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Ref: FOI2020/08320

Dr

18 August 2020

Dear

Thank you for your email of 20 July 2020 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), seeking information about Civil Service recruitment processes.

You requested the following information:

*“(1) With respect to the following information (paragraph 17) please clarify on what grounds and on what date(s) were the IBM tests replaced; and on what date(s) where the IBM tests removed from the recruitment (HR) processes of DBS/MOD?”*

*‘The original three tests provided by IBM have now been replaced with Civil Service tests which are owned by GRS and are hosted on their own platform. These became available this year and again GRS charge departments for their use based on a cost per test completed. It is a matter for each government department to determine which tests they wish to use as part of recruitment.’*

*(2) With respect to the references to Bands in the attachment ‘Information in scope of FOI2019\_11451.pdf’ please clarify the Band for the following post of employment at MOD Abbey Wood (2018-2019):*

*System Safety Trainer, MOD Abbey Wood (Job refs: 1602507; 1574523 (closed 11/07/18); 1595063 (closed 09/10/18)).*

*Re: ‘(2)’ - I have ascertained the Band is C2 Higher Executive Officer.*

*Further clarification/information:*

*(3) Please provide a copy of the instructions issued to the MOD by GRS and/or JFC and/or Civil Service HR, informing the MOD that the IBM tests must not be used for recruitment/selection of Civil Servants.*

*(4) Please provide a full copy of instructions (a) issued by GRS and/or JFC and/or Civil Service HR to the MOD, and (b) by the MOD to the MOD Recruiting Manager (Mr. Mike Lee; or any other person) for post of ‘System Safety Trainer’ in respect of requiring job applicants (interviewees) to give presentations during interviews; please ensure copy of instructions issued to MOD Recruiting Manager includes instructions pertaining to:*

*(4.i) Format of Presentation, Level of Knowledge Required, Topic Content, Duration of Presentations;*

*(4.ii) Method of presentation delivery (e.g. use of notes; slides; white boards; computers; etc);*

(4.iii) Full details of provisions to be made for Disabled People (interviewees); i.e. extra time, use of computing facilities, comfort breaks, physical adjustments, etc.  
(4.iv) Details of Competence Standards being tested by use of presentations;  
(4.v) Standardised Scoring System/Marking Scheme;  
(4.vi) Alternative methods of determining Competence Standards where presentations are not used.

(5) Full copy of the instructions issued by the MOD (and/or GRS and/or JFC and/or Civil Service HR) to the MOD Recruiting Manager (Mr. Mike Lee; or any other person) for the post of 'System Safety Trainer' instructing Mr. Lee (or any other person) that the use of presentations during interviews should not be used for job vacancy 1602507 and 1574523 'System Safety Trainer' MOD Abbey Wood, Bristol.

(6) Full copy of the Instructions to Applicants for job vacancies 157423, and 1595063, and 1602507 setting out in detail the following:  
(6.i) Notifying applicants they were required to give a presentation at interview;  
(6.ii) Format of Presentation, Level of Knowledge Required, Topic Content, Duration of Presentations;  
(6.iii) Method of presentation delivery (e.g. use of notes; slides; white boards; computers; etc);  
(6.iv) Full details of provisions to be made for Disabled People (interviewees); i.e. extra time, use of computing facilities, comfort breaks, physical adjustments, etc.  
(6.v) Details of Competence Standards being tested by use of presentations;  
(6.vi) Standardised Scoring System/Marking Scheme;  
(6.vii) Alternative methods of determining Competence Standards where presentations are not used".

A search of the MOD for the requested information has now been conducted, and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

In answer to (1), I can confirm that the IBM tests were replaced by the Civil Service owned numerical and verbal and numerical tests on 16 December 2019, any vacancy advertised before 16 December 2019 would have used the IBM tests as appropriate.

In respect of (2), I can confirm that the post of System Safety Trainer advertised under Reference numbers 1574523 and 1602507 was a Band C2 Higher Executive Officer post.

Regarding (3) about instructions not to use the IBM tests, the Government Recruitment Service has confirmed that they always advised recruiting managers to use the IBM tests as appropriate for recruiting and sifting internal and external vacancies and have never advised against their use.

For parts (4) to (6), it is unfortunately taking longer to confirm if information is held in scope of these requests, I will write to you again when I am able to respond to them in full, which I expect will be within the next seven working days.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Defence Business Services Secretariat