

Information Pack for Appointment to the Board of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland



The Minister for Mental Wellbeing, Public Health, Sport, Alcohol and Drugs is seeking to appoint up to 4 new Members to the Board of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland. The Minister 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 these Board vacancies follows the [Code of Practice for Public Appointments](#) and is regulated by the [Ethical Standards Commissioner](#).

Key dates for this appointment round

Closing date	Thursday 30 July 2026
Sift of applications	Friday 14 August 2026
Date applicants will hear about the outcome of their application	Monday 17 August 2026
Interviews	Interviews will take place online using MS Teams on: • Tuesday 25 August 2026 • Wednesday 26 August 2026 It is unlikely that we will be able to offer an alternative interview date.
Ministerial decision	W/C 7 September 2026
Estimated start date	3 Members in December 2026 and 1 Member in July 2027

Dear Applicant

Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland – Board Member Appointment

Thank you for your interest in the Mental Welfare Commission (the Commission). This is an exciting time for new Board members to guide and develop our work.

Our purpose is to protect and promote the human rights of people with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions.

Our work focuses on individual experience, often at the complex interface between the individual's rights, the law and ethics and the care the person is receiving. From this we make recommendations for change and improvement to services through our visiting programme, our monitoring of the use of mental health and incapacity law and our investigation activity. We work to empower individuals and their carers to know about and understand their rights and to challenge and influence services to provide rights-based care and treatment. We influence practice through our good practice guides and contribute to national, and occasionally international, policy developments.

Our strategic plan for 2026-2029 ([document available here](#)) focuses on four key priorities:

- to challenge and promote change;
- to focus on the most vulnerable;
- to increase the impact (in the work that we do); and
- to improve our efficiency and effectiveness.

We need Board members who will ensure that focusing on the most vulnerable is at the heart of everything we do. A successful Board needs members with a variety of skills and experience and we want to add people from a range of backgrounds to our diverse board. If you require any reasonable adjustments during any part of the process please let us know.

You do not need to have experience of being on a Board, working in a management post or at a senior level. You may have this experience or you may have developed the skills, knowledge and experience we are looking for in quite different contexts. For example, you may have a natural aptitude in these areas or you may have gained them by being active in your community, in a voluntary capacity or just through your own personal life experience. We are looking for individuals who can put their skills, knowledge and experience to use for the benefit of communities and individuals, through our Board, and who are willing to grow and develop into the role. We are looking for people who are committed to improving outcomes for some of Scotland's most vulnerable people.

This needs to be a time of real change in Scotland's approach to how the law interacts with the care and treatment of people with mental ill health or incapacity. We were closely involved with the Scottish Mental Health Review, please see the [Scottish Government](#)

[response](#) to the review, and we firmly believe that Scotland has the opportunity to create new legislation that can bring real improvement to the care and treatment of some of the most vulnerable members of our community. We are keen to see this happen.

We'd be happy to tell you more about exactly what the Mental Welfare Commission does and the role of its Members. So, if you'd find that helpful, Please email Stuart Gray at stuart.gray3@nhs.scot to arrange a call with Ashley Dee, Head of Culture and Corporate Services at the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland.

Yours sincerely
Sandy Riddell
Chair

Information about the role

Remuneration	The remuneration for the role is £279.13 per day, which is non-pensionable. You would also receive allowances at rates set centrally for relevant travel and subsistence costs. All reasonable receipted dependant-carer expenses, including childcare, and for support required to help you carry out your duties effectively will also be reimbursed where applicable.
Time Commitment	You must be able to make a firm commitment to spend up to 15 days per year on Board business. This time will be a mix of daytime Board meetings, reading documents and attending stakeholder events throughout Scotland. You may need to attend additional meetings exceptionally subject to the Board's ongoing business needs.
Length of Appointment Term	The term of appointment will be for four years. When the appointment term ends, the skills the Board requires will be reassessed. If you satisfy the requirements of the Board at that time, and there is evidence of your effective performance, Scottish Ministers may consider reappointing you for a further term, but this is not guaranteed. A non-executive member's total period of appointment will not exceed eight years.
Location of Meetings	The Commission is based at Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh. The meetings for the Commission Board, usually six each year, will normally be held in Edinburgh. The

	expectation is that the work will be a blend of virtual and physical meetings.
Disqualifications	A person is disqualified from appointment, and from holding office, as a member of the Commission if that person is: • a member of the House of Commons • a member of the European Parliament • a member of the Scottish Parliament – see 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.

