentary process is at page 11).
8. 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. Please see the link [above](#);
- There is confirmation that the time commitment required for the role can be met.

Media/Social media checks for candidates invited to interview

The selection panel may consider publicly available information posted by candidates on social media or information that is reported in the 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: [Privacy notice - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/privacy-notice-public-appointments/guide/pages/default.aspx).

Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018

Revised statutory guidance on the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 (“2018 Act”) was published on 26 June 2025 following the Supreme Court Judgment dated 16 April 2025 on the definition of “Man”, “Woman” and “Sex” in the Equality Act 2010, and consequently in the 2018 Act.

In order to comply with the 2018 Act, Scottish Government must now request data on biological sex as registered at birth from all applicants for Public Appointments on Boards which are captured by the 2018 Act. Following your application you will receive a request from the Public Appointments Team to request this data from you.

The Scottish Government is committed to dignity, fairness and respect for all and actively invites applications from all.

Common Questions and Answers

Who can I contact to speak about this role?	For further information about the role, please contact Dr Richard Dixon, Chair of the Board of ESS at ESSChair@environmentalstandards.scot or Rebecca Peppiette, Head of Corporate Services and Communications (rebecca.peppiette@environmentalstandards.scot). Further information about ESS can be found at www.environmentalstandards.scot/ .
Who can I speak to about a disability related reasonable adjustment?	Please contact the Public Appointments Team by email at public.appointments@gov.scot or by telephone on 0300 244 1898. Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via contactSCOTLAND-BSL .
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 about how to complete an application form?	Yes. More information is provided here: Introduction- Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) .
Do you have any advice for candidates attending interviews?	Yes. More information is provided here: Introduction - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) .
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).
Will you reimburse expenses for attending an interview?	Yes. You can claim reasonable expenses. Further information will be provided with the invitation to interview.
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 . 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 .
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, you must 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 at Public Appointments and Welfare Benefits: Information - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) .
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. If applicants opt for a guaranteed interview this information will be shared with the selection panel following shortlisting. Sometimes information about a reasonable adjustment is 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 on the application system.

Can I get feedback on my application or interview?	Yes. You can request feedback.
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.
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) 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 five 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) (this includes the Principles of Public Life). You will also wish to read the ESS Standing Orders .
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) . Anyone concerned about public appointments can raise a complaint and have it independently investigated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner. Details here Investigation process public appointments Ethical Standards Commissioner

For further information

Please contact the Public Appointments Team, Scottish Government

Email: public.appointments@gov.scot

Phone number: 0300 244 1898

Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#)

