

Information Booklet

**Open competition for appointment to the position of
Head of Policy and Strategic Planning (fixed term)**

Closing Date: 20th December at 4pm

Contact: Padraic Mellett or Karolina-Anna Siedlik

Email: recruit@hea.ie

**Higher Education Authority, 3 Shelbourne Buildings,
Crampton Avenue, Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4
Telephone Number: +353 (0)1 2317100 - Website: www.hea.ie**

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Title of Position: Head of Policy & Strategic Planning (Principal Officer)

Status of position: Fixed term contract until July 2024

Authority: Higher Education Authority

Location: 3 Shelbourne Buildings, Crampton Ave, Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4

About the Higher Education Authority

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 sets out a new vision for higher education in Ireland. In the decades ahead, higher education will play an ever-greater role in making Ireland a country recognized for innovation, competitive enterprise and continuing academic excellence, in addition to an attractive place to live and work, with a high quality of life, cultural vibrancy and inclusive social structures.

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) plays a key leadership role in driving change in the higher education system and ensuring a strong accountability and performance focus across institutions. The Authority has accountability and oversight responsibilities for a significant area of the public sector - the management of a state spend of over €1.35 billion per annum in Higher Education Institutions.

Through the management of the Irish Research Council, the Authority also has a mandate to enable and sustain a vibrant and creative research community in Ireland.

To deliver on its mandate the HEA must effectively manage a progressive and pioneering organisation comprised of highly skilled team members.

The HEA wishes to fill the post of Head of Policy and Strategic Planning (fixed term to July 2024)

Further information on the work of the Higher Education Authority is available at www.hea.ie

Context for the position

The HEA together with the Irish Research Council and the Department of Education and Skills contributed to the development of the national policy of science and innovation, Innovation 2020 and will play a central role in implementing aspects of the new strategy, particularly in the area of human capital development.

The HEA works with QQI in ensuring that higher education institutions provide high quality teaching and learning. This is achieved through a number of activities including monitoring implementation of institutional teaching and learning indicators as part of the strategic dialogue process, supporting

the work of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. The successful candidate will be a member of the Forum's Board.

The HEA also engages with other stakeholders on a range of initiatives relating to the transition from secondary to higher education and progression within the latter.

The quality of Ireland's higher education system is enhanced by the inward and outward movement of staff and students and staff. The HEA is the national agency for the Erasmus + programme and manages on behalf of the DES the Government of Ireland scholarship scheme. The HEA plays a key role in implementing the International Education Strategy.

A key role will be implementation of recommendations set out in the Gender Action Plan 2018-20 including running the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI).

The Role:

- Supporting initiatives to enhance teaching and learning in higher education institutions including close liaison with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning
- Progressing implementation by HEIs of measures to enhance the transition from post primary to further and higher education
- Oversee implementation of measures assigned to the HEA under the Department of Education and Skills' International Education Strategy
- Progress implementation of the recommendations of the Gender Action Plan 2018-20 and the Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions.
- Lead the HEA's contribution to the development of digital transformation of Irish higher education
- Support the development of research in the higher education sector.
- Contribute, with other members of the senior management team, to the development and implementation of higher education policy, particularly in the areas of teaching and learning, research and international education
- Lead the Policy, Research, International Education and Centre for Gender Excellence teams – 3 Assistant Principals and up to 8 support staff
- Such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the CEO

The Individual:

- You are an experienced manager with an established record of leadership and achievement at a senior level in business, industry, the public sector or higher education
- Must have strong knowledge of the education sector, with particular focus on policy development and implementation
- Must have a broad interest in current affairs, broader public policy and a keen understanding in particular of the Irish government and EU policy in research and innovation
- Strong analytical skills and a capacity to develop long term policies in relation to education strategy in line with Government priorities
- You have strongly developed strategic and financial skills - keen understanding of the need for public accountability and ensuring the effective investment of public funding

- You have highly developed communications skills and are capable of engaging with and influencing a wide range of internal and external stakeholders
- A good knowledge of higher education in Ireland or internationally would be desirable

Closing date for applications **4:00pm Friday 20th December** via email to recruit@hea.ie, for the attention of Mr. Padraic Mellett, HEA, Head of Corporate Affairs, Higher Education Authority. Alternatively, applications can be sent by post to Mr. Padraic Mellett, HEA, Head of Corporate Affairs, Higher Education Authority, 3 Shelbourne Buildings, Crampton Avenue, Shelbourne Road, Dublin D04 C2Y6.

Informal queries relating to this position should be submitted to recruit@hea.ie

The HEA is an equal opportunities employer.

Principal Conditions of Service

Part 1 (Conditions which particularly apply to this position)

1. Pay: The salary scale for this position is as follows:

PPC - €87,325, €90,920, €94,487, €98,082, €101,114, €104,258 (LSI1), €107,399 (LSI2);

PPC (Personal Pension Contribution) Scale (for officers who are existing civil or public servants appointed on or after 6 April 1995 or who are new entrants to the civil or public service and who are making a compulsory personal pension contribution).

Different pay and conditions may apply if, prior to appointment, the appointee is an existing civil or public servant appointed prior to 6th April 1995.

Increments may be awarded subject to satisfactory service and to changes in the terms and conditions relating to salary increments in the Civil/Public Service generally.

The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

Salary: The appointment will be made on the salary scale at a point in line with current Government Pay Policy. New Entrants to the Civil or Public Sector, as defined in Circular 18/2010, will commence on the first point of the salary scale. Different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is a serving civil or public servant.

2. Annual Leave: Annual Leave applying to all newly recruited and promoted Principal Officers from the 14th December 2011, will be entitled to 30 days leave. A serving civil or public servant who holds the grade of Principal Officer or equivalent upon appointment shall retain their annual leave allowance of 32 days per annum. This leave is exclusive of public holidays.

