



Business Administrator (Apprenticeship)

Candidate Information Pack



Job title: Business Administrator
Job location: Bristol / Warrington
Date: September 2019
Reference: **TBC**

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1. Our organisation

Our organisation

We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment. Acting to reduce the impacts of a changing climate on people and wildlife is at the heart of everything we do. We reduce the risks to people, properties and businesses from flooding and coastal erosion. We protect and improve the quality of water, making sure there is enough for people, businesses, agriculture and the environment. Our work helps to ensure people can enjoy the water environment through angling and navigation. We look after land quality, promote sustainable land management and help protect and enhance wildlife habitats. And we work closely with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations. We can't do this alone. We work with government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and communities to make our environment a better place for people and wildlife.

Of course, none of this will be possible without the professionalism and dedication of our staff. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all we do, and to valuing the diversity of our workforce, customers and communities.

We're committed to helping our people to find new ways of working and to maintain our focus on creating a better place for people and wildlife. For more information on the Environment Agency please see our website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus.

Click on this link for more information on our ambitious 25 year plan to improve the environment: [**25 Year Environment Plan**](#)

[Website](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Flickr](#) | [YouTube](#)



2. Salary and benefits

Join us in this role and you will enjoy the following benefits:

Grade Rate: Grade 2

Location: Bristol / Warrington

Hours of work: 37 Hours

Leave entitlement: Your leave allowance in this role will be 25 days plus bank holidays (pro-rata - if part time or an assignment).

We offer up to two days paid environmental outcome days each year. These give you the opportunity to take part in community activities with a clear environmental outcome for people and wildlife.

Pension: We will enrol you into the Environment Agency Pension Fund (EAPF) on commencing employment, if your employment contract is for 3 months or more. The EAPF is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). It is a career average scheme, which means you will build up benefits based on your pay each scheme year rather than your final salary.

We will base your pension contributions on your actual pay and you will receive tax and national insurance relief on your contributions. The pension contribution rates currently range between 5.5% to 12.5%. Whilst you are in the scheme we will also pay an employer contribution into your pension pot. We currently pay 18.5%, so this is a very generous scheme.



2. Salary and benefits continued

Work/life balance:

We support flexible working hours and practices to help you strike a good balance between your work life and your personal life. We will also encourage you to keep developing your skills and professional knowledge throughout your career.

Diversity:

We are committed to diversity and inclusion. We aspire to be the best employer in the country for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and want all our staff to feel valued and respected and to see this as a great place to work. From our EDI executive champions to our EDI employee networks, everyone has a part to play to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in our organisation. Diversity: it's in our nature.

Lease car:

There is no Lease car entitlement for this role.

Tenancy deposit loan:

Our Tenancy deposit loan scheme assists permanent employees and individuals employed directly by the Environment Agency on a Fixed Term Contract of more than 3 months, to cover the costs of a deposit for a privately rented home, which can sometimes act as a barrier to moving. The scheme gives access to an interest free loan to pay for some, or all of, a deposit and can be paid back over a period of up to 12 months, directly from your monthly salary.

The scheme gives access to an interest free loan to pay for some, or all of, a deposit and can be paid back over a period of up to 12 months (or by the end of your fixed term contract, if you are employed for less than 12 months), directly from your monthly salary.



3. The role

Role

This role involves supporting our permitting centres in Bristol and Warrington. Full details are included in the job advertisement.

The National Permitting Service

This role is based in the National Permitting Service which is a department of approximately 450 people within the Environment Agency. We work in five main locations and there are multiple teams at each location. Each team works on applications for environmental permits. These permits allow individuals or businesses to, for example, operate processes with emissions to air, dispose of or treat waste, discharge waste water to the environment or abstract clean water from the environment. With each application we aim to ensure the permit protects the environment.

Technical Administrator (Apprenticeship)

This is an apprenticeship role within the Environment Agency.

This apprenticeship is targeted primarily at young people aged 16 – 24 years. But this does not disqualify you from applying if you are aged over 24 years; are looking to re-enter the employment market after a career break or break for caring responsibilities; or are seeking to change your career direction as there is no upper age limit for undertaking an apprenticeship.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for an apprenticeship you:

- Must have the right to work in the UK and have been a UK resident for a minimum of three years immediately preceding the apprenticeship
- Must **not** hold or be working towards a similar apprenticeship or qualification at the same level or higher. (In order to be eligible, qualifications previously held or currently being worked towards must have been achieved in a different sector/subject in order to show that the apprenticeship would give you substantive new skills and personal progression).



