

Information Booklet

Sigmar Recruitment Consultants on behalf of the Ombudsman for Children will hold a competition for the purpose of recommending a person for appointment to the position of:

Private Secretary & Governance Support to the Ombudsman for Children

Grade: Executive Officer (EO)

Closing date: Thursday, 13 February 2025 – midday

1st interview dates: week beginning 24 February 2025

Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. is committed to a policy of equal opportunity. Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. will run this campaign in compliance with the Codes of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) and which are available on www.cpsa.ie

Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd.
13 Hume Street, Dublin 2
www.sigmarrecruitment.com/OCO
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Title of Position:	Private Secretary & Governance Support to the Ombudsman for Children
Grade:	Executive Officer (EO)
Employing Authority:	Ombudsman for Children
Location:	Dublin 1
EO Salary Scale¹:	€36,544

BACKGROUND

Ombudsman for Children's Office

The Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) is an independent statutory body, which was established in 2004 under the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002, as amended (2002 Act). The Ombudsman for Children is independent and directly accountable to the Oireachtas in relation to the exercise of his statutory functions under the 2002 Act. These functions are:

- to promote the rights and welfare of children
- to examine and investigate complaints made by or on behalf of children in relation to the administrative actions of public organisations that have, or may have, adversely affected a child.

Further information about this work is available on the OCO's website at www.oco.ie.

OCO's Communications Team

The OCO is seeking to recruit a Private Secretary and Governance Support to the Ombudsman for Children, who will work closely with the Ombudsman for Children to assist with scheduling and logistics, administration support, to support with the Management Team secretariat, and to provide cover and ad hoc support.

The successful candidate will report directly to the Ombudsman for Children, and will work closely with Corporate Services, and across the Office.

This role will be based at our Offices in Dublin 1.

THE ROLE

The OCO invites applications from interested candidates for the position of Private Secretary and Governance Support (EO) to the Ombudsman for Children

¹ Candidates should note that entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Candidates should note that different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is a serving civil or public servant.

Key Responsibilities

Scheduling, Logistics, Liaison

- Scheduling and Calendar Coordination: Organise and managing appointments for the Ombudsman for Children, meetings, and events to ensure efficient use of time.
- Screen and direct phone calls as well as recording and distributing correspondence (hard copy and email).
- Primary Point of Contact: Serve as the main liaison between different stakeholders for the Ombudsman for Children (the Management Team, OCO staff, public/civil servants, politicians, and other external organisations) to ensure smooth communication and coordination.
- Update and maintain stakeholder contact list on behalf of the Ombudsman and management team to support OCO events, activities, and external communications.
- Travel Coordination and Logistics: Plan and arrange travel itineraries for the Ombudsman for Children (and from time to time the Management Team), including booking accommodation, transportation, and other requirements.
- Liaise with the Communications Team on behalf of the Ombudsman for Children in relation to events and speeches they will be involved with and around media queries.
- Liaise with those people inviting the Ombudsman for Children to speak at, or attend, events to ensure smooth logistics and appropriate content for speeches.

Administration Support

- Draft and manage correspondence, including letters, emails, and reports, ensuring timely and professional communication on behalf of the Ombudsman for Children.
- Organise and prepare for meetings, including gathering of documents and attending to the logistics of meetings (in person and online).
- Research topics of relevance for the Ombudsman for Children as required.
- Complete expense claims on behalf of the Ombudsman for Children and submit them in a timely fashion in line with Civil Service guidelines.

Management Team Secretariat and Administration Support

- Provide full Secretariat function to the Management Team; organise monthly meetings, set the agenda, take minutes, ensure actions are logged and followed up on and send reminders as required.
- Keep the terms of reference and workplan for the Management Team up to date with reference to the Code of Practice for the Governance of State bodies.
- Ensure relevant records for the Management Team are held and updated as required.
- Organise other meetings between the Management Team and the Ombudsman for Children and coordinate diaries as required.

Compliance and Records Management

- Maintain records for the Ombudsman for Children in line with our electronic filing rules and good records management.
- Act as the data protection champion for records relating to the Ombudsman for Children and carry out data destruction in line with the OCO Data Protection and Retention policies.
- Support the Ombudsman for Children with procurement administration and liaise with Finance on payments, purchasing and procurement requirements as required.

Cover and Ad hoc Support

- Act as cover for the reception role for leave.
- Other duties from time to time, including supporting other units or staff as needed.

