

Candidate Information Pack

Learn about the application process and benefits available to staff at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK (CPA UK).

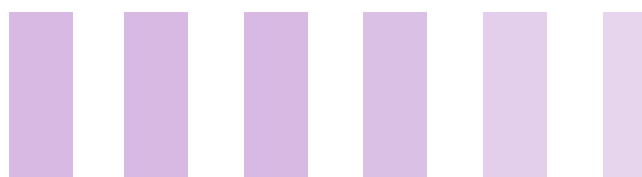


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Application Process

Before you start your application, please ensure you meet the 'Security' and/or 'Eligibility' requirements regarding the Location, Hours of Work and other sections laid out in this document.

To work for CPA UK you must have the right to work in the UK and have lived in the country for three years out of the past five. This is to comply with nationality checks and parliamentary security eligibility criteria.

To apply for this role you must complete our online application form.

Application Form

This captures an individual's work history and presents them with up to five questions to answer, based on the criteria outlined in the job description. When answering each question, try to base your answers on using the STAR or CAR methods (see below). You can use examples from your previous work history, home life, or volunteering. When doing so, please try to remember to keep examples short and to the point.

Each answer will be given a word limit. Anything you write beyond the word limit will not be considered.

STAR method:

Situation - explain the situation you had to deal with

Task - describe the task you were given

Actions - explain how you did something, just what you did

Results - what was the outcome, what was achieved, was anything learnt?

CAR method:

Context - explain the situation or task to cover the who, what, where, and when

Actions - explain how you did something, not just what you did

Results - what was the outcome, what was achieved, was anything learnt?

Application Process

All applications received will be assessed against the criterion set out in the application form, as well as any technical proficiencies listed in the job description. Each criterion is scored out of a maximum of two points.

Please let us know if you have a disability and we will strive towards making appropriate arrangements or adjustments to create full and equal participation in the selection process. If you require an adjustment(s) as part of the recruitment process, do contact HR at cpaukrecruitment@parliament.uk to discuss how we can try to assist with your requirements.

Interview Process

If you are shortlisted, we may ask you to complete an exercise, presentation, or other assessment as a part of the interview process. All interviews are assessed against the competencies and technical proficiencies listed in the job description. We will usually state when interviews are likely to occur in the advert but these are subject to change.

Interviews are usually comprised of a panel, where you will be asked a combination of competency-based and role specific questions based on the criterion listed in the job description. Try to use the STAR or CAR methods to structure your answers to questions.

Each answer is given a score from A to E. Scores from A to C are considered as a pass and D to E are considered as not reaching the required standard.

Following an interview, the interview panel will submit a report for approval. Once approved, we will contact the successful candidates to verbally offer a role. If you are unsuccessful, you will be notified by email and be provided with an opportunity to request feedback.

If we find more successful candidates than we have available positions, you will be placed onto a reserve list and may be offered the role in a 6-month period.

Onboarding Process

If you accept our verbal conditional offer, you will receive a conditional offer by email. You will need to complete various forms as soon as possible as part of your pre-employment checks, and provide proof of Right to Work documents. These will need to be verified in person and returned.

All successful candidates are required to pass these checks before an offer can be confirmed. Once these checks are passed, you will be sent a contract, pensions form, and new joiner form.

Please ensure any information entered and declared is correct and submit any supporting documentation that may be required. As we have a duty of care to ensure public funds are spent appropriately, offers are usually made at the entry level of a salary banding/advertised salary range.

Please note, our checks may take several weeks to complete, and we advise successful candidates not to hand in their notice until all these have been completed.

Security Checks

In addition to the above, successful candidates will be required to pass our security vetting check to at least Counter Terrorist Check (CTC) level or higher such as Security Clearance (SC) or Developed Vetting (DV). To undergo our security checks, you must have resided in the UK for a minimum of 3 years out of the last 5 years.

Please refer to the advert to check the security clearance level required for a position and refer to our [National Security Vetting booklet](#) for further information with regards to what these checks entail. It is estimated that CTC takes 2-6 weeks (4 on average) and SC takes 6-10 weeks (8 on average) to clear.

Eligibility

Under the Asylum and Immigration Act (1971), you must have the right to work in the UK when you apply. To check your right to work, please visit [Gov.uk Prove Right to Work](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/proof-right-to-work). Please note, we are unable to provide sponsorship if one is required as we do not hold a sponsorship license.

Location

The core location of our roles is our office in Westminster Hall, Houses of Parliament. Our hybrid working arrangements are set with a base level of at least one day a week in the office. Hybrid working arrangements are subject to change in line with business needs. When you join, you will be required to work more regularly in the office during your first six months and you will need to discuss this further with your line manager upon joining.

Hours of Work

We encourage applications from candidates expressing a wish to perform the role in a flexible working arrangement, subject to role requirements, such as part-time working, job-share, and compressed hours. Stated net conditioned hours exclude daily meal breaks of one hour.

If you want to work a flexible working pattern, you can initially discuss this with HR so that you can develop a flexible working request. This will be considered by the relevant managers.