3. Hours of Attendance: Working hours will be in accordance with the standard arrangements for HEA and will equate to no less than a 37 hours (net of rest breaks) per week.

No additional payment will be made for extra attendance as the rate of remuneration payable covers any exceptional extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

4. **Location:** This position is currently based at 3 Shelbourne Buildings, Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4. This is 5 minutes' walk from Lansdowne Dart Station and is serviced by a number of bus routes including 4,7, and 18.

Part II (Other conditions which apply generally to appointees to this position)

1. Tenure:

The appointee must serve a probationary period, which normally will last for 11 months. Should the appointee's services be satisfactory as regards health, conduct and efficiency generally during the probationary period, the appointee, on completion of the period will be finally appointed. Should the appointee's services be unsatisfactory, the appointment may be terminated at any time during the period.

2. **Duties:** The appointee will be expected to perform all acts, duties and obligations as appropriate to this position (which may be revised from time to time).
3. **Outside Employment:** The position is whole-time and the appointee must avoid involvement in outside employment/business interests in conflict or in potential conflict with the business of HEA. Clarification must be sought from management where any doubt arises.
4. **Sick Leave:** Sick leave with full pay may be allowed at the discretion of the Higher Education Authority in accordance with established procedures and conditions for the public service generally.
5. **Retirement and Superannuation:** The appointee will be offered public service pension terms and retirement age conditions in accordance with pension arrangements in the HEA depending on the status of the successful appointee:
 - a) In general, an individual who has no prior pensionable Public Service history in the 26 weeks prior to appointment will be a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme) which commenced from 1 January 2013 (Section 10 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 refers);
 - b) An individual who is on secondment will remain a member of the parent organisation's pension scheme and the pensionable remuneration will be based on his/her substantive grade i.e. the grade at which the individual is employed in his/her parent organisation;
 - c) An individual who was a member of a "pre-existing public service pension scheme" as construed by the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 and who does not qualify for membership of the Single Scheme will be a member of the HEA's Staff Superannuation Scheme and Associated Spouses and Children's Scheme;
 - d) At the time of being offered an appointment, the HEA in consultation with the Department of Education & Skills and the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform if necessary, will, in the light of the appointee's previous Public Service (and/or other) employment history, determine the appropriate pension terms and conditions to apply for the duration of the appointment. Appointees will be required to disclose their full public service history. Details of the appropriate superannuation provisions will be provided upon determination of appointee's status;

- e) In accordance with the provisions of the Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2004 staff may not retire before their 65th birthday unless it is on grounds of ill-health. Different retirement arrangements apply to staff employed in the public service prior to the aforementioned 2004 Act. The provisions of the Public Service Superannuation (Age of Retirement) Act 2018 will apply to this post.
- f) The following points should be noted:
- **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 will 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.
 - **Pension Abatement:** The Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 extended pension abatement so that a retiree's public service pension is liable to abatement on re-entering public service employment, even where the new employment is in a different area of the public service. However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service and awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER) or the Health Service Executive VER/VRS which, as outlined below, render a person ineligible for the competition) the entitlement to payment of that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements will, however, be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.
 - **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, 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 cesser 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.
6. **Pension Related Deduction:** This appointment is subject to the pension-related deduction in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2009. For further information in relation to public service superannuation issues please see the following website: <http://per.gov.ie/pensions>
7. **Eligibility to compete:** Candidates should note that eligibility to compete is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

- 8. Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):** It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.
- 9. Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):** The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider public service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.
- 10. Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants**

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the public service by any public service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. Thereafter the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility) and the Minister's consent will have to be secured prior to employment by any public service body.
- 11. Declaration of previous public service employment history:**

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a public service scheme of incentivised early retirement and/or the collective agreement outlined above. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

Competition Process

How to Apply

Applications may be sent by post or email to Padraic Mellett, Head of Corporate Affairs recruit@hea.ie no later than **4:00pm Friday 20th December**. Alternatively, applications can be sent by post to Mr. Padraic Mellett, HEA, Head of Corporate Affairs, Higher Education Authority, 3 Shelbourne Buildings, Crampton Avenue, Shelbourne Road, Dublin D04 C2Y6. Applicants will be required to provide a declaration as outlined in paragraph 11.

Applications will not be accepted after the closing date.

Selection Methods

The selection of candidates will be based on:

- Supporting statements
- Interview
- Satisfactory references (referees will not be contacted without the candidate's prior agreement)

The Higher Education Authority reserves the right to require candidates attend a second interview.

Shortlisting

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While a candidate 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, the HEA may decide that a number only will be called to interview. In this respect, the HEA 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 in your application.

Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 as amended, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

Security Clearance

Police vetting may be sought in respect of individuals who are considered for appointment. The applicant will be required to complete and return a Garda Vetting form should they come under consideration for appointment. This form will be forwarded to An Garda Síochána for security checks on all Irish and Northern Irish addresses at which they resided. If unsuccessful this information will be destroyed by the HEA. If the applicant subsequently comes under consideration for another position, they will be required to supply this information again.

Other important information

The HEA will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a campaign, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that the HEA are satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the competition 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 the HEA 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 HEA may, at its discretion, select and recommend that person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

Panel

A panel for a 12-month period from the date of interviews will be established and will be used to fill any subsequent permanent, longer or short-term fixed term contracts in the HEA depending on the nature of the vacancy and skills sets required.

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 he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by the HEA, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the HEA requires 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.

Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive.

When you submit an application for a competition, we create a computer record in your name. Information submitted with a job application is used in processing your application.

To make a request to access your personal data please submit your request by email to: dataprotection@hea.ie ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record(s).

Information in relation to a candidate's personal data held by the HEA are set out on the Data Protection page of www.hea.ie