EXPERIENCE AND PERSONAL QUALITIES REQUIRED

Essential Requirements

Candidates must have:

Key Requirements

- 3+ years of experience as Executive Assistant or a similar multitasking administrative / relationship liaison role
- Excellent organisational, diary management and time management skills
- Ability to multitask, be flexible and prioritise.
- Excellent level of IT competency, Excellent MS office skills, Canva etc...
- Ability to be proactive and anticipate needs.
- Ability to handle sensitive information with the utmost discretion and maintain a high level of confidentiality.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, and the ability to interact with many different people at all levels with confidence and competence.
- Eligibility to work in Ireland.

Desirable

- Company secretarial/ governance experience or qualification
- Research skills
- Knowledge of, or interest in. the child rights sector

Capability Framework for the role of Private Secretary and Governance Support to the Ombudsman for Children (EO)

Building Future Readiness

- Maximises the use of technology and digital skills to drive efficiencies and support better service delivery.
- Shows interest and openness to change, innovation and new technology or processes, actively exploring the practicalities and providing feedback or suggestions.

- Willing to try new approaches, seeking support when needed and openly sharing and learning from mistakes.
- Actively puts forward innovative ideas, creative solutions, or helpful suggestions.
- Enthusiastic about development opportunities, demonstrating a positive attitude, openness to feedback and willingness to learn.
- Committed to improving knowledge and skills for the future.
- Aware of own strengths and development areas.

Evidence Informed Delivery

Delivering Excellence

- Manages, plans, and prioritises workload to ensure targets and deadlines are met.
- Works in a systematic, organised, and efficient manner.
- Has good oversight of their teams work and puts procedures in place to track quality and productivity.
- Ensures they have a sufficient workload, seeks additional work, and uses appropriate initiative to take on other tasks.
- Delivers high quality standards with excellent attention to detail and accuracy.
- Ensures high quality, professional customer service, resolving complex issues or queries and prioritising customer experience.
- Demonstrates ownership, initiative, and responsibility over work, becoming self-sufficient in their own area of responsibility.
- Maintains resilience and a 'can-do' attitude when learning new skills or working under pressure, seeking support when needed.
- Flexible, agile, and resilient in the face of challenges or changing demands.

Managing information, problems, and decisions

- Can gather, understand, utilise, and analyse information from a range of different sources.
- Manages all information and data carefully, particularly with sensitive or confidential matters.
- Correctly processes and interprets verbal information, in a timely manner.
- Accurately evaluates numerical information and data, in a timely manner.
- Identifies and solves complex problems, with the support of their team if needed.
- Escalates issues appropriately, communicating all relevant information and suggesting possible solutions.
- Makes balanced judgements and decisions, considering the available information, previous learnings and following the relevant procedures or protocol.
- Makes appropriate and timely decisions on matters within own remit, seeking support and referring decisions upward, where necessary.

Leading and Empowering

Leading, Supporting, and Developing

- Leads, supports, and motivates the team to achieve set goals.
- Works well with diverse teams, ensuring their colleagues are included, heard, supported, and valued.
- Offers coaching, guidance, and feedback to others to support their development.
- Empowers their team and colleagues by delegating tasks and showing trust.
- Works with integrity, honesty, and accountability.

- Prioritises wellbeing for self and others, showing consideration, empathy, and support.
- Makes an effort to be self-aware and manage own emotions and behaviour, particularly in challenging situations.

Leading with Specialist Insight

- Develops specialist expertise and knowledge in their area.
- Committed to Continuous Professional Development, engaging in relevant courses and activities to keep knowledge up to date.
- Builds their expertise through listening and learning from others.
- Contributes to discussions and decisions by sharing insights and evidence.
- Promotes their own area of expertise and understands the value it brings.
- Finds opportunities to share or showcase their specialist knowledge.
- Comfortable working independently in their area, but also engages with other groups outside of their direct work or team.
- Quickly learns what work needs to be done and how to do it, seeking support or guidance when necessary.

Communicating and Collaborating

- Utilises interpersonal skills to build positive and effective working relationships, even in a blended or hybrid working environment.
- Strong collaboration and teamworking skills, plays their part and works well with colleagues within and outside of own team.
- Communicates in a clear and appropriate manner verbally, digitally and in writing, adapting approach to suit the audience.
- Shares the appropriate level of detail and communicates information in an accessible and understandable format.
- Willing to communicate with colleagues at all levels, openly sharing their views, thoughts, and concerns.
- Manages difficult conversations with professionalism, respect, and sensitivity, seeking support when required.
- Listens to, consults, and engages with relevant stakeholders, keeping them informed as necessary.
- Appreciates diversity and makes an active effort to listen, consult and engage with a variety of people.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

General:

The appointment is to an Executive Officer post on a permanent contract and is subject to the Civil Service Regulations Acts 1956 to 2005, the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004, the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002 and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the Civil or Public Service.

