Reference: 2025-031

Thank you for your email dated 4 March 2025 in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I request the following information regarding the recruitment process for the Trainee Investigator position, ref no. 383329, advertised in January 2025:

1. **The recruitment policy or guidelines applied to this vacancy, including any scoring or assessment criteria used for the online numerical and verbal tests, motivation letter, and interview stages.**
2. **The overall number of applicants for the position.**
3. **The number of applicants that were invited to take part in the online assessments.**
4. **The number of applicants that completed the online assessments and and were then invited to complete the rest of the application form.**
5. **The number of applicants that took part in the online assessments and were then invited to complete the rest of the application form.**
6. **The number of applicants shortlisted for the video interview.**

7. I further would like to request: Anonymized equality monitoring data collected at each stage of this recruitment process, in other words: The breakdown of applicants by gender, ethnicity, age, disability, and any other protected characteristics monitored, at the following points:

- **Initial applicants (before online tests).**
- **Candidates invited to take the online tests.**
- **Candidates that passed the online tests and were invited to complete the rest of the application form.**
- **Candidates that were selected for interview.**
- **Candidates that were offered one of the 12 available positions.**
- **Candidates that were rejected.**

Response

Question 1

Please see Annex 1 (Scoring guidance). More information can also be found here: Civil Service Jobs Privacy Notice - Civil Service Jobs - GOV.UK. As this request was internal, a link to the Resourcing Policy information on SFO internal systems was provided to them.

Question 2

2171.

Question 3

1661.

Question 4

799

Question 5
799

Question 6
62

Question 7
Please see Annexes 2 (Anonymised equality monitoring data) & 3 (Anonymised test data) which contain answers to your questions.

Annex 1 – Scoring guidance

Experience & Behaviours; 1-7 scoring scale		
Rating	**Label**	**Definition**
1	Not Demonstrated	No positive evidence of criteria
2*	Minimal Demonstration	Limited positive evidence of the criteria
3	Moderate Demonstration	Moderate positive evidence of the criteria
4	Acceptable Demonstration	Adequate positive evidence of the criteria
5	Good Demonstration	Substantial positive evidence of the criteria
6	Strong Demonstration	Substantial, positive evidence of the criteria, some evidence of exceeding expectations.
7	Outstanding Demonstration	Evidence provided wholly exceeds expectation at this level.

Ratings 1-3 = the applicant has not provided enough evidence to demonstrate effectiveness in this area; **Rating 4** = the applicant has provided acceptable levels of evidence to demonstrate effectiveness in this area. This is generally considered a 'pass' except where the panel has agreed to raise the pass mark for all candidates; **Ratings 5-7** = the applicant has provided comprehensive evidence to demonstrate effectiveness in this area.

The pass mark for inviting to interview for each element is 4. Where a high number of candidates meet the standard, in order to short list for interview you can raise the benchmark but all DCS candidates who meet the minimum requirement of 4 will be invited to interview.

2* - a score of 2 in ***any*** criteria means the highest overall score for behaviour or experience a candidate can receive is 3, and they would not be considered to have demonstrated the required standard for interview.

Technical (professional) scoring scale		
Rating	**Label**	**Definition**
1	No	No substantial evidence of required criteria
2	Partial	Some evidence of required criteria
3	Yes	Evidence of all required criteria

There is only one technical score per candidate regardless of how many technical criteria are being assessed.

Rating 1-No; the candidate has failed to demonstrate all/any of the technical criteria and has failed the technical element of the sift

Rating 2-Partial; this can be applied when candidates evidence some but not all the essential technical criteria. It can also be applied if candidates meet all the essential criteria but not the desirable criteria, to assist with shortlisting for interview (if you have stated on the advert you may consider desirable criteria in this way). How you apply this score and whether partial is considered as a pass or fail will depend on the selection process you have agreed and advertised. You must apply the scale consistently i.e. if one candidate is put through to interview with partial then all candidates who meet the rest of the requirements and scored partial for technical should be interviewed.

