



Assistant Principal Standard 2022

Stage 1 - Online Tests Pre-Test Information Booklet

Competition ID: 22434207

Contact: aprecruitment@publicjobs.ie

This is an important document so please set some time aside to read it in advance of the test session.

Welcome!

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your application for the role of Assistant Principal 2022. The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is the central recruiter for the Civil and Public Service. Through this competition, PAS will establish panels of suitably qualified individuals from which vacancies at the grade of Assistant Principal, may be filled.

PAS is committed to the principles of good recruitment practice and these principles involve a fair and impartial selection process. This selection process has been developed to assess the key skills and attributes necessary to perform in the Assistant Principal Officer role. Candidates will be required to take a number of tests which are designed to evaluate their potential for this role

The purpose of this Pre-test Information Booklet is to provide you with a better understanding of the Online Testing Stage and to introduce you to the format of the Tests. Work through this information carefully as it will help you understand what you have to do and what you can expect during this stage of the process. By working with this information, you can ensure that you perform to the best of your ability.

Candidates will be permitted to take the tests **only once**.

Information on Stage 2 and any subsequent stage of the selection process will be made available to those candidates who are invited to progress. The following link to the candidate information booklet can be found [here](#) and will give you further details on the role and the selection process.

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS SERVICE

December 2022



Overview

Stage 1 of the selection process will be conducted online, whereby you will be supervised via webcam throughout the tests. The Online Testing Stage of the selection process comprises three tests.

- **Test 1: Verbal Reasoning – 35 minutes**
- **Test 2: Numerical Reasoning – 35 minutes**
- **Test 3: Job Simulation Exercise – 25 minutes**

The tests can be completed in any order. Candidates must reach the required standard in all three tests. Successful candidates will be placed on the Order of Merit based on their combined scores from the Verbal and Job Simulation Exercise. Those placed highest will be considered for advancement to the next stage of this multi-stage selection process depending on the number of vacancies on hand at any given time. The number to be invited forward at each stage will be determined from time to time by the Public Appointments Service.

Qualification at this stage is **no guarantee** that a candidate will be invited to the next stage or subsequent stages of the selection process.

What is Remote Proctoring?

To facilitate candidates' availability and circumstances, Stage 1 of the selection process will be conducted online and will take place using remote proctoring, whereby you will be supervised throughout the assessments.

Remote Proctoring has become increasingly common in recent times and this method is widely used in both the private, public and education sectors, where it is not possible to gather groups of individuals onsite. This means that while taking the test, intermittent photographs will be taken of candidates, to confirm they are completing the tests honestly and without assistance. The assessments are supervised via a Record and Review function, meaning the photos will be recorded and reviewed afterwards by the Public Appointments Service. This will serve as an authentication check that you are the candidate invited to take the assessment, and that you are completing the assessments without assistance from others.

You may complete this assessment in a venue of your choice; however, you must have access to a laptop/PC with a webcam running either a Google Chrome or a Microsoft Edge browser and a reliable internet connection. Do not use a tablet, mobile phone or Chromebook. Please ensure that your device is connected to a power source.

Overview of the Assessment Program

The online assessment program has the following sections:

You will receive a Link and a Passcode to your publicjobs messageboard in advance of your testing session. This Link and Passcode will issue to your messageboard **on Friday 2nd December 2022**. **Please note** you will only have access to the live tests from **10am Thursday 8th December 2022**. You can access the assessment site from **Friday 2nd December 2022** and you are advised to do so as soon as possible as there are several things you need to do before taking the live tests. You should start the online process as soon as possible to make sure you have enough time to take the live tests before the deadline and that you are thoroughly familiar with the test formats.

Verification of your ID – you will need to use a webcam to take images of yourself and your photo ID (e.g. passport, driving license). You cannot take the live assessments until your ID has been verified, so you should submit the images as soon as possible. You will have from **Friday 2nd December 2022** to verify your ID and study the familiarisation material.



You should submit your images for identity verification by 1pm on 7th December 2022 otherwise we cannot guarantee that the identity verification process will be completed in time for you to take the live tests before the final deadline.

Familiarisation – this explains the nature of the assessments, enables you to become familiar with how to use the program to record your answers, provides example questions and enables you to check that your computer and internet connection are compatible with the assessment software

Live Assessments – There is a set window to complete **all three assessments** which will open at **10am on Thursday 8th December 2022**. You must complete all three assessments no later than **1pm on Tuesday 13th December 2022**.

As the assessment will require your full concentration, please ensure that you complete this assessment in a quiet controlled environment where there are no distractions and where you will not be disturbed by a third party.