The selection process will include competency based interviews.

Pay:

Executive Officer – PPC						
€36,544	€38,465	€39,550	€41,667	€43,564	€45,400	€47,229
€49,019	€50,831	€52,618	€54,514	€55,784	€57,596*	€59,422**

* After 3 years satisfactory service at the maximum

** After 6 years satisfactory service at the maximum

Important Note:

Candidates should note that entry will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Candidates should note that different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is a serving civil or public servant at an analogous grade.

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be payable in line with current Government Policy. (See Haddington Road Agreement paragraph 2.19 for recent changes.)

Tenure:

This is a permanent position. The appointee will be required to serve a 12 month probationary period.

Location:

The appointee for this role will be based in the Ombudsman for Children's Office at 52-56 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1.

When absent from home and place of employment on official duty, the appointee will be paid appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances, subject to normal civil service regulations/public sector regulations.

Hours of attendance:

Hours of attendance will amount to not less than 35 hours gross. The appointee will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations.

Rest Periods:

The terms of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 will apply to this appointment.

Annual Leave:

In addition to the standard 10 public holidays and Good Friday, the annual leave for this position is **23** days per annum.

Sick Leave:

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 sick leave circulars.

PRSI:

Officers who will be paying Class A rate of PRSI will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts directly to the OCO. Payment during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims for social insurance benefit to the Department of Social Protection within the required time limits.

Superannuation and Retirement:

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the OCO at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, and except for candidates who have worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment (see paragraph d below), this means being offered appointment based on membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme").

Key provisions attaching to membership of the Single Scheme are as follows:

Pensionable Age:

The minimum age at which pension is payable is 66 (rising to 67 and 68) in line with State Pension age changes.

a) Retirement Age: will be determined in accordance with the relevant government Departmental circulars.

b) Pension Abatement

- If the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service or in the Public Service please note that the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 includes a provision which extends abatement of pension for all Civil and Public Servants who are re-employed where a Public Service pension is in payment. This provision to apply abatement across the wider public service came into effect on 1 November 2012.
- This may have pension implications for any person appointed to this position that is currently in receipt of a Civil or Public Service pension or has a preserved Civil or Public Service pension which will come into payment during his/her employment in this position.

Department of Education and Skills Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers Circular 102/2007

- The Department of Education and Skills introduced an Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. It is a condition of the Early Retirement Scheme that with the exception of the situations set out in paragraphs 10.2 and 10.3 of the relevant circular documentation, and with those exceptions only, if a teacher accepts early retirement under Strands 1, 2 or 3 of this scheme and is subsequently employed in any capacity in any area of the public sector, payment of pension to that person under the scheme will immediately cease. Pension payments will, however, be resumed on the ceasing of such employment or on the person's 60th birthday, whichever is the later, but on resumption, the pension will be based on the person's actual reckonable service as a teacher (i.e. the added years previously granted will not be taken into account in the calculation of the pension payment).

Ill-Health Retirement

- Please note that where an individual has retired from a Civil/Public Service body on the grounds of ill-health his/her pension from that employment may be subject to review in accordance with the rules of ill-health retirement within the pension scheme of that employment.

c) Prior Public Servants

While the default pension terms, as set out in the preceding paragraphs, consist of Single Scheme membership, this may not apply to certain appointees. Full details of the conditions governing whether or not a public servant is a Single Scheme member are given in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012. However, the key exception case (in the context of this competition and generally) is that a successful candidate who has worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) capacity in the public service within 26 weeks of taking up appointment, would in general not become a member of the Single Scheme. In this case such a candidate would instead be offered membership of the pension scheme for non-established civil servants ("Non-Established State Employee Scheme"). This would mean that the abatement provisions at (c) above would apply, and in addition there are implications in respect of pension accrual as outlined below:

d) Pension Accrual

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one existing public service pension scheme would apply. This 40-year limit, which is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other Provisions) Act 2012 came into effect on 28 July 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment.

e) Additional Superannuation Contributions (ASC)

ASC was introduced on 1 January 2019 replacing Pension Related Deduction (PRD), which had been in existence since 1 March 2009. ASC is provided for under Part 4 of the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. Whereas PRD was a temporary emergency measure, ASC is a permanent pension contribution payable in addition to existing pension contributions and attracting tax relief at the marginal rate. In general, ASC liabilities are lower than the previous PRD liabilities.