The Board of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland is an independent statutory body that protects and promotes the human rights of people with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions, and works to ensure that care and treatment are lawful, person-centred and consistent with best practice.

Our Mission

To be a leading and independent voice in promoting a society where people with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions are treated fairly, have their rights respected and have appropriate support to live the life of their choice.

Our Purpose

We protect and promote the human rights of people with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions.

Our Priorities

To achieve our mission and purpose over the next three years, we have identified four strategic priorities

- To challenge and promote change
- Focus on the most vulnerable
- Increase our impact (in the work that we do)

- Improve our efficiency and effectiveness

Our Activity

- Influencing and empowering
- Visiting individuals
- Monitoring the law
- Investigations and casework
- Information and advice

The Commission has a key statutory role in safeguarding individual rights and monitoring how the principles of the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 are applied in practice. Through its direct contact with individuals who use and provide mental health and learning disability services, the Commission tracks the impact of policy on care and treatment, gathers and evaluates service users' and carers' experiences and uses these to press for necessary improvements in policy and practice. Through direct interventions in the care and treatment of individuals, providing guidance and conducting investigations, the Commission has a strong influence on the quality of care and treatment of some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

The Commission has lived experienced board members who actively influence the work of the Commission. In addition, the Commission is committed to engagement and participation across its full range of activities and also has employed staff with lived experience etc. This team forms part of the Commission's developing engagement and participation activities, with a Scotland wide remit of both raising awareness of individual's rights and seeking views and involvement from a range of groups. The Commission also has a statutory Advisory Committee with lived experience representation which is being further developed. This acts on the direction from the Commission in addition to offering guidance and advice to the Commission.

[This video](#) outlines the Mental Welfare Commission's history, key achievements and continuing contribution to improving outcomes for people in Scotland, with input from the Chair and Chief Executive.

The Commission's [annual report](#) outlines the impact of our work in protecting and promoting the rights of those we serve.

More information on the role and work of the Commission can be found at www.mwcscot.org.uk.

The role of the Board Member

Board members are accountable to the Minister through the Chair of the Commission. Our non-executive members support the Chair and work with the other members to discharge the functions of the Commission which comprise:

- strategy development and innovation;
- monitoring the effective performance of the Commission's activities and ensuring achievement of its aims;
- ensuring governance arrangements are sound and providing good governance across the Board and committees:
 - ensuring oversight, scrutiny, assurance on proposals and decisions the Board makes, and overseeing the implementation of Board decisions;
 - ensuring the right systems are in place to hold executives to account rigorously and effectively through supportive challenge;
- resource allocation to address strategic objectives;
- ensuring probity and propriety in the workings of the organisation including performance and risk management;
- uphold the highest ethical standards of integrity and probity - being honest and trustworthy - and comply with the Board's Code of Conduct (which can be accessed via this link: [Board Code of Conduct](#) derived from the nine principles of public life in Scotland set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (based on the Nolan Principles); and
- participate and chair committees of the Board.

The Selection Panel

Panel Chair	Joanne Farrow, Deputy Director, Complex Care & Rights Division, Mental Health, Social Care and National Care Service Directorate
Panel Member	Sandy Riddell, Chair of the Mental Welfare Commission

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](#).

Person Specification

The Mental Welfare Commission are looking to appoint up to 4 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.

Priority Criteria

The priority criteria are weighted over the essential criteria, and the candidates who provide the strongest evidence against the priority criteria will be considered most able to fulfil the roles. In the event that candidates provide evidence of equal merit against the priority criteria, the selection panel will then take into account the strength of the evidence presented against the essential criteria in determining the candidates most able to fulfil the roles.

The Board is seeking a mix of strengths in the 4 Board members to be appointed and therefore Ministers will appoint the combination of candidates who together most closely meet the priority criteria for selection.

Applicants must provide evidence for **at least one** priority criterion - you may include evidence for more than one if relevant.

Priority Criteria	Example Indicators	Assessment
1. Carer Experienced	Lived experience as a carer within Scotland with insight into the Scottish mental health and social care landscape.	Application: Using no more than 300 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form. Interview: You will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.