Verbal Reasoning Test

The Verbal Reasoning Test measures the ability to understand written passages and the logical evaluation of an argument. The Test consists of a series of passages, each of which is followed by several statements. You must assess whether each of these statements are either “true”, “false” or “cannot say” based on what the passage says.

So, having read a passage, you should indicate whether you believe each statement to be:

- **True** if you think the statement must be true given what is said in the passage,
- **False** if you think the statement must be false given what is said in the passage,
- **Cannot say** whether the statement must be either true or false from the passage

Base your answers only on the information given in the passages of text. There is one, and only one, correct answer to each question. Click on the answer that you think is correct.

You will have 35 minutes to evaluate the 54 statements in this test.

Most candidates do not complete all questions within the time allocated, however please work as quickly and as accurately as possible.

Numerical Reasoning Test

The Numerical Reasoning Test measures the ability to make correct decisions or inferences from numerical data.

It consists of a series of charts/tables each of which is followed by a question. You must use the facts and figures presented in the charts/tables to answer questions designed to assess your ability to evaluate numerical data.

You are given five options to choose from, only one is correct in each case.

You will have 35 minutes to complete 24 questions in this test.

Most candidates do not complete all questions within the time allocated, however please work as quickly and as accurately as possible.



Job Simulation Exercise

The Job Simulation Exercise is designed to assess the following competencies:

- Leadership
- Management and Delivery of Results
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills

In the Job Simulation Exercise you will be given a series of scenarios similar to those that may be encountered in the Assistant Principal Officer role. The situations and details in this exercise are all fictional. They should not be seen as a reflection of Government policies nor of the policies or practices of any Department.

This Exercise is designed so as not to advantage or disadvantage candidates whatever their previous managerial experience. No specialist knowledge of the subject area is required and even if you feel that knowledge you may have in the area is relevant, you should use only the information provided in the brief. In each scenario, you assume the role of an Assistant Principal Officer.

These scenarios are independent of each other and have been developed to reflect the variety of the work found across the Civil Service and therefore do not necessarily reflect what happens in your Department or workplace.

For each scenario you will be given five possible actions for handling or managing that situation. Your task is to rate each of those actions in terms of their appropriateness using the scale below.

- Highly Appropriate
- Appropriate
- Slightly Appropriate
- Slightly Inappropriate
- Inappropriate
- Highly Inappropriate

Rate each action on its own merits by choosing the appropriate option on the drop-down menu. **Do not compare the five actions but treat each one separately.** You may use the same rating for more than one action if you wish, for example, in some of the scenarios you may feel that many of the actions are highly appropriate, in others you may feel that many are slightly inappropriate etc.

Try not to spend too much time rating any one action. Make your best choice and remember that if you are close to the ideal response, marks are still awarded. The questions are concerned with determining **your** judgement of the appropriateness of the actions in the given scenarios.

Key points to remember for the live Exercise

- Read each scenario carefully.
- Respond to the scenarios based on the facts presented even though you may not have all the information.
- Base your answers on the information within each scenario only.
- If you are not sure how to rate an action, then give your best guess.
- The Job Simulation Exercise consists of 8 scenarios with 5 actions to be rated for each.
- There is no negative marking. You will NOT lose marks for incorrect answers, so answering as many questions as you can within the time is important.
- **There are 8 scenarios, with 40 actions to rate and you will have 25 minutes to complete them.**



Remote Proctoring

As mentioned previously, these assessments will be remotely proctored. Guidance is provided below on what constitutes a breach of the rules for candidates. If candidates are found to have breached the Record and Review rules at any point, this could lead to subsequent disqualification and their application receiving no further consideration.

- You must be alone in the room for the duration of the assessment.
- You are not permitted to communicate with any other person during a test.
- Your desk and work area must be clear – you are permitted to have rough paper, pen, water, calculator and reading glasses if required.
- Mobile phones are not permitted unless for the use of the calculator for the numerical reasoning only.
- You are not permitted to copy/screenshot/photograph or record the assessment session or exercise materials in any way.
- You should stay seated for the duration of each assessment.
- Your webcam must remain on throughout each assessment.
- Please ensure that you do not block the webcam for any reason.
- You must be visible on camera for the full duration of each assessment.
- You are not permitted to access Google or any other apps.
- Device should be plugged in to a power source/charging.
- Please ensure you are in a quiet environment with no distractions for the duration of the assessment.
- You can take bathroom breaks between tests, not during the tests. However, there is a set amount of time to complete the tests, so the onus is on the candidate to complete the test within this time.

Instructions

You can access the assessment site from **Friday 2nd December, 2022**, and we advise you to do this **as soon as possible once the assessment site is available** as there is Familiarisation material to work through. You also need to complete the ID Verification process before you can access the live tests from **10am on Thursday 8th December 2022 to 1pm Tuesday 13th December 2022**; and if you have a problem (e.g., with your computer or internet or ID verification) you need to make sure you have time to resolve your problem and complete the tests before the deadline.

You **MUST** complete the following steps before you can take the live tests – and you need to do these things well in advance of taking the live tests. It is **ESSENTIAL** that you complete these steps using the computer and network that you will use for the live assessment. This should mean that your computer and network are compatible with the assessment program. We recommend that you start the process immediately.

- **Check your webcam**
- **Verify your identity**
- **Study the Familiarisation material**

If you are not able to complete the above and cannot resolve the issue by using a different computer, browser or network, then you should **email support@assessmentintelligence.com including your Candidate ID Number and “AP2022” in the subject line.**

Step 1 - Check your webcam

NOTE – you will need a working webcam to enable the proctoring to take place.

The onus is on candidates to ensure they have access to a webcam, regrettably no alternatives are available.

Click the 'Webcam test' button. This will check if your webcam is working within the program. Also make sure that you are clearly visible and front on in the image and be aware that you need to remain clearly visible throughout the live tests.

Do this well in advance of taking the live tests and also do it immediately before taking the live tests in case something has changed.

Step 2 - Verify your ID

Before starting the ID Verification process, you should click the link at the top of the main menu page ('ID Verification and Proctoring – instructions, common issues and resolutions.pdf') and read the document. If you encounter a problem with your ID verification or starting a live test, please make sure you have read it before emailing support.

NOTE – you cannot start the live tests unless your ID has been verified.

For this you will need to have a valid photo ID (passports and driving licenses are acceptable photo IDs). The process is straightforward and is explained at the time. Using the webcam, you will need to take a webcam image of yourself and image photo ID (e.g. passport). You will be informed by email of the verification outcome using the email you provided at application. You will be asked to check that this is correct when you submit your images for verification.

We will check your ID and you will receive an email from admin@assessmentintelligence.com informing you of the outcome (but do check your junk/spam folder and do log on to check your ID verification status if you feel you are waiting too long).

You may be asked to re-take the photos if they are not clear enough and this is not uncommon, so please check the images before submitting and start the verification process early to ensure you have enough time to complete the process. You can check your ID Verification Status by logging in. If you have not been notified within 24 hours of submitting images AND your online verification status is still 'Submitted waiting approval', **email support@assessmentintelligence.com including your Candidate ID Number and "AP2022" in the subject line.**

We advise you to submit your webcam images as soon as possible. You should have submitted your images for identity verification before **1pm on Thursday 7th December 2022**, otherwise we cannot guarantee that the identity verification process will be completed in time for you to take the live tests.

NOTE – you MUST complete the identity verification process online.

Under no circumstances send any images or documents by email to the 'support@' address.

Please note, it is your responsibility to ensure that you submit clear images in good time.

If the name on your photo ID will differ significantly from your name on your application, you **MUST** inform PAS by emailing aprecruitment@publicjobs.ie

Step 3 - Study the Familiarisation material

The familiarisation material will explain how to record your answers and navigate your way around the tests. It will show you the layout of the tests so you can practice entering answers and navigating between pages. You should be fully familiar with these things before taking the live tests in order to perform at your best.



Taking the live assessment

To take the actual tests you will use the same Link and Passcode from your publicjobs messageboard.

Before starting a live test you should close all other browsers and browser tabs.

For best results we recommend completing the online assessments in a test-like environment. Any possible distractions should be turned off, for example mobile phones, TV and music. Concentration is needed throughout the assessments, so when completing each test, ensure other people are aware that they should not disturb you until you are finished. No responsibility can be accepted for any issues arising from where you choose to sit the tests.

*****You MUST complete a Room Scan immediately before taking each live test i.e., do it three times - once before each test.*****

For the Room Scan you will need to use your webcam to record the environment you will take the live test in, showing the desktop and its surrounds. NOTE - you need to do the Room Scan only immediately before taking each live test.

This process is explained fully on the assessment site by clicking the yellow highlighted link called 'Room scan instructions.pdf'. Read this well ahead of time so you will know what is involved.

You will need to use an up-to-date **Chrome** or **Microsoft Edge** browser on a PC. **If you are using a Mac, you MUST use Chrome. Do not use a tablet, mobile phone or Chromebook.**

During the assessment, you will see a small video stream from your webcam in the top left corner. Images from this stream will be monitored.

We take great care with your webcam images and retain them for as short a time as possible. The image of your photo ID is deleted as soon as your identity has been verified.

Please note that on completion of a live test an on-screen message will confirm that you have completed it and the test will show as 'Completed' on the main menu. **There will be no emailed confirmation of completion of the tests.**

The results will be issued to your message board.