Rating 3-Yes; the candidate has demonstrated all required technical criteria and has passed the technical element of the sift

Annex 2 – anonymised equality monitoring data

Disability	Yes	%	No	%	Prefer not to disclose	%	Total
Total Applicants	207	12.1%	1401	82.0%	101	5.9%	1709
Online Test	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Passed Sift	10	16.1%	49	79.0%	3	4.8%	62
Passed Interview	3	12.0%	21	84.0%	1	4.0%	25
Reserve List	2	15.4%	11	84.6%	0	0.0%	13
Posted	1	8.3%	10	83.3%	1	8.3%	12
Rejected	193	11.9%	1330	82.0%	98	6.0%	1621
Withdrawn	11	17.5%	50	79.4%	2	3.2%	63

Gender	Man	%	Woman	%	Prefer to self-describe	%	Prefer not to disclose	%	Total
Total Applicants	809	47.3%	837	49.0%	3	0.2%	60	3.5%	1709
Online Test	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Passed Sift	27	43.5%	32	51.6%	0	0.0%	3	4.8%	62
Passed Interview	10	40.0%	15	60.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	25
Reserve List	5	38.5%	8	61.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	13
Posted	5	41.7%	7	58.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	12
Rejected	773	47.7%	787	48.6%	3	0.2%	58	3.6%	1621
Withdrawn	26	41.3%	35	55.6%	0	0.0%	2	3.2%	63

Ethnic Group	Asian / Asian British	%	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	%	Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	%	Other ethnic group	%	White	%	Prefer not to disclose	%	Total
Total Applicants	394	23.1%	326	19.1%	99	5.8%	47	2.8%	731	42.8%	112	6.6%	1709
Online Test	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Passed Sift	17	27.4%	13	21.0%	0	0.0%	3	4.8%	22	35.5%	7	11.3%	62
Passed Interview	5	20.0%	5	20.0%	0	0.0%	2	8.0%	11	44.0%	2	8.0%	25
Reserve List	3	23.1%	4	30.8%	0	0.0%	2	15.4%	4	30.8%	0	0.0%	13
Posted	2	16.7%	1	8.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	7	58.3%	2	16.7%	12
Rejected	380	23.4%	304	18.8%	94	5.8%	43	2.7%	694	42.8%	106	6.5%	1621
Withdrawn	9	14.3%	17	27.0%	5	7.9%	2	3.2%	26	41.3%	4	6.3%	63

Sexual orientation	Heterosexual or straight	%	Bisexual	%	Gay or lesbian	%	Prefer to self-describe	%	Prefer not to disclose	%	Total
Total Applicants	1374	80.4%	99	5.8%	58	3.4%	4	0.2%	174	10.2%	1709
Online Test	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Passed Sift	43	69.4%	3	4.8%	4	6.5%	0	0.0%	12	19.4%	62
Passed Interview	16	64.0%	1	4.0%	1	4.0%	0	0.0%	7	28.0%	25
Reserve List	11	84.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	15.4%	13
Posted	5	41.7%	1	8.3%	1	8.3%	0	0.0%	5	41.7%	12
Rejected	1310	80.8%	96	5.9%	53	3.3%	4	0.2%	158	9.7%	1621
Withdrawn	48	76.2%	2	3.2%	4	6.3%	0	0.0%	9	14.3%	63

Age Group	16-24	%	25-29	%	30-34	%	35-39	%	40-44	%	45-49	%
Total Applicants	718	42.0%	412	24.1%	178	10.4%	116	6.8%	84	4.9%	69	4.0%
Online Test	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Passed Sift	16	25.8%	22	35.5%	5	8.1%	6	9.7%	5	8.1%	3	4.8%
Passed Interview	7	28.0%	7	28.0%	4	16.0%	4	16.0%	0	0.0%	2	8.0%
Reserve List	4	30.8%	4	30.8%	2	15.4%	3	23.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Posted	3	25.0%	3	25.0%	2	16.7%	1	8.3%	0	0.0%	2	16.7%
Rejected	689	42.5%	386	23.8%	166	10.2%	109	6.7%	79	4.9%	67	4.1%
Withdrawn	22	34.9%	19	30.2%	8	12.7%	3	4.8%	5	7.9%	0	0.0%

