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# Financial Investigator Candidate Information Pack

Job title: Accredited Financial Investigator  
Job location: Various locations across England  
Date: May 2018  
Reference: Vacancy 8299

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# 1. Our organisation

## Our organisation

We are the Environment Agency. We work to protect and improve the environment and create better, safer places for people and wildlife. We:

- protect and improve the quality of water, making sure there is enough for people, businesses, agriculture and the environment
- fight environmental crime
- work closely with businesses (such as those in the waste industry) to help them comply with environmental regulations
- reduce the risks to people, properties and businesses from flooding and coastal erosion

Our work helps to ensure people can enjoy the water environment through angling and navigation and we also look after land quality, promote sustainable land management and help protect and enhance wildlife habitats.

Of course, none of this will be possible without the professionalism and dedication of our staff.

We work with government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and communities to make our environment a better place for people and wildlife. As a public body we are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all we do and valuing the diversity of our workforce, customers and communities.

We're committed to helping our people find new ways of working to maintain our focus on creating a better place for people and wildlife. For more information on the Environment Agency and what we do, please visit: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus)



## 2. The role

The Accredited Financial Investigator is part of the Environment Agency's National Investigation Team which investigates serious and organised environmental crime. The team also provides support and guidance to Area Enforcement Teams and the wider enforcement community. You will be part of a wider department which is the National Enforcement Service which includes the National Intelligence Team, Prevention and Disruption and Enforcement Once.

One of the many great things about being a Financial Investigator is that you'll genuinely be able to see that you've made a difference by ensuring that crime does not pay. The work you carry out will have a clear outcome and a significant impact on the environment.

Based in one of our area hubs, you'll work in a secure office. The Financial Investigations team currently focuses on Major Investigations, Serious and Significant investigations, Prevention and Disruption and Producer Responsibility cases and you could be involved in any of these areas of work whilst carrying out the following:

- To carry out Money Laundering, Confiscation investigations and Revisit Investigations with a view to prosecuting offenders involved in environmental crime, identifying and recovering criminal assets through the legislation of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
- Provide specialist guidance to operational teams in order to influence compliance with Environment Agency policy / legislation / best practice ways of working and contribute to the delivery of business plans.
- Provide and co-ordinate specialist technical advice and guidance to area teams, from a range of sources; ensure that local decisions are based on sound technical judgment and are in line with current legislation.
- Mentor and coach others on policies, procedures, practices and techniques equipping them with the knowledge and skills to deliver their work in an effective and efficient manner
- Keep up to date on changing legislation / best practice externally, to inform internal priorities and appropriate alignment.
- Lead or participate in projects, providing functional / specialist input to improve ways of working and business change & efficiency.
- Build and sustain effective relationships with operational customers to understand issues and provide effective response / steer for operational needs.
- Ensure all work programmes are delivered without risk to any team or individual; put health and safety at the heart of what you do; encourage and develop a safety-conscious culture within the team.
- To develop financial profiles of selected subjects as directed, obtaining, analysing and interpreting financial evidence and intelligence from all available 'restricted' and 'open' sources.
- Develop financial profiles and gathering of evidential material, in support of both proactive and reactive investigations.
- To prepare documentation and make applications for appropriate orders to the Crown Court and Magistrates' Court, pursuant to the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and other relevant legislation.
- To prepare prosecutor's statements in connection with confiscation investigations, deal with defence responses to such statements, brief CPS representatives and Prosecution Counsel, and give evidence at Court.

- To assess the suitability of cases for Restraint Order applications, and to liaise with legal teams and compile supporting witness statements as necessary.

## What skills do you need?

The role of a Financial Investigator is varied and you'll draw upon a number of key skills and personal characteristics. You'll need to be able to:

- have the ability to assimilate and analyse large quantities of complex information
- organise and prioritise your workload
- be confident and assertive
- take the initiative
- adapt your behaviour and communication style to different people and situations
- build strong relationships with a diverse range of people
- integrate into a team
- solve problems
- be computer literate
- record information correctly
- handle information securely as per government guidelines
- work independently when required

## Top capabilities

As part of the application and interview processes, we'll be looking at you to tell us how you:

- Take decisions and solve problems
- Communicate effectively
- Deal with Data and information management
- Achieves Results
- Influences and Persuades Others

Please refer to the **Top Capabilities** document (attached to the vacancy) that describes our capability framework in further detail. The **How to Apply** section (section 8 below) provides advice on how to complete your application.