Important: If you apply and are found to possess the above we will not be able to consider your application and any offer of employment will be withdrawn or your contract will be terminated.

Benefits of an apprenticeship

Apprenticeships provide you with the opportunity to:

- Develop skills and competencies in your chosen field that will support you in your role and provide a foundation for ongoing personal development and career progression
- Dedicate 20% of your contracted hours to study and to on and off the job training
- Demonstrate through an 'End Point Assessment' that you meet all the requirements set by the apprenticeship 'standard'
- Gain a nationally recognised qualification in Business Administration at no personal cost.

Apprenticeship type and level

This is a Business Administration Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard. It is the equivalent of two 'A' levels and will take between 15 - 18 months to complete.

A summary of this Standard can be found here: [Business Administrator Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard](#)

Apprenticeship structure and content

Apprenticeship Standards are designed for specific occupations. All are built around the key skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to perform effectively in that occupation. The Business Administrator Apprenticeship will ensure you have an in-depth understanding of the fundamental principles, techniques, and workplace behaviours essential to working within our organisation.

This apprenticeship is delivered by Knowledgepool Ltd, and will be delivered through a combination of online learning, face to face workshops and on the job assessment. This is fully funded by the Environment Agency and a minimum of 20% of your contracted hours will be provided as 'skills development time' so you can successfully complete your apprenticeship



The four components of this apprenticeship are:

1. Business Administration teaching and learning

Knowledge modules are delivered through a blend of digital content via our Training Provider's own online apprenticeship platform. This will be supplemented with support from a Talent Coach and group sessions. Apprentices will complete a series of assignments throughout the programme to ensure they fully understand the knowledge components of the Standard prior to the End Point Assessment.

2. On-programme support

Key to the apprenticeship will be your ability to apply and embed knowledge into your day-to-day work. A Talent Coach from Knowledgepool will support your progress and help identify evidence of where you have demonstrated the required knowledge, skills and behaviour in the workplace. It is important that you keep a record of what you do so that you are able to draw on your best experiences and build up a portfolio for assessment at the end of the apprenticeship.

The Talent Coach will contact you on a monthly basis and every 12 weeks will visit you in the workplace to review your progress

3. Personal Development

Throughout the programme you will also learn about topics that will support your work, welfare and development – for example, how to write a personal development plan.

4. End point assessment

The end point assessment is carried out by an independent assessment organisation. It includes a work-based project, a competency based interview, a showcase of your portfolio, and a presentation session. The assessment determines whether you have successfully met the learning requirements of the apprenticeship.

Knowledge/Qualifications

Apart from a minimum of Maths and English at Grades A – C at GCSE (or equivalent), we're not seeking any specific qualifications for these roles. It's much more important that you have the right personal characteristics and are keen to develop a career in administration.



Skills/Abilities/Experience

As this is an entry level role we welcome all backgrounds, preferably those with an interest in the environment and wanting to make a difference. Whilst some relevant work experience would be an advantage, it's less important to us than your ability to demonstrate the key transferrable skills and personal qualities that we're looking for.

To help bring the role to life, here is some information from a current Technical Administrator undertaking an apprenticeship:



I have been working as a Technical Administrator for just over 2 years in the National Permitting Service and I was offered the opportunity to complete a Business Administration Apprenticeship Level 3 alongside my role if I wished. I decided to take this opportunity because it would give me a formal qualification in an area of business I didn't previously have anything in and it would boost my confidence in areas I wasn't so familiar with, despite having several years of experience.

My role involves a wide variety of tasks and responsibilities from arranging meetings and minute taking to being responsible for the records in our department. I also book travel and accommodation and produce reports for team leaders as and when they are required.

I've become very familiar with administration for the recruitment process which has incorporated a spectrum of tasks from arranging interviews to updating our internal systems with outcomes and information. I get the opportunity to meet other colleagues from different areas of the business by arranging visits to my department and hosting meetings. This a small sample of the wide variety of tasks incorporated into my job.