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 candidates.

The Selection Process

How to Apply:

All candidates should visit www.ocojobs.com where there is a full list of available positions in the OCO with the corresponding downloadable information booklet for each position. There will also be a link to the online application portal to where all applications must be submitted.

To apply, candidates must provide an up-to-date application form and submit their application form via the online application portal.

Only application forms fully submitted online will be accepted into the campaign. Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.

Closing Date:

Your application must be submitted on the online application portal before **12 noon exactly, Thursday, 13 February 2025**. Applications will not be accepted after this time.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within 24 hours of applying, please contact OCO@sigmar.ie.

Campaign updates will be issued to your registered email address as entered on the online application portal.

The onus is on each applicant to ensure that they are in receipt of all communication from Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. You are advised to check your emails on a regular basis throughout the duration of the competition; in addition, being sure to check junk/spam folders should any emails be mistakenly filtered.

Sigmar Recruitment accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. and should make sure that the contact details specified on their application form are correct.

Selection Process:

The Selection Process may include the following:

- Submission of Application Form
- Shortlisting of candidates based on the information contained in their Application Form
- Initial/preliminary interview
- Presentation or other exercises
- A final competitive interview
- Any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate

Shortlisting:

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While you may meet the eligibility requirements of the

competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. may decide that a smaller number of applicants will only be called to interview. In this respect, Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. provide for the employment of a short-listing process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position. An expert board will examine the application forms against a pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/experience on the application form.

Confidentiality:

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 applications will be treated in strictest confidence.

Security Clearance:

Garda vetting will be sought in respect of the successful candidate. The successful candidate will be invited to complete a Garda vetting form via the eVetting portal. This form will be checked by An Garda Síochána. The Garda vetting disclosure will be kept on file with the OCO. It is expected that an eVetting policy will be in place in the near future, which will set out the frequency of vetting within the OCO.

Other Important Information

Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend interview, or a successful result notification, is not to be taken as implying that Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements 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 that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises the Board may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process

Candidates' Rights - Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process

Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd. will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of the codes of practice published by the CPSA. The Codes of Practice are available on the website of the Commission for Public Service Appointments <http://www.cpsa.ie/>.

Should a candidate be unhappy with an action or decision in relation to their application (where the selection is managed by Sigmar Recruitment) they can seek feedback from Sigmar Recruitment. An initial review will be carried out internally by the candidate's recruitment contact as to why their application was deemed unsuccessful. The outcome of this review will be sent to the candidate in written format.

- To request an initial review, a candidate must write to Sigmar within 5 working days of receiving notification of the decision on their application. Sigmar will carry out the initial review without delay. If the candidate is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may resort to the formal procedures within 2 working days of receiving notifications of the outcome of the initial review.
- Should the candidate not be satisfied with the outcome of the initial review, it will be referred to the Account Director who acts as the decision arbitrator.
- The decision arbitrator will be a person unconnected with the selection process and he/she will adjudicate on requests for review. The decision of the decision arbitrator in relation to such matters is final.

Candidates' Obligations

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Candidates must not:

- Knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- Canvass any person with or without inducements
- Interfere with or compromise the process in any way
- A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.
- Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- Where they have not been appointed to a post, they will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- Where they have been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, they shall forfeit that appointment.

Specific candidate criteria

Candidates must:

- Have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned
- Be suitable on the grounds of character
- Be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned -and if successful, they will not be appointed to the post unless they:
- Agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed
- Are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by Sigmar Recruitment, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as Sigmar Recruitment require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Quality Customer Service

We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it. Feedback will be provided on written request.

Data Protection Act 2018

When your application is received, we create a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature and as part of the recruitment process, certain information you provide will be forwarded to the employing organisation. Such information held by Sigmar and the employing organisation is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information on how we retain and use your personal data, please review our Privacy Statement, which includes instructions on their right to withdraw consent at any point:

<https://www.sigmarrecruitment.com/privacy-statement>.

To make a subject access request under the Data Protection Act 2018, please submit your request in writing to: Data Protection Officer – Sigmar Recruitment Consultants Ltd., 13 Hume St., Dublin 2 or email privacy@sigmar.ie. Ensure that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes