



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

**Human Resources Directorate**  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

31 March 2014

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 1045-13**

Thank you for your email of 06 November asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

*I am emailing to request information about your policy/approach in recruiting Director level employees. I would like information about how people who are not already permanently employed by the FCO e.g. civil servants in other departments or on loan or secondment to the FCO are recruited at SCS2 grade as permanent FCO staff.*

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request.

In common with other Government Departments (OGDs), the FCO encourages interchange between departments at its senior levels. We advertise all Director level jobs (which are graded at Senior Management Structure (SMS) Payband 2 (SMS2 is SCS2 equivalent) as well as other SMS jobs (SMS1, 3 and 4, SCS1,3 and 4 equivalent), via the Civil Service Jobs online. In case it is helpful below is the link to their website:

<https://jobs.civilservice.gov.uk/company/nghr/activate.cgi?6342712.b6b724d630181b8a85ad110918b0737b>

The FCO has a Senior Appointments Board, chaired by the Permanent Under Secretary, Sir Simon Fraser, which looks at appointments at SMS2 and above. It considers all eligible applicants and makes recommendations to the Foreign Secretary. In deciding whom to recommend for appointment, the Board weighs up a range of evidence including performance against the SMS competences, plus the experience and expertise the candidates offer. The majority of appointment decisions are made on the basis of an interview. There will however be times when the Board decides there are good reasons to recommend a particular candidate for an appointment without interview. This is usually to make use of particular skills and expertise (for example: language skills) or when one candidate very clearly stands out above all others.

Should a Civil Servant from another Government Department be successfully recruited to an FCO position, the loan is for an agreed, limited time period, and the individual remains an employee of their home department. If a Civil Servant on loan wishes to then permanently join the FCO, they are able to apply via the FCO inward transfer scheme. This provides a

route for Civil Servants who are already working for the FCO on loan, to transfer to the FCO on a permanent basis.

There is no automatic right to permanent transfer into the FCO. Inward transfer places are limited and will depend on the FCO's operational workforce planning and other operational requirements. All applicants must have been recruited to the Civil Service through fair and open competition, be a British citizen, be a permanent Civil Servant and have completed any probationary period in the home government department. Applicants must have been working in the FCO or one of its posts, in an FCO funded-position, for a period of 12 months or more and be prepared, if successful, to use any specialist skills within the FCO.

Potential transferees at SMS Pay Band 2 are considered on the basis of their SCS appraisals and are required to pass an interview panel comprising at least two FCO Director Generals and the HR Director.

If the inward transfer is approved, this takes effect once the officer in question fills a new substantive position which has been advertised and for which they have bid successfully. They will then be considered a permanent FCO staff member.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless it is exempt. The information we have supplied to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

I hope you are satisfied with this reply.

Yours sincerely,

Knowledge Management Officer  
Human Resources Directorate



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.