It's great for my apprenticeship because I can choose evidence that covers a multitude of the skills they are looking for at assessment. It also gives me good scope to choose a project which has to be completed as part of the qualification. Colleagues are always willing to support me by mentoring me or allowing me to shadow them, and the skills learnt through the apprenticeship workshops and online learning platform have allowed me to approach tasks with confidence that I would have previously been apprehensive about.



As a result of this opportunity I have improved my confidence and gained added skills along the way. I have advanced my knowledge of business fundamental principles, honed techniques in minute writing and note taking, and really learnt how to assess my own skills, know where I excel and how to identify personal development opportunities.

I have a personal coach who works with me on my apprenticeship from my apprenticeship provider. She delivers essential workshops and supports me with my portfolio of evidence as well as any personal concerns that might affect my work. This is invaluable as I know I can ask any question, big or small and get the right guidance. They also work with my manager to make sure I get the right support in the workplace including making sure I get the 20% of my contracted time toward my qualification. It's well worth doing and adding to your portfolio of skills.

Sally M Smith, National Permitting Service, Sheffield.

4. Further information

The Environment Agency values a diverse workforce and welcomes applications from all sections of the community who wish to join a workforce which embraces difference and welcomes everyone.

We aim to create and maintain a diverse workforce (including our Board and Executives) that better reflects the UK's economically active population. Therefore, we particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), disabled, female and LGBT+ candidates who are under-represented across our workforce.

We will consider flexible working patterns for all our vacancies, including job share, so please include clearly any information regarding your preferred working arrangements on your application.

Eligibility to apply and continuity of employment

Employment agency workers and contractors are considered to be external candidates and should therefore only apply for positions that are being advertised externally. They are also not eligible to claim continuity of employment should they be successful in securing a position with the Environment Agency.



For applicants who currently work in local government or other bodies listed in the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government etc.) (Modification) Order 1999, you may be eligible for continuous service for the purpose of calculating any future redundancy payment. In addition, if you can demonstrate that you have worked at the Environment Agency immediately before joining the Civil Service and are now being re-employed by the Environment Agency within a period of three years of leaving, you may also count your Civil Service employment for the purpose of calculating your service related entitlements as outlined above. If you are unsure of your status then you should contact your own HR Team.

Pre-employment Checks

We apply the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check when recruiting staff to our posts. This includes a basic criminal records check.

For the great majority of roles in the Environment Agency this will be sufficient and only certain roles will require a higher level of clearance. Should this be necessary, you will be advised of this during the recruitment process.

Want to find out more?

To find out more about what it's like to work at the Environment Agency, please visit:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency/about/recruitment>





5. How to apply

We use an online recruitment system. To make the application process simple and straightforward, and so that you know how it works and what we need from you, we've put together a few hints and tips. Make sure you have all the information you need about the vacancy. For some jobs, you'll be asked to download a candidate pack, like this one, where you'll find specific application instructions.

The first thing you need to do is sign up to our recruitment system. You will need a valid e-mail address to log in and apply for opportunities, as all communication from us will be via e-mail. You can do this via the vacancy you are interested in by selecting '**Apply**' at the bottom of the advert.

Once you've clicked this link you'll then be asked:

