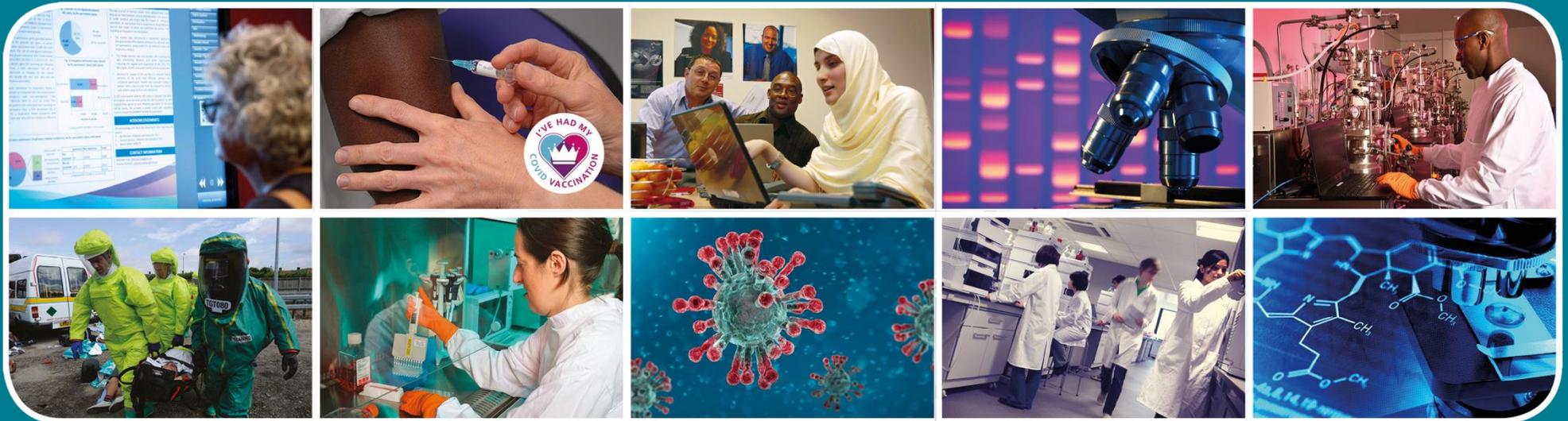




UK Health
Security
Agency

Director of Public Health Microbiology UK Health Security Agency



Why join the UK Health Security Agency?

Dame Dr Jenny Harries, Chief Executive Officer

**Thank you for considering a role
at the UK Health Security Agency**



Our mission is ambitious - we exist to save lives and provide health security for the nation. Should you be successful in your application you will be joining an extraordinary and diverse team at an exciting time in our development.

UKHSA is an organisation with a clear remit. It is the UKHSA's job to stay ahead of all threats to health, both present and future. This could be an infectious disease, antimicrobial resistance or a chemical, radiological or environmental hazard.

Whatever the threat, we will be impactful and insightful, and we will be inclusive in our approach.

To help us achieve this vital goal, we have a remarkable science capacity with some of the most prestigious lab facilities in the world. This is backed up with our greatest asset, our people.

We have some of the brightest scientists, data analysts, coordinators, clinicians, logisticians and technicians.

I wish you luck in your application and look forward to working with you as together we work to protect the nation's health.

Best wishes,

Jenny

Why join the Science Group at UKHSA?

Professor Isabel Oliver, Director General Science and Research and Chief Scientific Officer

Thank you for considering a role with the Science Group at the UK Health Security Agency



Science is at the core of UKHSA and fundamental in achieving our goals. The day-to-day work of our scientists underpins the decisions that our health protection professionals make on the front-line and informs the strategic policy advice we provide to the highest levels of government.

The UK Health Security Agency protects health from infectious diseases and environmental hazards through the generation and application of the best scientific evidence.

The scientific evidence we generate is used globally because of its quality and we are a scientific partner of choice for industry and academia.

The UKHSA Science strategy published last year sets the vision and ambition for science in UKHSA building on the learning and legacy from the pandemic.

Our ambition is to secure health and prosperity working in partnership across the health and life sciences ecosystem strengthening our preparedness response to current and future health security challenges.

Our laboratories are a major scientific asset for UKHSA and the country as a whole and are central to the delivery of our health security mission and our scientific ambitions.

As one of the leading global expert bodies on health, we bring together our comprehensive specialised microbiology and laboratories functions and other world-leading scientific capabilities together with health protection operational capabilities and data analytics in an inclusive, insightful and impactful manner, in line with our values.

I look forward to working with you to deliver the UKHSA Science Strategy vision and strategic ambitions.

Best wishes,
Isabel

About the UK Health Security Agency

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) prepares for and responds to infectious diseases, and environmental hazards, to keep all our communities safe, save lives and protect livelihoods.

The United Kingdom Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is responsible for protecting every member of every community from the impact of infectious diseases, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents and other health threats. We provide intellectual, scientific and operational leadership at national and local level, as well as on the global stage, to make the nation health secure.

We are a system leader for health security; taking action internationally to strengthen global health security; providing trusted advice to government and the public; and reducing inequalities in how different communities are impacted by infectious disease, environmental hazards, and other threats to health. As the nation's expert national health security agency UKHSA works to:

- Prevent: anticipate threats to health and help build the nation's readiness, defences and health security
- Detect: use cutting edge environmental and biological surveillance to proactively detect and monitor infectious diseases and threats to health
- Analyse: use world-class science and data analytics to assess and continually monitor threats to health, identifying how best to control and mitigate the risks
- Respond: take rapid, collaborative and effective actions nationally and locally to mitigate threats to health when they materialise
- Lead: lead strong and sustainable global, national, regional and local partnerships designed to save lives, protect the nation from public health threats, and reduce inequalities

Threats to the security of our health are rising across the world. Our world is changing in multiple, compound ways that are amplifying the health security challenges the UK and other countries are likely to face. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a reminder of the impact that health hazards can have on our lives and livelihoods. It has also shown the great strides that can be made when government, industry, and academia work together, developing innovative solutions and harnessing the power of data and scientific insight to drive policy and response.

UKHSA's mission is challenging, innovative and in the spotlight. To achieve our objectives effectively and fairly, we commit to representing modern Britain and all its diversity. We recognise that diversity of background and life experience brings different insights, creates challenge and encourages change and innovation. This in turn produces more accountable and trusted public services and better decisions.

The UKHSA is committed to our organisational values which are:

Impactful

To be impactful, we:

- have an uncompromising focus on the nation's public health and overcoming health inequalities
- develop ways to measure what we do to make sure we have the impact we intend; we assess our performance regularly
- are committed to working in a sustainable way for the future
- work to build trust and confidence in UKHSA
- make and keep our commitments

Insightful

To be insightful, we:

- make decisions and take appropriate risks, informed by the latest data, evidence and technology
- work collaboratively and look ahead to prepare for potential future opportunities or hazards
- share our insight with others
- are a learning organisation, using information and experiences to make improvements
- use feedback to develop our work – both what we deliver and how we work together

Inclusive

To be inclusive, we:

- value every single person in our organisation
- listen to a range of voices and work in partnership to make decisions – with our people, with partners, across communities
- consider the impact of our decisions on others
- challenge our own assumptions and biases
- make people feel safe and welcome in every meeting or interaction

More information about the UKHSA can be found [here](#).

About the role

Job Title

Director Public Health Microbiology

Location

Any UKHSA laboratory site or London Headquarters. Required to travel to all Laboratories.

Salary

External candidates should expect to be appointed to a salary c.£140,000 per annum dependent on experience.

Existing Civil Servants will be appointed in line with the Civil Service pay rules in place on the date of their appointment.

Individuals who are on Medical and Dental / Agenda for Change pay scales will be appointed to their increment with a view of honouring existing Clinical Excellence Awards.

Contract Type

Permanent (A secondment may also be considered)

The Role

The Director of the Specialised Microbiology and Laboratories Service leads on the delivery of UKHSA public health microbiology and laboratory-based infectious diseases scientific work to deliver UKHSA's health security mission of protecting lives and contributing to prosperity.

This role spans the country with accountability for the microbiology laboratory functions in Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge and Manchester, FW&E laboratories in Colindale, Porton and York. Microbiology in this context encompasses bacteriology, mycology, parasitology and virology and all supporting laboratory technologies. The work of the UKHSA specialised microbiology and laboratory network is to support surveillance, research, and other vital programmes, to aid detection of infectious diseases, and to support effective treatments and interventions, all within the wider UKHSA objective of significantly reducing the public health burden.

The Director will also oversee a range of standing contracts for laboratory services commissioned from the NHS and undertake liaison with the NHS and other laboratory providers in relation to the delivery of day-to-

day laboratory services, and the generation of additional capacity to support surge operations in response to small- and large-scale public health incidents. In this respect, the Director must have a track record of operational delivery and specific experience linked to emergency operations required to enable public health incident responses within a Category 1 responder organisation.

In addition to working across the UKHSA to ensure and assure its day-to-day core and emergency operations, the Director must be ready to support the research activities of the UKHSA, and to be a trusted partner in the review, development, and deployment of new public health tests and other scientific developments. This influence will also extend to the review and assurance around the employment of microbiology standards and quality practice and given that the UKHSA operates laboratories at the highest levels of containment, a close working relationship with the HSE to maintain the highest safety standards, and to support their activities within the sector.

The Director will be well supported by a team of Deputy Directors who will support the further development and transformation of specialised microbiology and laboratory services, to include inherited and other pandemic testing capabilities. Success will be dependent on five key activities:

1. The effective and efficient delivery of laboratory services, to the highest scientific, quality and safety standards;
2. Robust work force planning and the career development of staff;
3. High quality research and innovation;
4. Engagement with the NHS and a wide range of partners to ensure the delivery of public health microbiology priorities; and
5. An unerring focus on horizon scanning, contingency planning, and emergency operations.

This is a critical role which supports the delivery of the primary UKHSA functions as outlined in the Strategic Remit Letter (of reducing harm from infectious diseases, preparing for future health security hazards, and strengthening health security capability).

The post-holder must ensure that the UKHSA Directorate of Public Health Microbiology is at the forefront of scientific innovation, and that the evidence base for intervention in, and prevention of, outbreaks, and surveillance of infectious disease covered by the Service, is world leading. The post-holder must develop a core UKHSA laboratory network (Reference, Specialist Diagnostic, FW&E, High Containment, Research, Genome Sequencing) working closely with and enabling a surge support network of associate labs (NHS, Academia, etc) to form the wider public health microbiology laboratory network required by the nation.

Key responsibilities will include:

- To provide leadership for UKHSA Specialised Microbiology and Laboratories Directorate comprising its workforce, sites, and laboratories.
- Take overall responsibility for the Specialised Microbiology and Laboratories Directorate and provision of services to stakeholders, internal and external, including the public.
- Set the strategic direction for Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories within the UKHSA's strategic framework.
- Ensure that the Health & Safety of staff is paramount, that the H&S arrangements for the service are of the highest standards, and to work closely with the HSE to address any recommendations and all enforcements in a timely fashion.
- Ensure that all testing is appropriately validated and that UKHSA's microbiology laboratories are accredited to appropriate international standards.
- Ensure high quality scientific activity, including a programme of research that delivers the needs of the organisation, developing partnerships and collaborations with other Public Sector Research Establishments, the National Laboratories Alliance and academia.
- Be accountable for and provide leadership in the provision of state-of-the-art microbiology laboratories.
- Work closely with the leadership of the UKHSA to ensure that any commissioning of microbiology laboratory services is well planned and resourced.
- To seek collaborations both nationally and internationally, including with health organisations, academia, and industry.
- To engage with the NHS to ensure its laboratories meet UKHSA public health microbiology requirements,
- Deliver reports and advice, utilising and interpreting highly complex data, in order to support the delivery of UKHSA priorities.
- Be responsible for policy development in the Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories Service, and the creation, implementation, and review of clinical guidelines in conjunction with other consultant colleagues and clinical users
- Take responsibility for the upkeep and provision of Quality and information systems related to the Specialised Microbiology and Laboratories Service.
- Support and develop the Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories Service workforce across the whole system, in line with UKHSA's remit, to support capability and capacity, including technical and professional skills to meet the challenges involved in protecting and improving the public's health.
- Enable programmes of research, test and product development and evaluation within Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories Service that are aligned with the research priorities of UKHSA.
- Maintain oversight and assurance of ongoing research within Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories Service.
- Take overall responsibility for the development work undertaken within Specialised Microbiology and Laboratories Service
- Support the development of the public health microbiology workforce for UKHSA, developing and implementing directorate workforce plans, including retention, recruitment and career development of staff.
- Ensure that Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories Service works to the highest standards of Clinical Governance.
- Ensure that all statutory and regulatory obligations are met.
- Lead the Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories Service to deliver defined outputs to the required quality, within budget and on-time.

- Act as budget holder responsible for the financial performance of the Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories Directorate.
- Take measures to continually develop and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories Directorate.
- Ensure the business and budgetary planning processes are fully in place and functioning effectively, reporting to agreed standards and timescales
- Work with colleagues to identify and ensure the maintenance of business-critical activities, e.g., ensure that there are effective business continuity plans in place, and that they are tested regularly.
- Work with colleagues within and external to UKHSA to provide surge capacity and capabilities and ensure effective succession planning within the Public Health Microbiology and Laboratories Service.

As one of its most senior leaders, you will also be a visible role model for the Civil Service Leadership behaviours.

We expect all our senior leaders to be:

- Inspiring – about our work and its future
- Confident – in our engagement with others
- Empowering – to allow our teams to deliver.

Person Specification

It is important through your CV and Statement of Suitability that you provide evidence and examples of proven experience of these selection criteria.

To be successful in this role, you will need to be qualified in microbiology, public health or other relevant discipline with inclusion in the GMC Specialist Register/GDC Specialist List for Public Health Specialists or qualified to an essential of PhD level (or equivalent) in a relevant scientific discipline. In addition, you also need to be able to demonstrate your capability and potential against the following criteria:

Essential Criteria:

- A confident, empowering, and visible leader, with experience of building and maintaining complex functions and services whilst setting future direction and positively managing change
- A demonstrable track record of leading large scale multi-disciplinary teams preferably within a scientific setting
- Experience of leading complex networks of laboratories with an understanding of public health microbiology
- Excellent written and oral communication skills with experience operating across a complex landscape with multiple stakeholders at both local and national level
- Experience of managing significant commercial and financial activities, including revenue, capital projects, and budgets to balance
- Demonstrated ability to operate at pace in a fast-changing complex environment to manage competing priorities effectively
- Demonstrated ability to develop creative and innovative organisational interventions to support delivery and develop a high performing workforce

Desirable Criteria:

- Experience of commitment to research and development
- Experience of working with industry, academia and public sector organisations
- Experience in informing the development and implementation of government policy

This list is not exhaustive, please refer to the accompanying Job Description for the full person specification.

Benefits of working for the Civil Service

Whatever your role, we take your career and development seriously, and want to enable you to build a really successful career with the Department and wider Civil Service. It is crucial that our employees have the right skills to develop their careers and meet the challenges ahead, and you'll benefit from regular performance and development reviews to ensure this development is ongoing. As a Civil Service employee, you'll be entitled to a large range of benefits.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Civil Service values and supports all its employees.

We have strong and pro-active staff networks, special leave policies for hospital appointments, flexible working policies, workplace adjustments put in place for those who need them, and talent programmes to help everyone irrespective of background, to achieve their potential and thrive.

Pension

Your pension is a valuable part of your total reward package.

A competitive contributory pension scheme that you can enter as soon as you join where we will make a significant contribution to the cost of your pension; where your contributions come out of your salary before any tax is taken; and where your pension will continue to provide valuable benefits for you and your family if you are too ill to continue to work or die before you retire. Visit [Civil Service Pension Scheme](#) for more details. If joining on Medical & Dental terms and conditions you will retain your NHS pension arrangements.

Generous Annual Leave and Bank Holiday Allowance

25 days annual leave on entry, increasing on a sliding scale to 30 days after 5 years' service. This is in addition to 8 public holidays.

This will be complemented by one further day paid privilege entitlement to mark the King's Birthday.

Staff Wellbeing

Flexible Working Schemes allowing you to vary your working day as long as you work your total hours.

Generous **paid maternity and paternity leave** which is notably more than the statutory minimum offered by many other employers.

Onsite facilities Opportunity to use onsite facilities including fitness centres and staff canteens (where applicable).

Season Ticket and Bicycle Loan

Interest-free loans allowing you to spread the cost of an annual travel season ticket or a new bicycle.

Sick Pay

Occupational sick pay.

The Recruitment Process

Application

Perrett Laver have been appointed to support with the recruitment for this post. Please visit <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies/> quoting reference number 7706 for more information. To apply for this post, you will need to complete the online application process accessed via the advertisement listed for this role.

This should be completed by 09:00 on 17 February 2025:

1. A **CV** setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements and relevant professional qualifications. Please ensure you have provided reasons for any gaps within the last two years; and
2. A **Statement of Suitability** Two A4 sides (not exceeding 1500 words) how you consider your personal skills, qualities and experience providing evidence of your suitability for the role, with particular reference to the criteria in the person specification.