## What experience do you need?

Specific, relevant work experience as an Accredited Financial Investigator or Accredited Financial Intelligence Officer is important but it's also important that you show an ability to demonstrate the key transferrable skills and personal qualities that we're looking for. It would also be useful if you had experience in the following:

- Dealing with complex and protracted investigations
- Preparing prosecution files
- Working collaboratively with other teams and external stakeholders
- Obtaining Special Procedure Material
- Preparation and presentation of evidence at court.
- Experience of Proceeds of Crime legislation

## What qualifications do you need?

You will need to have current accreditation through the National Crime Agency at least to Accredited Financial Intelligence Officer or Confiscators level; or evidence that you are in the process of achieving this accreditation. We will accept applications from candidates whose accreditation has been temporarily suspended within the past year.

It would be helpful (but not essential) if you had up to date knowledge of the legislation associated with the obtaining and presentation of evidence, in particular Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Criminal Procedure & Investigation Act 1996 and the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

## What else do you need to know?

- This is a national role and will involve travel to a variety of other locations including other agency offices, legal chambers and courts. An overnight stay may sometimes be involved.
- You must have a valid full UK driving licence.
- The Financial Investigations Team is dispersed across the country so you must be willing to liaise with your colleagues and attend team meetings on a bi-monthly basis.
- While we welcome applications for those requiring part time and flexible career opportunities, you must be able and willing to work flexibly, as in certain circumstances you may be asked to work away from your home base to for example, attend court.

## To help bring the role to life, here are some views from current Financial Investigators:

I joined the Environment Agency after serving for 30 years in the Police. I was an accredited Financial Investigator in the Police and took the opportunity to carry this role over to work within the National Enforcement Service of the EA.

The organisation is an excellent workplace, I enjoy working with enthusiastic, professional investigators and lawyers to prevent disrupt and prosecute those involved in serious environmental offending and to show that crime does not pay.

Flexible working, safe working environments and ensuring staff wellbeing are all part of making the Environment Agency an excellent place to work.

**Vic – Senior Financial Investigator**

After graduating from University with a BSc (Hons) in Psychology with Criminology and later gaining a Graduate Diploma in Psychology, I joined Environment Agency Wales in the Procurement Department and then became one of the first Crime Analysts employed by the Environment Agency in 2007 in Cardiff. I am now an Accredited Financial Investigator (AFI) in the National Investigations Team. It is a really exciting and interesting job in a really supportive and friendly team.

The Environment Agency has supported me to ensure I have received all relevant training required for my accreditation and I am now hoping to find a Master's Degree in order to gain more specialist knowledge on the subject. The job is not always 9 to 5 and the Environment Agency has been flexible enough to allow the Team to identify better ways of working and adapt process to be more effective and efficient in a specialist team.

The Environment Agency is a great place to explore different jobs and disciplines. It also offers opportunities around less well known roles - we don't just all work in flooding!

Kath – Financial Investigator

I joined the Environment Agency in 2002, following service in HM Forces with the Corps of Royal Military Police and a short stint within the private sector as an Independent Financial Adviser. I started in the Financial Investigations Team as a Financial Intelligence Officer, gaining my NCA accreditation before starting my current role as a Financial Investigator.

I find that the team to be very professional and knowledgeable, always willing to discuss areas of work and provide me with support & guidance when required. The team are very dedicated to what they do, and that is reflected in their professional work ethic.

The Environment Agency has always been a flexible and rewarding employer. The wellbeing of the staff and having a safe working environment is a priority of the Agency, which makes employees feel recognised and supported for the sometimes difficult job that they do.

Peter – Financial Investigator



# 3. Training and development

You will need to have current accreditation through the National Crime Agency at least to Accredited Financial Intelligence Officer or Confiscators level; or evidence that you are in the process of achieving this accreditation. We will accept applications from candidates whose accreditation has been temporarily suspended within the past year – you may have to do some refresher training in this case.

Depending on your level of accreditation and experience, you may receive ongoing support via an allocated mentor from within the team which is statutory as part of your development as a Financial Investigator. The NCA are our national regulators for Financial Investigations and the team has close contact with a dedicated regulatory support officer who updates us on changes in legislation. In addition, the NCA regulatory officer (POCC Officer) ensures that Personal Development Portfolios (PDP) are on track and Continual Professional Development (CPD) is achieved. You will be required to submit evidence for your CPD throughout your career as a Financial Investigator. This is to ensure that we are complying with the NCA standards of practice.

