



By email

15 June 2016

Dear 



Thank you for your e-mail of 10 June, in which you provided clarification of what information you would like to have in relation to your recent application for a post of Assistant Commissioner for the Boundary Commission for England (BCE). Your request is being treated under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Your requests and our responses are as follows:

*I would also like the diversity breakdown for those shortlisted. I suspect you have yet to make any appointments but if you have, then I would like that breakdown too.*

The statistical breakdown of the diversity of applicants invited to interview is at Annex A. As you say, no individual has yet been appointed, so no equivalent statistical breakdown has yet been compiled.

*In relation to the shortlisting grid, this assumes that none of those shortlisting made their own notes or completed any grid or that if they did, these have not been retained. I would like copies of grids completed by the individuals undertaking the shortlisting. I would also like any notes taken of the shortlisting meeting or discussion.*

I can confirm that no additional notes or separate scoring grids were created by the sift panellists, as they each entered their scores directly into a single shared spreadsheet. It was a copy of this sheet (anonymised) which was provided in response to your original request. No notes were taken of the subsequent meeting between the panellists to discuss the overall scores, nor did the panellists make individual notes on each applicant's forms.

Can you therefore confirm that no guidance was given to the panel members about how to weight evidence in the applications or how to arrive at a particular number for each criterion. If guidance was given, even if informally, I would like to see a copy of it.

The exercise to recruit Assistant Commissioners applied the sift scoring assessment process set out in the HR policy of the Cabinet Office (as the sponsor department of the BCE). The sift panellists therefore followed the guidance on scoring candidates as set out in the Cabinet Office HR guidance, the relevant extract from which is supplied at Annex B. Before sifting, the panellists calibrated the weight they would put on the evidence provided, sharing examples of evidence for each criterion and against each score, to ensure consistency of approach. This was done face to face and no notes of these meetings exist.

Under the provisions of the FOI Act if you are dissatisfied with the response we have provided you may ask for an internal review. The BCE has a reciprocal arrangement with the Boundary Commission for Wales and in this instance you should write to:

The Secretary to the Boundary Commission for Wales,  
Ground Floor,  
Fitzalan Court,  
Cardiff,  
CF24 0BL.

If it transpires you are not content with our response or the internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the BCE. The Information Commissioner can be contacted on:

The Office of the Information Commissioner,  
Wycliffe House,  
Water Lane,  
Wilmslow,  
Cheshire,  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

  
Chris Wilcox  
Information Manager

**Boundary Commission for England** | Tel: 020 7276 1102  
35 Great Smith Street | London | SW1P 3BQ

e: [information@boundarycommissionengland.gov.uk](mailto:information@boundarycommissionengland.gov.uk)  
[boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/](http://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/)

## **Annex A - Diversity breakdown of applicants shortlisted for interview**

Total invitees to Interview = 52

NB: Percentages may not add to 100 exactly, due to roundings.

### **Gender**

Female = 16 (31%)

Male = 35 (67%)

Not Declared = 1 (2%)

### **Gender Identity**

Yes = 0

No = 50 (96%)

Prefer not to say = 1 (2%)

Not declared = 1 (2%)

### **Disability**

Yes = 5 (10%)

No = 45 (87%)

Prefer not to say = 1 (2%)

Not declared = 1 (2%)

### **Ethnicity**

Asian = 2 (4%)

Black = 0

Chinese = 0

Mixed Ethnic = 0

White = 49 (94%)

Other = 0

Prefer not to say = 1 (2%)

Not declared = 0

### **Religion/Belief**

None = 10 (19%)

Bahai = 0

Buddhist = 0

Christian = 31 (60%)

Hindu = 0

Jain = 0

Jewish = 2 (4%)

Muslim = 1 (2%)

Sikh = 0

Other = 0

Atheist = 2 (4%)

Prefer not to say = 5 (10%)

Not declared = 1 (2%)

### **Sexual Orientation**

Bisexual = 0

Gay (inc. Lesbian) = 1 (2%)

Heterosexual = 46 (88%)

Prefer not to say = 3 (6%)

Not declared = 2 (4%)

**Annex B - Extract from Cabinet Office HR policy providing guidance on recruitment sift scoring.**

## **Scoring**

An objective scoring system is required to assess candidates, both at the application form and interview stages.

Before looking at application forms or conducting an interview, the chair of the interviewing panel must check that the other panel members:

- Understand the scoring system,
- Have a clear understanding of the minimum criteria for the job, and
- Are aware of the Guaranteed Interview Scheme.

The scoring system: a three point scale is used.

<b>Point</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
3	The candidate provided evidence that demonstrated they exceed the level of competence required.
2	The candidate provided evidence that demonstrated they fully meet the level of competence required.
1	The candidate provided evidence that demonstrated they generally meet the level of competence required but there are a few minor gaps they can be investigated at interview or developed on the job.
0	The candidate failed to demonstrate that they meet the level of competence required.

- When all the individual assessments are completed panel members should compare and agree final scores for each applicant.
- You should not select any applicant who scores zero in any of the competences or essential skills/experience/qualifications.
- If any of your competences or essential skills/experience/ qualifications are of paramount importance, you may want to weight them by doubling the normal score.