

Job Title: Chief of Staff to the Head of the Scotland Office and Delivery Advisor to the Secretary of State

Site: London/Edinburgh

Grade: G7

Post type: Permanent

Working pattern: Full-time. This is a hybrid role, with the expectation you will be office-based 60% / three days a week as a minimum.

Role type: Private Office/Strategy

The Scotland Office supports the Secretary of State in promoting the best interests of Scotland within a stronger United Kingdom. It ensures Scottish interests are fully and effectively represented at the heart of the UK Government, and that the UK Government's responsibilities are fully and effectively represented in Scotland.

The Role:

We are seeking an experienced, strategic, inclusive and emotionally intelligent leader to join the Private Office Directorate as the Chief of Staff to our Director and Head of the Scotland Office, Fiona Mettam.

The successful candidate will work closely with Fiona and her Executive Team to support her in the delivery of the Secretary of State's priorities. The occupants' time will be split between strategy and private office work, leading a team of 2 private secretaries, but matrix working closely with the broader Private Office and Scotland Office to drive delivery. They will report directly to the Principal Private Secretary.

We are looking for someone with impeccable organisational skills, confidence in their own judgement and a track record of translating ministerial priorities into tangible, implementable action. This will be a stretching role, suitable for an experienced Grade 7 looking to develop themselves ahead of promotion.

They will possess the proven ability to deliver through others with kindness and compassion and demonstrate an ability to manage a demanding workload whilst horizon scanning and responding swiftly to emerging priorities. As the Head of the Director's Office they will have experience establishing, maintaining and adapting systems. In their capacity as a strategic advisor, they will lead on key strategic projects (including delivery governance, priorities development and tracking, and cross-Whitehall engagement). They will have significant responsibility and need excellent judgment in particular in relation to Fiona's Non Working Days.

In return, they will be welcomed into a social, experienced and fast-paced team that places collaboration, challenge, innovation and high-quality outputs at the centre of what we do.

Key responsibilities

Key responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Operating a smooth and efficient Private Office and ensuring that day-to-day business is transacted in a timely and effective manner to enable Fiona to use her time as effectively as possible.
- Establishing and running effective systems, processes and structures within the Private Office - supporting the department's wider transformation projects. This includes being curious and identifying more effective ways of working, using your initiative to solve complex problems and looking for opportunities that help the Director and the organisation be more effective - including championing opportunities such as AI.
- Build strong internal relationships with Fiona and the wider Executive Team. Credibly speaking truth to power where required and supporting internal communications to help carry staff voices to the Director to shape thinking and help us be a great place to work for everyone
- Help the Director and wider Executive team to work together as effectively as possible and deliver governance, oversight and direction to the organisation as a whole.
- Lead on key strategy functions including priority tracking, internal and external delivery and engagement planning, and capability building.
- Working with No10/HMT/CO on the department's reporting to the centre of government.
- Plan and consider partners and stakeholder engagement for the Director to ensure this is effectively aligned with priorities and complements the broader SO engagement strategy
- Lead the coordination of the Scotland Office's contribution to the MERC Cabinet Committee structure.
- Embodying our departmental values of collaborative, impactful, respectful, reflective and open.
- Support the Fiona and the Principal Private Secretary in their responsibilities concerning proprietary and ethics.

Person Specification

Essential:

- Excellent written and verbal communication, and confident working closely with senior leaders/ministers.
- Experience of providing policy and/or strategy advice to government ministers or senior leaders and demonstrated ability to pick up new topics quickly.
- Ability to work confidently and credibly with a range of colleagues, external partners and ministers, and to influence and prioritise direction of work.
- Experience of providing policy and/or strategy advice to government ministers or senior leaders and demonstrated ability to pick up new topics quickly.
- Ability to be creative and innovative, coming up with new ideas to tackle problems.

Desirable:

- Experience of working in a strategy or private office role, working with the centre of government or working closely with senior leaders.
- Experience working on proprietary and ethics.

Application process

To apply, you'll be asked to provide:

- a CV;
- a personal statement setting out your suitability for the role (max 750 words).

Further Information

At interview, we'll assess you against these behaviours:

- Leadership
- Seeing the Bigger Picture
- Making Effective Decisions

We will also assess you against your experience for the role.

Feedback will only be provided if you attend an interview. A further fireside chat with Fiona may be conducted following interviews.

If you want to discuss the role further, please get in touch with the recruitment manager at hannah.payne1@ukgovscotland.gov.uk