Failure to submit an application will mean the panel only have limited information on which to assess your application against the criteria in the person specification.

As part of the online application process, you will be asked a number of diversity-related questions. If you do not wish to provide a declaration on any of the particular characteristics, you will have the option to select 'prefer not to say'. The information you provide when submitting your application will help us monitor our progress towards the Civil Service becoming an inclusive employer and a great place to work. See the [Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#) for more information or go to [Equality and Diversity](#)

Should you encounter any issues with your online application or are unable to apply online please contact sarah.snelling@perrettlaver.com. If you have comments that would support us to improve access to documentation, or our application processes more generally, please do not hesitate to contact us via accessibility@perrettlaver.com.

Selection Process

Sarah Pittam, a Civil Service Commissioner, will chair the process. The Civil Service Commission has two primary functions:

- Providing assurance that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the [Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles](#). For the most senior posts in the Civil Service, the Commission discharges its responsibilities directly by overseeing the recruitment process and by a Commissioner chairing the selection panel.
- Hearing and determining appeals made by civil servants under the Civil Service Code which sets out the Civil Service values – Impartiality, Objectivity, Integrity and Honesty - and forms part of the relationship between civil servants and their employer.

More detailed information can be found on the [Civil Service Commission website](#).

In addition to Sarah Pittam, the other panel members will be:

- Isabel Oliver – Director General Science and Research, UKHSA
- Jon Cocking – Chief People Officer, UKHSA
- Sue Hill – Chief Scientific Officer for England, NHS England
- A representative from the Royal College of Pathologists/Faculty of Public Health

Shortlist

You will receive an acknowledgment of your application through the online process.

The panel will then assess your application to select those demonstrating the best fit with the role by considering the evidence you have provided against the criteria set out in the 'Person Specification' section. Failure to address any or all of these may affect your application.

The timeline later in this pack indicates the date by which decisions are expected to be made, and all shortlisted candidates will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible thereafter.

Assessment

If you are shortlisted, you will be asked to take part in a series of assessments which will include psychometric tests and a staff engagement exercise. These assessments will not result in a pass or fail decision. Rather, they are designed to support the panel's decision making and highlight areas for the panel to explore further at interview.

You may also have the opportunity to speak to Isabel Oliver prior to the final interview to learn more about the role and the organisation. Please note this is not part of the formal assessment process.

You will be asked to attend a panel interview to have a more in-depth discussion of your previous experience and professional competence in relation to the criteria set out in the Person Specification. There will be a presentation at the interview, which will take the form of a scenario-based assessment. Candidates will be provided with the brief 30 minutes prior to the interview, during which they will have this time to prepare their response before presenting on the assigned topic. You will have 5 minutes for your presentation. Please note this will not test a technical point, but will assess how quickly candidates process, adapt, and present information under pressure.

In the Civil Service we are challenging ourselves to become a more diverse and inclusive organisation. We recognise that recruitment and inclusion of individuals with diverse skills, perspectives and backgrounds will bring real strength to the organisation, the wider Civil Service and to society.

Full details of the assessment process will be made available to shortlisted candidates.

Offer

Regardless of the outcome, we will notify all candidates as soon as possible after the final interview.

Expected Timeline

We will try and offer as much flexibility as we can, but it may not be possible to offer alternative dates for assessments or interviews. You are therefore asked to note the below timetable, exercising flexibility through the recruitment and selection process, in order to meet the dates given. Please note that these dates may be subject to change.

The anticipated timetable is as follows:

Advert Closing Date	09:00 on 17 February 2025
Longlisting	Week Commencing 24 February 2025
Shortlisting	Week Commencing 17 March 2025
Assessments	19 th , 20 th , 21 st March 2025
Interviews	3 rd and 4 th April 2025

FAQs

Can I apply if I am not currently a civil servant?

Yes. This role is open to suitably qualified people in the external market as well as existing civil servants.

Can I join on secondment terms?

If you are considering a secondment contact sarah.snelling@perrettlaver.com before applying.

Is this role suitable for part-time working?

This role is available for full-time or via flexible working arrangements. The importance and nature of the role makes this a demanding and sometimes time critical work delivery agenda so you should discuss any proposed alternative working pattern with sarah.snelling@perrettlaver.com before applying.

Will the role involve travel?

Some travel may be required for this role, including to represent the organisation across the UK and on occasion, globally.

Where will the role be based?

Any UKHSA office location. Regular travel to all UKHSA laboratories will be required.

