



Dear **Defence Business Services**
Head DBS Secretariat
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MOD Abbey Wood North
Bristol BS34 8QW

DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

Ref: FOI2020/09350

15 September 2020

Email:

Following my letter of 18 August 2020 in response to your e-mail of 20 July 2020 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), you requested clarification of the following points:

“Please clarify the following information in your response; re:

‘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.’

Please clarify:

(i) What is meant by ‘as appropriate’?

Please provide full true copy of the detailed instruction issued by the GRS to the recruiting manager for the post of System Safety Trainer (2018).

(ii) Did the GRS advise recruiting managers to use IBM tests randomly for different applicants for the same vacancies?

(iii) Did the GRS advise recruiting managers to use the IBM tests for external applicants but not for internal applicants for the same vacancies?

(iv) Did the GRS advise recruiting managers to use the IBM tests for some external applicants but not for other external applicants for the same vacancies?

(v) Did the GRS advise recruiting managers to use IBM tests for some applicants who had already been ‘sifted’ as suitable?”

To answer (i) I can confirm that ‘as appropriate’ means in accordance with the guidance provided for online tests which is attached to this letter for your information.

In response to (ii) and (iii) if online tests are required for a specific post, both internal and external applicants are required to undertake them. From 13 August 2018, the Top Level Budget area decided that all internal candidates applying for a promotion must undertake the Civil Service Judgement Test, and if a post is advertised externally all applicants, including those in the substantive grade of the post must undertake this test.

To answer part (iv) all external applicants must undertake the test.

Finally, in response to part (v) I can confirm that no applicants would be sifted-in for interview unless they had successfully taken the test, or were already exempt from taking the test because they were either internal candidates and substantive in the grade, or had already successfully taken a test within the last six months.

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