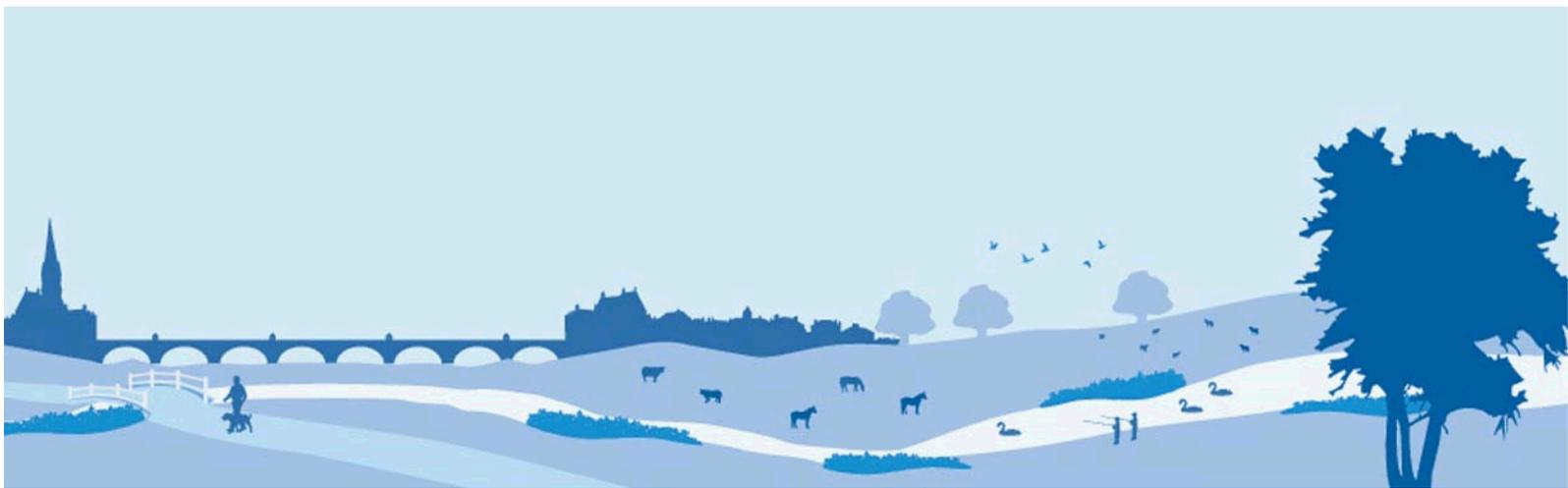
- Do you have the right to live and work in the UK?
- Do you have the required qualifications or equivalent experience, which were stated in the job advert?
- Are you currently an employee of this organisation?

Simply answer yes or no and you can carry on with your application. You'll then see the '**Register**' page. Simply complete the details and select '**Submit Registration**' and register to the system. You only need to sign up to the system once; you'll just be able to login next time.

When it comes to the actual application, you need to fill out each section, please be aware that the system will automatically time out if you are inactive for more than 60 minutes. This will result in any unsaved information being lost so make sure you save what you are doing regularly. Once you've finished, your details and information will be saved on the system for any future applications – of course, you can edit your details at any point.

When you apply to the Environment Agency for a job we will ask you to provide your personal data on our application form. We need this information so that we can establish your identity and your right to work in the UK.

You can read our Data Protection Statement on the application process page of our recruitment system. It is also available for reference on each page of the actual application.



Competence Questions/Statement

We're keen to know what makes you right for the job you're applying for and why we should ask you in for an interview. The competence questions/statements are your chance to convince us!

You should demonstrate how your skills, qualities and experience meet the requirements of the job (as described in the job advert and candidate pack). And instead of simply telling us, show us: use real life examples of where you've used a certain skill or how you've practically applied your experience. **Remember you can draw from your experiences at school, college, work and other activities.**

There's a 250 word limit per competence including spaces. It's a really important part of the selection process so make sure you keep your statement relevant and concise. Think about what we need to know about you and what you'd bring to the role and our organisation.

How to prepare your answers for a capability based application

Capabilities are high level descriptions of key behaviours, skills and knowledge that underpin effective performance. They are the behaviours, skills and knowledge employees must have, or must acquire, to achieve high levels of performance. Please refer to the **Top Capabilities** document (attached to the vacancy) that describes our capability framework in further detail.

Capability questions target a specific skill, so we will be looking for some key components in your answer:

- an indication that **you** understand the importance of that capability to the role for which you have applied
- evidence that **you** understand the fundamental skills associated with that capability
- an **example** that highlights your possession of that capability
- an awareness from **you** of how the critical skills will be used to good effect in the new role



The STAR approach

STAR stands for:

- **S**ituation
- **T**ask
- **A**ction
- **R**esult

The STAR approach is a universally-recognised communication technique designed to enable you to provide a meaningful and complete answer to questions asking for examples and it has the advantage of being simple.

Step 1: Situation or Task

Describe the situation that you were confronted with or the task that needed to be accomplished. With the STAR approach you need to set the context. Make it concise and informative, concentrating solely on what is useful to the story. For example, if the question is asking you to describe a situation where you had to deal with a difficult person, explain how you came to meet that person and why they were being difficult. If the question is asking for an example of teamwork, explain the task that you had to undertake as a team.