In addition to ongoing technical development and any refresher training required for your role, you will have the opportunity to complete specific Environment Agency courses relating the wider agency business. Depending on your Individual Performance Plan agreed with your Line Manager, this could include a mixture of on the job training, mentoring, e-learning and some structured classroom based learning sessions.

## How long will it take?

Once accredited, it can take up to two years to become a fully qualified Financial Investigator. To achieve this you are expected to submit evidence in the form of a Professional Development Plan (PDP) around certain activities such as financial intelligence checks and the submission of production orders.

In addition, in order to carry out confiscation investigations, you will need to submit further evidence around dealing with asset restraining orders. You will also be required to take a further exam and attend a training course to obtain this qualification.

## Induction Stage

When you first join the agency you will complete a National induction package and a National Enforcement Services induction package – both of these will be via ELearning. You will also receive ongoing support from your Line Manager where you will discuss objectives and development opportunities as part of your Individual Performance Plan which will be reviewed every quarter. Your Line Manager will encourage you to gain knowledge of the wider Environment Agency business and be an advocate of Health and Safety issues for yourself and the rest of the team.



## 4. Is this the right career for you?

The Financial investigator role is varied and demanding, but it is very rewarding too. As with all jobs, some people are better suited to the role than others.

To help you decide if this is the right career for you we've put together some situations you may find yourself in as a fully-trained Financial Investigator. You won't encounter these types of situations every single day, of course. But we'd like to be honest with you so that you know if the role is something you'll enjoy doing. If you are not sure whether the job is really for you, ask yourself – and be honest – about how you would react to these situations having received the relevant training and development.

- As part of a financial investigation you may find that you have reams of bank account information to format, collate and analyse which can be a time consuming and difficult task. You will have to decide how you are going to manage that information and keep track of your own progress. You will also be expected to keep the area investigation lead or Senior Investigations Manager apprised of your findings. However the satisfaction of discovering criminal activity or tracing realisable assets makes the effort worthwhile.
- You may be required to give evidence in Court in respect of your investigation. The defendant and possibly family members and friends will be in the Court and waiting areas. Defendants are not usually happy to have their assets removed from them as a result of your investigation (even though it is their own fault for being involved in criminality). You need to be aware that this may happen and be confident to deal with this type of situation.

One of the many great things about being a Financial Investigator is that you'll genuinely be able to see where you've made a difference in ensuring that crime does not pay. The work you carry out will have an outcome and a significant impact on the environment. Here's what else you can expect in terms of outcomes, both positive and sometimes challenging:

- The Environment Agency has had some very good results in respect of confiscation orders from waste crime cases. One of the first proceeds of crime cases in the South West of England resulted in an illegal operator paying £1.2 million pounds in a confiscation order.
- One of the victims of environmental crime is the innocent land owner whose property is now full of contaminated waste. Unfortunately, it is the land owner's responsibility to clear the waste if it has not been done by the criminal.
- The Environment Agency have successfully obtained Confiscation orders against a number of defendants meaning that the defendants have to sell their assets to satisfy the order. The Court can and has made compensation orders in favour of the Land owners at the same time, the compensation payment is then made from the assets confiscated as part of the confiscation order.
- In two recent cases, the Canals Rivers Trust; an innocent land owner was awarded in excess of £40,000 in compensation which the defendant paid out of his savings and pension fund. An elderly couple whose land had been used by a criminal in Burton on Trent were awarded in excess of £29,000 in compensation to clear their land, the defendant had to sell his house to make the payment.

## 5. Roles available

Area	Locations	Financial Investigator	Role type & Number of Posts
National	Various	1	Accredited Financial Investigator – 1 post

## 6. Salary and benefits

<b>Starting salary:</b>	<b>£34,330</b> per annum. We also offer a pay award scheme that is linked to your performance throughout the year.
<b>Lease car:</b>	There is no lease car with this role
<b>Hours of work:</b>	37 hours (pro rata if part time)
<b>Leave entitlement:</b>	Your annual leave allowance will be 27 days (pro rata if part time) plus bank holidays. This increases to 30 days with length of service. We also 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.
<b>Pension:</b>	We will enroll you into the <a href="#">Environment Agency Pension Fund</a> (EAPF) on commencing employment. The EAPF is part of the <a href="#">Local Government Pension Scheme</a> (LGPS). It is a career average defined benefits scheme, which means you will build up benefits based on your pay each year. We will base your pension contributions on your pensionable pay and you will receive tax and national insurance relief on your contributions. You will begin by contributing 6.5% of your pensionable pay. 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.
<b>Work/life balance:</b>	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.
<b>Diversity:</b>	We are committed to diversity and inclusion. We want all our staff to feel valued and respected and to see this as a great place to work. Diversity: it's in our nature.



