



Met Office

Audit Report

April 2025

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Profile	3
Audit Findings	4
Good Practice	4
Areas for Improvement	4
Queries Raised	4
Breaches of the Recruitment Principles	4
Exceptions	5
Exception 1 Usage	5
Diversity, Innovation and SCS Recruitment	5
Diversity	5
Innovation	5
SCS Recruitment (including External by Default)	5
Conclusions and Recommendations	5
Management Action Plan	6
Moderation Meeting	6
Audit Rating	6
Our Classification Systems	7

Executive Summary

The Civil Service Commission audits organisations to drive greater innovation and improvement in departmental practice, while ensuring the important principle of recruitment on merit, after fair and open competition remains the cornerstone of an effective and impartial Civil Service.

The new audit programme better reflects the differences in scale and the challenge of recruitment within the different departments and organisations that the CSC regulates.

For each audit the Commission requests evidence on six campaigns, with each to include records related to:

- o the job advert;
- o the candidate pack;
- o the sift records (with scores);
- o the interview questions;
- o the interview scores (with feedback);
- o the appointment; and
- o the chair / panel report.

and:

- requests evidence on six exceptions;
- issues a questionnaire related to diversity, innovation and SCS recruitment;
- identifies areas of concern; potential breaches to the Recruitment Principles; and clarifying evidence from the organisation required for the interim audit;
- discusses the above with each organisation at an audit meeting;
- moderates the final report with Civil Service Commissioners including, where relevant, the department's Link Commissioner;
- issues the Final Audit Report with the audit rating to the organisation; and
- follows up recommendations with the organisation to ensure the actions have been addressed.

Profile

The Met Office is an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). The Met Office is the UK's national meteorological service providing weather and climate-related services to the government, businesses, emergency responders and the public. The Met Office is supported by one public body.

- **Headcount:** 2,170 (January 2025)
- **Appointments:** 327 (last four quarters)
- **Exceptions:** 0 (last four quarters)
- **SCS1+2 / Commissioner-led competitions:** 1/0 (last four quarters)

The Met Office audit was in January 2025.

The Met Office Complexity Score is 1. This reflects a standard score for the smallest departments with a focused remit. The Met Office engaged positively throughout the audit process.

Audit Findings

The audit reviewed six campaigns.

Good Practice

The Met Office clearly stated what the CV and supporting statement should include.

Areas for Improvement

The Met Office should expand on the requirement for international experience with an example to provide candidates with a better understanding.

The Met Office should ensure candidate outcomes are clearly recorded in the interview records.

The Met Office should explicitly state if there are any additional assessments candidates are expected to undertake within the 'Selection Process' to ensure that candidates understand what is expected from them.

The Met Office should add further detail to job adverts by providing examples of qualifications expected beyond "professional qualifications".

Queries Raised

CSC noted that the Met Office omitted the complaints process from the job advert on all campaigns. The Met Office could not provide an explanation other than human error. They accepted the breaches and stated that training will be implemented to ensure no recurrences.

Breaches of the Recruitment Principles

Four Serious breaches were identified in the audit. Two Serious breaches due to removing the statement that recruitment should be regulated by the Commission. One Serious breach around exclusionary criteria stating candidates should have stakeholder management at department and ministerial level in government organisations. One Serious breach for assessing desirable criteria instead of essential criteria.

Eight Technical breaches identified in the audit. Six Technical breaches for omitting the complaints process from job adverts. Two Technical breaches related to record keeping on candidates outcomes.

No breaches were identified outside the audit.

Exceptions

The Met Office did not use any exceptions in this period.

Exception 1 usage

- **Total (last four quarters):** There were no exceptions.

Diversity, Innovation and SCS Recruitment

Diversity

The Met Office has an recruitment action plan, which includes increasing the diversity of applicants by advertising in a wide range of sources and ensuring adverts are diverse.

The Met Office selection and hiring stages monitor diversity levels, with interventions to improve recruitment processes.

Innovation

The Met Office has an established Talent Acquisition team to proactively source hard to fill roles via platforms such as LinkedIn Recruiter.

SCS Recruitment (including External by Default)

The total number of SCS recruitment within the department conducted via fair and open competition, based on merit, in the last four quarters was one, which was made to an external candidate.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Four Serious breaches and eight Technical breaches inside the audit. No breaches outside the audit.

There were no exceptions.

The Met Office has a recruitment plan and established a talent acquisition team. However, the Met Office should evidence more of this work for future audits.

One SCS recruited through a fair and open process, which was made to an external candidate.

Management Action Plan

The audit identified four recommendations:

	Recommendations	Priority	Implementation Date
1	The Met Office should continue to work with the Commission, to understand the Recruitment Principles and how these relate to the Fair principle, and in particular, around the use of exclusionary criteria.	High	October 2025
2	The Met Office should take steps to improve structure and accuracy on job adverts, which should include the complaints process, and the statement that recruitment is regulated by the Commission.	Medium	October 2025
3	The Met Office should take steps to improve record keeping across all campaigns, in particular, candidate outcomes.	Medium	October 2025
4	The Met Office should evidence, in future audits, any new or ongoing work to develop diversity and innovation in their recruitment practices.	Medium	October 2025

The Civil Service Commission will follow up with the organisation to ensure actions have been taken to address the recommendations.

Moderation Meeting

At the Moderation Meeting, held on 12 March 2025, the Commissioners noted that the Met Office is required to recruit a large number of highly qualified professional people such as technology specialists, data scientists and meteorologists without competitive pay and to a remote location. CSC considered the Met Office should be complexity score 2. The Commissioners agreed the recommendations and audit rating.

Audit Rating

The audit rating is determined by compliance (breaches and Exception 1 usage); positive actions (diversity and innovation) and SCS recruitment (including external by default and Commissioner insight). The weighting will also be determined by the department size – for example, larger departments will have more SCS staff than smaller departments who may not have any SCS staff.

	Breaches	Exception 1 Usage	Diversity	Innovation	SCS Recruitment
Scale: 1-5	1	5	2	2	5
Weight (100%)	40%	25%	10%	10%	15%
Sub Score	8	25	4	4	15
Total Score	56				
Rating	Fair				

Our Classification Systems

Complexity Score

- 5** **Most Complex** – largest most varied or currently most high-profile departments
- 4** **Complex** – large, varied or a high-profile department
- 3** **Average Complexity** – small, more focused departments, medium range and public profile
- 2** **Less Complex** – small department, low range and public profile
- 1** **Least Complex** – smallest departments with a focused remit

Considerations Informing Audit Rating

Compliance, Breaches, Exception 1 Usage, Diversity, Innovation, and SCS Recruitment.

Audit Ratings

Good	70-100
Fair	50-69
Needs Improvement	30-49
Needs Regulatory Intervention	20-29

Recommendations

Priority	Definition	Action Required
High	Non-compliance with the Recruitment Principles.	Remedial action must be taken taken urgently within an agreed timescale.
Medium	Impact on the legal requirement of the Recruitment Principles related to fair, open, and based on merit.	Remedial action should be prioritised within an agreed timetable.
Low	No, or minimal, impact on the legal Requirement of the Recruitment Principles related to fair, open, and based on merit.	Remedial action should be taken at earliest opportunity within an agreed timetable.