Unfortunately, relocation costs will not be reimbursed.

Can I claim back any expenses incurred during the recruitment process?

No. Unfortunately we will not be able to reimburse you, except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance.

What nationality do I need to hold in order to apply?

To be eligible for employment to this role you must be a national from the following countries:

- The United Kingdom;
- The Republic of Ireland;
- The Commonwealth*;
- European Economic Area (EEA) nationals with (or eligible for) status under the EU Settlement Scheme;
- Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals already working in the Civil Service;

- Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals who have built up the right to working the Civil Service; and
- Certain family members of the relevant EU and Turkish nationals.

**Individuals will need to demonstrate that they meet the relevant immigration requirements.*

For further information on whether you are eligible to apply, please visit [Gov.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Is security clearance required?

Yes. The successful candidate will be required to obtain security clearance to a minimum of SC level with a view to obtaining DV in the future. More information about the vetting process can be found [here](#).

For meaningful national security vetting checks to be carried out individuals need to have lived in the United Kingdom for a sufficient period of time. You should normally have been resident in the UK for the last 5 years / 10 years as the role requires SC / DV clearance. UK residency less than the outlined periods may not necessarily bar you from gaining national security vetting and applicants should

contact the Vacancy Holder / Recruiting Manager listed in the advert for further advice.

What reasonable adjustments can be made if I have a disability?

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments in order to support disabled job applicants and ensure that you are not disadvantaged in the recruitment and assessment process.

If you feel that you may need a reasonable adjustment to be made, or you would like to discuss your requirements in more detail, please contact sarah.snelling@perrettlaver.com in the first instance.

Do you offer a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Disabled Persons?

Disabled applicants who meet the minimum selection criteria in the job specification are guaranteed an interview. Selection will be on merit. If you wish to claim a guaranteed interview under the Disability Commitment, you should complete the relevant section of the online application. It is not necessary to state the nature of your disability.

Will this role be overseen by the Civil Service Commission?

Yes. As this role is one of the more senior posts within the Civil Service, a Commissioner will oversee the recruitment process and chair the selection panel.

More detailed information can be found on the Civil Service Commission [website](#).

What do I do if I want to make a complaint?

The law requires that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the [Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles](#).

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Recruitment Principles, and you wish to make a complaint, you should contact sarah.snelling@perrettlaver.com in the first instance.

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the Department, you can contact the [Civil Service Commission](#).

What should I do if I think that I have a conflict of interest?

Candidates must note the requirement to declare any interests that might cause questions to be raised about their approach to the business of the Department.

If you believe that you may have a conflict of interest please contact sarah.snelling@perrettlaver.com before submitting your application

Diversity & Inclusion

The Civil Service is committed to becoming an exemplar employer on inclusion.



We know that working inclusively and harnessing a range of talents means solving problems better, making better decisions and delivering better public services. We are committed to representing as broad a range of views and backgrounds as we have in UK society, focused not just on the characteristics protected under law but equally committed to greater socioeconomic diversity, greater regional diversity and to building teams where effectively harnessing cognitive diversity is the way decisions are made. We know that diverse perspectives and experiences are critical to an effective, modern Civil Service that delivers policies and services for all of our citizens.

Our vision is to ensure the Civil Service represents modern Britain and is a truly inclusive employer – an example to other employers. We will create an organisation where diversity and fairness are not only respected and valued – but celebrated - and where everyone can see where they belong and no one feels excluded.

What's in it for me?

We want to maximise the potential of everyone who chooses to work for us – regardless of background, working style or career experience.

If you're interested in becoming a world class leader, developing your career with us – starting with this interesting and challenging role – or doing things differently and inspiring colleagues, then the Civil Service is the place for [you](#).

Our passion for inclusion and equality means creating a work environment for all employees that is welcoming, respectful, fair, engaging, and enriched with opportunities for personal and professional development

What's next?

You've taken the first step and looked through this job pack to understand the skills and experience needed to perform this role. Now join us in achieving our ambitions and let us help you achieve yours. [Read more](#).



UK Health
Security
Agency

Contact us

Should candidates like to discuss the role in more detail before submitting an application, please contact Annabel Holt at annabel.holt@perrettlaver.com or +44(0)20 7340 6219

For further details, please visit <https://perrettlaver.com/ukhsa-director-of-public-health-microbiology/>

Our work is regulated by the Civil Service Commission.

UKHSA is a Disability Confident employer.