2. Clinical Experience in Mental Health provision	Clinical Experience in mental health provision in Scotland (e.g. nursing or psychiatry), with an understanding of regulation and clinical practice.	Application: Using no more than 300 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form. Interview: You will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.
3. Experience in Staff Wellbeing and Governance	Demonstrable knowledge and experience of legislative processes, legal frameworks and oversight responsibilities in relation to staff wellbeing and governance across the health and social care sector in Scotland.	Application: Using no more than 300 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form. Interview: You will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.

Essential Criteria

Applicants must provide evidence for **all** the essential criteria listed below.

Essential Criteria	Example Indicators	Assessment
1. Ability to contribute effectively to the work of the Board through analysis and decision-making	- Ability to be effective as part of a team. - Ability to extract key information and balance different considerations to reach conclusions and explain your reasoning. - Ability to see the “bigger picture” when considering issues and topics.	Application: Using no more than 300 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form. Interview: You will be asked to undertake a <u>practical exercise</u> and will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.

2. Enthusiastic and passionate in promoting individual rights	• Ability to value diversity and promote anti-discriminatory and anti-stigma practice. • Commitment to improving outcomes for people living with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions. • Awareness of human rights approaches for people living with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions. • Understanding of experiences and challenges in accessing appropriate services.	Application: Using no more than 300 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form. Interview: You will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.
3. Ability to provide constructive and supportive challenge	• Ability to offer supportive challenge to executive and board colleagues. • Confidence and self-awareness to chair, or participate as a member of, committees through effective oversight and scrutiny. • Demonstrates a strong understanding of governance and accountability, supporting robust scrutiny, asking insightful questions, and maintaining a clear focus on achieving outcomes.	Application: Using no more than 300 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form. Interview: You will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.
4. Ability to communicate and influence effectively	• Ability to be focussed and succinct in your communications • Ability to listen to diverse voices and respect views that are different to your own • Ability to engage with and influence a diverse range of people and stakeholders.	This will be assessed holistically throughout the selection process.

Tailored Career History

In addition to being asked to provide evidence against the Criteria assessed at application stage, you will also be asked to provide a tailored career history. This should include information from your professional, personal and voluntary experience which is relevant to this role. This should be no more than 400 words. You may wish to include:

- Dates
- Information about the organisation
- Information about your role and experience

How to apply online

How to apply online

1. Find the role you wish to apply for on our [website](#).
2. Click the 'Apply Now' button at the top of the advert and complete the personal information and conflict of interest questions.
3. When prompted, provide evidence against the relevant box/boxes for the Priority Criteria and Essential Criteria 1–3. Please note that each response must not exceed 300 words.
4. Complete the Tailored Career History section in no more than 400 words.
5. Save and submit your application.

Please note that any content exceeding the stated word limits will not be considered by the selection panel.

We strongly recommend that you draft your answers in a word document and check the word count / spelling and grammar before copying and pasting your answers in the relevant sections of the online application form.

Please note that you will not be able to update your answers once the online application is submitted. 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

[Further guidance on how to apply can be found here.](#)

The Assessment Process

The assessment process is detailed below:

1. The selection panel will assess all applications against the criteria for appointment (see the Person Specification in this Pack). 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 and the questions asked will relate directly to the criteria for appointment. (Candidates who are invited to interview will be sent, 30 minutes before that interview, a document relating to the MWC. They will be asked to review the document and to answer a number of questions on it at the start of their interview.)
3. The selection panel will also ask questions relevant to the fit and proper person test (see further down) which will include questions about the [Principles of Public Life](#).
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 on 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 Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check - there is no charge for this. An appointment is conditional on satisfactory completion of these.

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 selection panel will not know which applicants have requested a guaranteed interview until the shortlisting is complete.

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](#)
- There is confirmation that the time commitment required for the role can be met.

Social Media Checks - 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

Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 Scottish Government recognises the implications of the Supreme Court judgement dated 16 April 2025 for public appointments subject to the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. The Supreme Court ruled that a person with a full gender recognition certificate (GRC) which recognises their gender as female, is not a “woman” for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and consequently the 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 26th 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.

Frequently asked Questions and Answers

Who can I contact to speak about this role?	Please email Stuart Gray at stuart.gray3@nhs.scot to arrange a call with Ashley Dee, Head of Culture and Corporate Services at the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland.
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
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)
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 here: 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 only be shared with the selection panel <u>after</u> scoring has been complete at the shortlisting stage. 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 .
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.
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 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)(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) 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

For further information

Please contact the Public Appointments Team, Scottish Government

Email: public.appointments@gov.scot

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