It is important to be aware that candidates must let the PAS know of any extenuating circumstances prior to or during the particular stage of the selection process. Any documentary evidence must be supplied within 5 working days. Please note that submission of such document(s) is not a guarantee that the circumstances outlined will alter the decision/outcome. A candidate who undertakes any part of the selection process and who subsequently claims extenuating circumstances should note that this will not be considered. Examples of possible extenuating circumstances include hospitalisation or bereavement. Please note that candidates who are permitted to reschedule will be given only one opportunity to do so.

The onus is on candidates to ensure that they perform to the best of their ability. Therefore, issues such as tiredness, nerves, travel to tests/interviews or expected results/performance not achieved, are not considered extenuating circumstances.

Please note: If the Public Appointments Service is not notified of any issues you experience in advance of or on the day of your tests, we will not be in a position to address these after the fact.

Online Familiarisation

The online Familiarisation material is available as soon as you log on.



We strongly advise that you access the familiarisation material before taking the live tests. This will give you a more detailed description of the tests, include full instructions for completing the tests and provide example questions. It also explains how you can record your answers and navigate your way around the test. It is **ESSENTIAL** that you use the online familiarisation material to check that your browser and the internet connection that you intend to take the live test on are compatible with the online tests. Note that some network firewalls may block access to the assessment site or prevent images from showing. If you can complete the Verification of ID process and the familiarisation material works well on your IT equipment, this is a good indication that the live tests will work also. You should do this well in advance of taking the tests.

Technical issues

If you lose internet connection while in the live test, you should **immediately close your browser**. You will be able to continue the test without losing time and your previous answers will have been saved (except possibly on the last page you were on before losing connection).

If you experience any other issue while taking the live test, you should **immediately close your browser** and email support@assessmentintelligence.com including your **Candidate Number** and the “**AP2022**” in the subject line.

If you do need to close your browser or your computer crashes and restarts, you must start up a fresh browser and paste in the test link again. **If your browser starts up and reloads the live test again automatically, you must close it down immediately and start from a fresh browser. If your browser starts up and asks if you want to restore sessions or pages, you MUST decline.**

If you have any problems accessing or completing the test, please email the Online Test Helpline at support@assessmentintelligence.com including your **Candidate Number** and “**AP2022**” in the subject line. A response will be issued between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday and 11am and 4pm, Saturday and Sunday.

If you have any queries regarding the competition process, please contact PAS at aprecruitment@publicjobs.ie

Honesty Contract

Integrity and honesty are key values within the Civil and Public Service. As potential employees you are expected to honour these values, both in how you approach this competition and by agreeing to follow the rules and procedures laid down. **By taking part in the selection process, you are confirming that you are the person named on the application and you agree to complete the tests honestly and without assistance.** A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process. Your attention is drawn to the important information set out in Appendix 1. By accessing or attempting any assessment / test materials you are agreeing to be bound by the terms set out.



Appendix 1

IMPORTANT INFORMATION Terms and Conditions

Your attention is drawn to this important information. By accessing or attempting any assessment/test materials you are agreeing to be bound by the terms set out below.

1. All test and assessment materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the tests/ assessment materials (including any text, questions and/or potential answer options) or associated materials (including practice and/ or familiarisation materials) may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, printing, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process. Any person(s) who contravenes this provision, whether an applicant or other, or who assists another person(s) in contravening this provision, is liable to prosecution and/ or civil suit for loss of copyright and intellectual property.

2. Your attention is drawn the Commission for Public Service Appointment's Code of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service. In particular please note Section 5 - Responsibility of Candidates (see below).

Canvassing

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify them and will result in their exclusion from the appointments process.

Candidates' obligations

Candidates in the recruitment process must not:

- Knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- Canvass any person, with or without inducements
- Interfere with or compromise the process in any way.

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Penalties for failure to comply

Any person who contravenes the above provisions, or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine and/or imprisonment.

If a person found guilty of such an offence was or is a candidate in a recruitment process, then:

- Where they have not been appointed to a post, they will be disqualified as a candidate
- Where they have been appointed subsequent to the recruitment process in question, they shall forfeit that appointment.

3. The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to undertake any element of the selection process is not to be taken as implying that the Public Appointments Service is satisfied that such a person fulfils the essential requirements.



PC/laptop Minimum Specification Requirements

The following are the minimum requirements to successfully take the tests on a PC or Laptop. Most computers will meet these requirements.

- Browser
 - Up to date versions of either Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge
 - Pop up blocker should be disabled
- Equipment
 - PC or Laptop (tablet devices, mobile phones and Chromebooks are not supported)
 - Built-in or external webcam
- Internet
 - An upload and download speed of 2Mbps minimum