



## Minutes of Garda Appointments Quality Assurance and Selection Governance Committee

**Date:** 8 December 2022

**Venue:** Remote Video Conference

### **Attendance:**

**Committee Members:** Bryan Andrews (Chair), Moling Ryan

**Executive:** Helen Hall, Aoife Clabby, Clare Kelly, Sharon O'Brien

**Apologies:** Valerie Judge

### **1. Review of 2022 Competition Processes and Recommendations Arising**

A review of the 2022 Senior Garda Competitions had been carried out by the Executive and a draft report on the matter had been considered by the Appointments and Quality Assurance Committee at its meeting on 11 November 2022. At that meeting the Committee had reached agreement on a number of proposals. There had been two outstanding and inter-linked proposals, in relation to the approach to shortlisting. The Committee had discussed a possible approach in relation to shortlisting and had requested that this aspect would be the subject of further consideration and exploration by the Executive.

It was noted that the Executive had since engaged with the Public Appointments Service (PAS) and with SHL (the Service Provider for Situational Judgment Testing). The Committee noted a further draft document that had been provided for discussion by the Committee. The Committee discussed the matter in detail.

Details of the proposals that were considered by the Committee and the outcome of each proposal are included at appendix A below.

The Appointments Committee, having discussed the competition process over the course of both meetings and having received additional material for review, agreed the following for recommendation to the Authority:

- The proposed timeline for the competition, subject to discussions with SHL on scheduling.
- A two-stage selection process would be conducted as in previous years. The competition would consist of shortlisting, Situational Judgement Tests (SJTs) and interview.
- All eligible candidates to be invited to complete SJTs.
- Shortlisting would be based upon
  - SJTs and
  - Section A & B of application form (of applicants who are successful in the SJT);

Qualification for the interview stage would be based on meeting the required standard in both of these elements. Therefore any applicant who was unsuccessful in either the SJT or the application form would not be invited to interview.

- In line with approach to the previous competitions, it was proposed that the board would only consider forms of the candidates who were successful in the SJT. In addition, the Committee was now recommending that only candidates who were successful in the SJT would be requested to submit an application form.
- All shortlisted candidates would be invited to a competency-based interview, which would include a presentation on a pre-determined topic. In relation to the presentation topic, the Committee was recommending that a range of topics would be developed and that the candidate would be questioned and scored on their presentation.

The Committee also reviewed and recommended for approval the competition documents, subject to their finalisation in line with any decision of the Authority:

- Draft Statement of Practice
- Draft Candidate Information Booklet
- Draft Application Form
- Draft Expressions of Interest Form

The Committee decided to recommend the proposed approach to the Authority for approval.

## **2. AOB**

A date for the next committee meeting will be determined at a future date.

## Appendix A - Outcome of proposals considered by the Committee and recommended for Authority approval

The following proposals were considered by the Committee and the outcome of each item is set out below:

<b>Proposals on the competition materials, briefings and scheduling of competitions</b>		
1.	It is proposed to add further clarity to the application form and candidate information booklet where possible.	Agreed
2.	Word counts would be included in all sections including footnotes with the introduction of further measures to mitigate the risk of 'workarounds' by candidates.	Agreed
3.	HR&PD are proposing to hold preparatory briefings of Garda members in advance of the 2023 competitions. The Authority Executive would work with HR&PD and provide material relating to the competition process and what is expected. This would however be in the context of the Authority solely supporting HRPD, but not being directly involved in briefings of potential applicants.	Agreed
4.	The value of useful feedback will continue to be conveyed and emphasised to selection boards at training, but in the context that their feedback relates to how the person interviewed and that development of candidates is not the role of Selection Board.	Agreed
5.	The Executive will endeavour to avoid scheduling interviews in July and will communicate the dates well in advance.	Agreed
<b>Proposals on the manner in which SJTs will be used in the Superintendent and Chief Superintendent competition at the shortlisting stage</b>		
6.	To introduce additional safeguards to protect the integrity of the SJT process as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. proctoring,</li> <li>ii. time limits and</li> <li>iii. a shorter testing window.</li> </ul>	Agreed
7.	To amend the process of shortlisting so that the selection board considers all application forms in addition to SJTs rather than only the candidates who score above the 30 <sup>th</sup> percentile. Previously the bottom percentile were excluded and the selection board only considered candidates who ranked above that.	Retain as is
8.	Consider whether to retain the assessment of two competencies (as is) or to ask the selection boards to review more than two competencies at the shortlisting stage.	Retain as is
9.	To mark competencies at shortlisting and to combine with a mark related to each candidate's outcome in the SJT. SJT marks would be provided to the selection board after they have allocated the marks based on the form.	Retain as is
10.	The Committee recommends that only candidates who are successful in the SJT will be requested to submit an application form.	

**Proposals on enhancing the use of the presentation as part of the interview process at the final interview stage in all three competitions**

11.	A number of presentations topics would be identified so that candidates would not all present on the same topic and candidates would have a choice.	Agreed
12.	Candidates would be asked to submit <u>material</u> on their selected topic in advance of the interview.	Agreed
13.	Candidates would be questioned more rigorously on their presentation and it would be scored.	Agreed
<b>Proposal on panelling of candidates</b>		
14.	Consider recommending that the Authority gives consideration to aligning promotional vacancies more closely with projected vacancies when putting panels in place.	Agreed but continue to allow for contingency