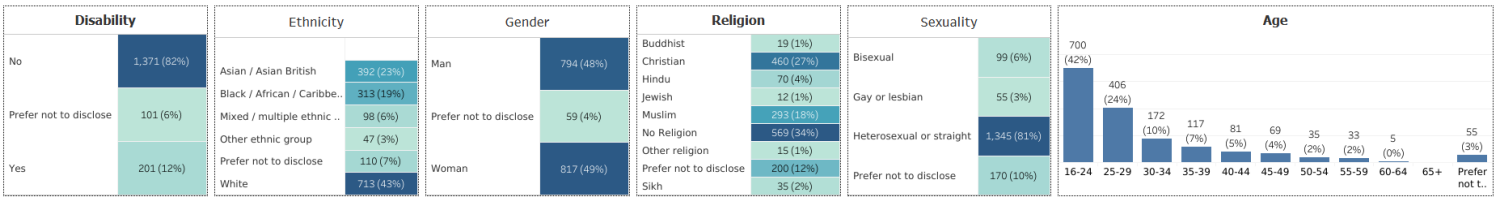
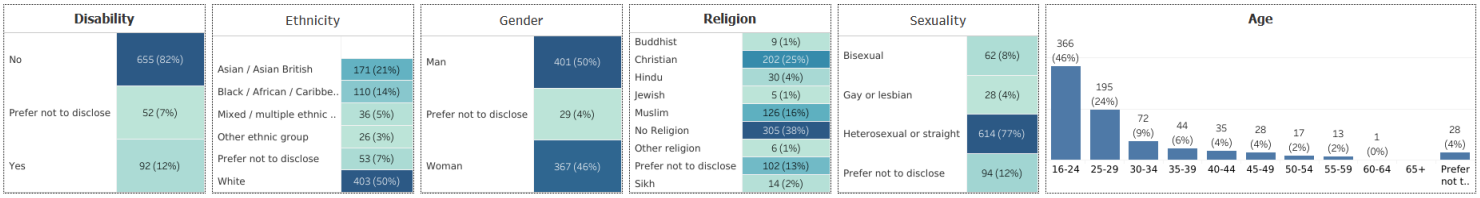
Age Group	50-54	%	55-59	%	60-64	%	65+	%	Prefer not to disclose	%	Total
Total Applicants	37	2.2%	33	1.9%	6	0.4%	0	0.0%	56	3.3%	1709
Online Test	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Passed Sift	1	1.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	6.5%	62
Passed Interview	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	4.0%	25
Reserve List	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	13
Posted	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	8.3%	12
Rejected	34	2.1%	33	2.0%	5	0.3%	0	0.0%	53	3.3%	1621
Withdrawn	3	4.8%	0	0.0%	1	1.6%	0	0.0%	2	3.2%	63

Religion	**Buddhist**	**%**	**Christian**	**%**	**Hindu**	**%**	**Jewish**	**%**	**Muslim**	**%**
Total Applicants	18	1.1%	478	28.0%	71	4.2%	12	0.7%	296	17.3%
Online Test	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Passed Sift	0	0.0%	16	25.8%	1	1.6%	0	0.0%	13	21.0%
Passed Interview	0	0.0%	8	32.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	20.0%
Reserve List	0	0.0%	5	38.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	30.8%
Posted	0	0.0%	3	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	8.3%
Rejected	18	1.1%	447	27.6%	69	4.3%	12	0.7%	282	17.4%
Withdrawn	0	0.0%	23	36.5%	2	3.2%	0	0.0%	9	14.3%

Religion	**Sikh**	**%**	**Other religion**	**%**	**No Religion**	**%**	**Prefer not to disclose**	**%**	**Total**
Total Applicants	35	2.0%	16	0.9%	582	34.1%	201	11.8%	1709
Online Test	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Passed Sift	1	1.6%	0	0.0%	19	30.6%	12	19.4%	62
Passed Interview	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	32.0%	4	16.0%	25
Reserve List	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	30.8%	0	0.0%	13
Posted	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	33.3%	4	33.3%	12
Rejected	35	2.2%	15	0.9%	553	34.1%	190	11.7%	1621
Withdrawn	0	0.0%	1	1.6%	21	33.3%	7	11.1%	63

Annex 3 – anonymised test data

Candidates invited to take the online tests.



Candidates that passed the online tests and were invited to complete the rest of the application form.