Step 2: Action

This is the most important section of the STAR approach as it is where you will need to demonstrate and highlight the skills and personal attributes that the question is testing. Now that you have set the context of your story, you need to explain what **you** did. In doing so, you will need to remember the following:

1. Talk about yourself, not the rest of the team.
2. Go into detail.
3. Steer clear of technical information, unless it is crucial to your story.
4. Explain **what** you did, **how** you did it and **why** you did it.



What, how and why

When we shortlist your application, we would like to know how you reacted to the situation. This is where you can start selling your skills. For example, you may want to describe how you used the team to achieve what you wanted and how you used your communication skills to keep everyone updated on progress, etc.

This is probably the most crucial part of your answer. We want to know that you are using a variety of transferrable skills in order to achieve your objectives. You must be able to demonstrate in your answer that you took specific actions because you were trying to achieve what you wanted, and that things didn't happen simply by chance.

Step 3: Result

Explain the positive outcome of your action(s) – how it all ended. Use the opportunity to describe what you **accomplished** and what you **learnt** in that situation. This helps you make the answer personal and enables you to highlight further skills.

How we shortlist

We will shortlist your application based on the information you've provided in your application form. If you choose to attach your CV (this is not necessary), please note that your **CV is not visible to us at the shortlisting stage**.

Application questions

For some roles, we'll ask you some specific questions, like if you have a preferred work location. If you're disabled and you'd like to be part of our Guaranteed Interview Scheme, you can add this information in here.



Equality and Diversity

We're committed to reflecting the communities we serve and we'd like you to tell us about yourself and your background.

Submitting your application

Once you've filled out and completed everything, you'll be prompted to submit your application. Simply click the button and you're done.

Please be aware that once you've submitted your application, with the exception of the 'Personal Details' section you will not be able to edit your application further. If you decide to withdraw your application, you will not be able to submit another application for the same vacancy.

If, at any stage, you have questions or problems, please contact the recruitment team on 0845 602 6099 or email ea_recruitment@sscl.gse.gov.uk

Setting up 'job alerts'

If you have been unsuccessful with your application you can set up email alerts for future vacancies. You will automatically receive an email when a job that matches your criteria becomes available. To do this simply click on '**create a new job alert**', enter your job criteria and save.

Environment Agency Benefits

The Environment Agency offers an attractive and competitive benefits package, including:

Core Benefits

Basic Salary

Based on skills and experience, in which salary ranges are subject to review each year as part of the pay award.

Pension Scheme

A final salary pension scheme. Contributions are based on your full time equivalent pay and range between 5.5% and 12.5%. The Environment Agency contribution is currently 18.5% of your pay.

Holidays

Attractive annual holiday entitlement starting at 25 days plus statutory bank holidays pro-rata for flexible workers, i.e. part time, job share employees).

Enhanced statutory policies

Enhanced maternity, adoption and paternity leave, and sickness absence provisions.

Training & Development

Performance Management

Individual performance plans, learning and development matched to your agreed career objectives and progression plans.

Learning & Development

A range of training courses, leadership development initiatives and access to L&D materials are available, covering technical, managerial and personal skills.

Examination Leave

Paid leave for exams and revision for approved studies.

Professional subscriptions

We will pay the membership fees for one relevant professional association.

Work/life Balance

Flexible Working

Flexible working patterns including job share.

Family Friendly Benefits

Childcare vouchers' scheme and discounts on selected childcare products.

Travel & Transport Benefits

A range of travel and transport benefits. Discounts on Haven Holidays and HotelStay.

Shopping & Leisure Benefits

A variety of discounts at online stores and leisure experiences available via Mylifestyle.

Health & Wellbeing

Occupational Health

Access to Duradiamond Healthcare advisory service.

Eye Care

Free eye tests.

Employee Assistance Service

Access to Workplace Wellness available to you and your family

Sports & Social Club

Opportunity to benefit from a wide range of subsidised events and discounts.

Health Discounts

Optional discounts provided by a number of external providers and health clubs.

Local Benefits

These vary from region to region.

Finance

Interest Free Loans

For season tickets and/or bicycles and safety equipment as well as tenancy deposit scheme

Special Leave

Additional paid leave is available for employees taking part in public duties, trade union activities, special/trained forces and for health & safety representatives.

The following benefits only apply to eligible roles:

**Lease Car Scheme
Relocation Assistance
Free Car Parking**