A – D Banding: Net conditioned full-time working hours for permanent and fixed staff are 35 hours per week.

Salary/Allowances

You will be appointed at the entry level of the pay band that will be part of the advertisement. If you are an internal employee, pay on promotion rules apply for all salary offers.

Fixed-Term Contracts

All CPA UK vacancies advertised as being of a Fixed Term contract on our [internal](#) and [external](#) job opportunities boards have the possibility of extension and/or permanency unless otherwise stated. Some roles may be advertised with the possibility of extension but not permanency. Please check the advert for further information.

Workplace Adjustments

We support individuals in need of workplace adjustments. The workplace adjustment process prevents, reduces or removes problems you might face at work. Adjustments can be requested to help with obstacles relating to mental health, and physical or non-physical requirements. You can request a reasonable workplace adjustment if you have a disability or suffer from a difficulty or disadvantage in your workplace.

Benefits

We offer an attractive range of benefits for employees. Terms and conditions apply.

Annual Leave

Staff receive 35 days annual leave. 2 days must be taken at Easter and 5 days must be taken over the Christmas or New Year period when the office is least busy.

Maternity Leave

After one year of continuous service, up to six months' full salary will be paid for the whole of ordinary maternity leave (26 weeks) and SMP will continue for the first 13 weeks of any additional maternity leave based on your contractual hours.

Pension Schemes

Pick from a [Civil Service pension scheme](#) with an employer contribution up to 28.97% or a Partnership pension scheme where member contributions are optional.

Gym Membership

Access to a subsidised gym located in the Parliamentary Estate on a membership or pay-as-you-go basis, with a network of over 100 centres across the UK.

Nursery

Access to the House of Commons on-site nursery, a modern and welcoming facility for children aged three months to five years.

Catering Services

Access to a range of cafés, bars, and restaurants catering for all preferences and budgets in both traditional and contemporary surroundings.

Post Office & Cash Dispensers

There are two Post Offices on the Parliamentary estate as well as cash dispensers available in three locations.

Benefits

We offer an attractive range of benefits for employees. Terms and conditions apply.

Health and Wellbeing Service

Our in-house Health and Wellbeing Service provides advice and guidance to support good health at work, including access to an on-site GP. CPA UK also has several Mental Health Trained First Aiders working with the parliamentary community

Travel Office

Comprehensive travel service provider that makes planning both domestic and international journeys an easy process including access to a range of potential discounts.

Westminster Abbey Access

Access is free for a passholder, which includes a complimentary audio guide upon production of your permanent Parliamentary pass.

Family Visit

You'll have the opportunity to bring family members to the Palace of Westminster, give them a tour and take them to one of many of the cafés and restaurants.

Prayer/Contemplation Rooms

We have rooms dedicated to religious prayer of all faiths, known by us as the 'Multi-Faith Prayer Room'

Employee Assistance Programme

The Employee Assistance Programme offers a 24/7 365-day-per-year confidential helpline to staff and their families to give practical advice, counselling, and support

Benefits

We offer an attractive range of benefits for employees. Terms and conditions apply.

Learning and Development

You will have access to workshops, online resources, and career coaching. You will also be assigned a buddy when you join us.

Mental Health

We are committed to creating a work environment and culture which supports positive mental health. We have accredited members of the team who are Mental Health First Aiders, and part of the wider Parliament community of MHFAs, who are trained to be a source of information and signposting if you require it. We provide a monthly newsletter with mental health and wellbeing resources, training sessions and events. We also run monthly wellbeing activities across the whole team.

Parliamentary Workplace Equality Networks (WENs)

We value diversity and inclusion and are committed to making our work more fulfilling, flexible and family-friendly where possible. We strive to be more like the country our Parliament represents, by drawing upon the talents of the widest possible range of geographical, career and social backgrounds.

Parliament WENs provide an opportunity for groups of people to discuss and consider issues relevant to their situation or of interest to them:

- ParliREACH – a support network relevant to race, ethnicity, and cultural heritage issues
- ParliAble – a support relevant to disabilities
- ParliCare – for those with caring challenges
- ParliGENDER – for gender equality in Parliament

Inspiring the Future

Volunteer in a state school or college near where you live or work to talk to young people about your job and career route.

Benefits

We offer an attractive range of benefits for employees. Terms and conditions apply.

Professional Subscriptions

Employees who are members of a professional body may reclaim the cost of one professional subscription to that body per year subject to the terms and conditions set out in our Staff Expenses Policy.

Eyesight Test

We run a voucher scheme where an eyesight test is free for users of Display Screen Equipment (conditions apply).

Christmas Advance Pay

Advance of up to £250 on or around 15th December (providing this amount does not exceed half of net monthly pay).

Data Protection Notice

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association respects your rights to privacy, and we are committed to being transparent about how we collect and use that data. We process and collect personal data in line with our responsibilities under the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

This [privacy notice](#) explains the personal data that we collect from you and how we use the information.

Contact us

If you experience any difficulties or need to get in touch for any reason, please contact us at cpaukrecruitment@parliament.uk

We wish you all the best!