## 7. Further information

This role will include travel to other offices and courts and therefore requires a full UK driving licence.

We are fully committed to having an inclusive workforce to reflect the communities we serve. We welcome applications from candidates seeking flexible working patterns, including part time and job share.

Please note that Environment Agency employees are not civil servants, so you may wish to check your eligibility for continuity of employment by contacting your HR department. All eligible bodies are listed in the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government etc.) (Modification) Order 1999.

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.

Please note all successful applicants must undergo Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) checks prior to commencement of employment. This includes a basic criminal records check.

Should you be successful, we will require you to successfully undertake vetting to SC (Security Check) level to work within an investigative environment.

## 8. 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.

The first thing you need to do is sign up to our online recruitment system. You'll need a valid e-mail address to log in and apply for jobs, 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:

1. Do you have the right to live and work in the UK? – please answer 'yes' or 'no'
2. Do you have the required qualifications or equivalent experience, which were stated in the job advert? – we are not seeking any specific qualifications or experience for this role, so please answer 'yes' to this question
3. Are you currently an employee of this organisation? – please answer 'yes' or 'no'

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. You can then carry on with your application.

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 please 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.

### Capability questions

We're keen to know what makes you right for the job you're applying for and why we should invite you for an interview. The capability questions 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 this candidate pack). 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.

There's a 250 word limit per question. It's a **crucial** part of the selection process so make sure you dedicate plenty of time to completing this part of the application form. 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.

When discussing a situation where you had to deal with conflict, a good answer might provide an example of how you intervened to diffuse the situation, how you approached it with consideration for both yourself and others. For example:

*"I could sense that my colleague was irritated and I asked him gently to tell me what he felt the problem was. By allowing him to vent his feelings and his anger, I gave him the opportunity to calm down. I then explained to him my own point of view on the matter, emphasising how important it was that we found a solution that suited us both."*

This answer helps us understand what drove your actions and reinforces the feeling that you are considering the needs of others before acting. It provides much more information about you as an individual and is another reason why the STAR approach is so useful.

## 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.

## An example

For example, a strong answer to this capability question might be constructed in the following way:

"Can you tell us of an occasion when you demonstrated strong leadership in order to produce a positive outcome?"

1. Consider an introductory sentence or two about the importance of strong leadership in general terms.
2. Explain what strong leadership looks like to you. Make this personal to you; express an opinion on leadership rather than regurgitate leadership theory.
3. Talk about how you exhibited strong leadership. Draw upon a couple of real life examples which shows good evidence that you have the skills that you say you do.
4. Don't dwell too much on the details of the situation – word count (and time in interviews) is limited; we want to hear about what you did and how you contributed, added value, and drew on your skills, and how your leadership intervention was critical.
5. Discuss how these skills would transfer to the new position you are applying for.



The key in answering all capability questions is that you are required to **demonstrate** that you have the right skills by using an example (or examples) based on your work or life experience, and not just talk about the topic in a theoretical, general or impersonal manner.

## How are capability answers scored?

Answers are scored on scale of one to seven, with seven being the highest score:

Score	Category	Comment
1	Not demonstrated	No positive evidence
2	Minimal demonstration	Limited positive evidence
3	Moderate demonstration	Moderate positive evidence
4	Acceptable demonstration	Adequate positive evidence
5	Good demonstration	Substantial positive evidence
6	Strong demonstration	Substantial, positive evidence of the capability and includes some evidence of exceeding expectations
7	Outstanding demonstration	Evidence provided wholly exceeds expectation at this level

The minimum benchmark score for each answer is four, but to stand out from the crowd you should be aiming for a score of five or above.

It should be noted that the score is cumulative. This means that if an application is scored over three capability questions, the minimum score needed to be considered for interview will be 12 (three times four). If you score highly on two of the capabilities but poorly on the third, you may still pass the minimum benchmark score of 12.

## 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. If, at any stage, you have questions or problems with our online application system, please contact SSCL on 0345 300 1861.

Don't leave your application until the last minute – technical support is provided Monday to Friday only; and most vacancies close at 23:55 in the evening. If you are unable to submit your application at 23:54 on the day applications close, we will be **unable to accept late submissions**.

## Sign up for job alerts

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

