

Person Specification

Executive Director (Chief Operating Officer)

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	- Degree or equivalent professional experience - Evidence of ongoing professional development at senior leadership level	- Postgraduate qualification - Leadership qualification - Professional qualification relevant to service area (business management, change management, governance, legal, finance, HR, organisational development, public administration or equivalent)
Experience	- A minimum of five years of senior leadership experience within a public sector, complaints or customer-focused environment. - Experience of contributing to organisational strategy and translating strategic objectives into operational delivery. - Experience of leading organisational change, transformation and continuous improvement programmes. - Experience of managing organisational performance through performance measures, service standards and quality assurance frameworks. - Experience of overseeing governance, risk management and assurance arrangements. - Experience of leading multidisciplinary teams and developing high-performing, inclusive cultures. - Experience of managing relationships with senior stakeholders, including external partners.	- Experience working within an ombudsman, regulatory, audit, parliamentary, inspection or scrutiny body. - Experience of leading large-scale organisational modernization, transformation or service redesign initiatives. - Experience of engaging with Parliamentary committees, sponsoring bodies or government departments. - Experience of stakeholder engagement across public bodies, scrutiny organisations and elected representatives. - Experience of contributing to organisational learning and influencing public service improvement beyond core service delivery. - Agile development and project management experience.
Skills	Board and executive-level leadership and decision-making	Media engagement and acting as a public spokesperson.

	• Building effective strategic partnerships and stakeholder influence • Representing the SPSO externally with credibility and authority • Balancing operational delivery, transformation and long-term sustainability	• Leading digital transformation, service redesign or organisational modernisation programmes. • Influencing policy or sector-wide improvement through evidence, insight and learning.
Knowledge	• Governance frameworks, risk management, assurance and corporate accountability. • Financial management and stewardship of organisational resources. • Organisational transformation, change leadership and continuous improvement. • Performance management and quality assurance frameworks. • Digital transformation, technology and data-enabled service delivery.	• Scottish Parliamentary and Parliamentary Office Holder governance arrangements. • Ombudsman services, administrative justice and the wider Scottish public service environment. • Complaints handling, investigations or redress systems. • Public service reform and shared service delivery models.
Values	• A commitment to SPSO values. • Strong self-leadership: taking responsibility, self-awareness, acting with integrity, inspiring others, authenticity, and modelling the organisational behaviours. • Personal accountability: holding yourself and others – your team, management colleagues, and others – to account for responsibilities through evaluation and appropriate challenge. • A commitment to financial probity and transparency. • Strong self-awareness and commitment to continuous personal development.	• A champion of diversity and inclusion. • Commitment to creating a culture of trust and empowerment.

Job Holder Competencies	
Leading the business	• Leads on organisational strategy and long-term planning • Communicates and inspires colleagues to deliver SPSO's strategic vision and objectives • Assesses environment, external trends and identifies risk and opportunities, responding strategically • Evaluates, monitors and controls strategic and operational risks, using the appropriate framework to apply a systematic approach to minimise the impact and proportionately control risks • Ensures organisational capability, resilience and future readiness • Shows people the link between individual and organisational objectives • Leads through organizational values and acts as a role model
Managing change	• Leads significant change and transformation programmes, managing the complexity of change, anticipating barriers, securing ownership and commitment of colleagues • Gathers information to have an overview, identifying opportunities for continuous improvement in line with strategy. Adaptable and willing to try new ways of working in response to changing organisational needs • Creates engagement and ownership of change by communicating a compelling case for change, a clear vision of success and the benefits to stakeholders. • Uses effective consultation and engagement throughout the change process to inform decision-making, understand and manage resistance and support sustainable implementation. • Supports and drives implementation, sustaining momentum of change projects • Ensures change is successfully embedded within organisational culture, processes and ways of working, evaluating outcomes and benefits to drive continuous improvement and long-term organisational performance. • Maintains organisational performance through periods of transition.
Driving performance and standards	• Understands KPIs and measurements for successful organisational performance • Oversees performance by setting expectations and accountability mechanisms • Regularly reviews structure, process and resource issues that impact on performance • Uses performance data, assurance and quality measures to drive improvements aligned to organizational strategy • Maintains a focus on customer and stakeholder outcomes. • Promotes continuous improvement and learning.

	• Ensures services operate efficiently, effectively and in accordance with good governance principles.
Managing people	• Builds inclusive, high-performing teams. • Develops leadership capability and talent. • Empowers others through effective delegation and trust. • Aligns organisational, team and individual objectives, setting clear expectations for performance and fostering a culture of accountability, development and continuous improvement. • Creates the conditions for high performance by fostering ownership, valuing diverse contributions, promoting open communication and addressing barriers that impede effective delivery. • Foster collaboration and organisational learning. • Models continuous learning and professional growth, proactively seeking feedback, encouraging constructive challenge and fostering a culture of learning and innovation.
Planning and organising	• Effectively balances strategic priorities with operational demands in a complex environment • Plans ahead for emerging risks and future challenges, setting relevant, realistic goals • Allocates resources effectively and achieve value for money • Delivers objectives within agreed timescales and resources • Uses experience to weigh up options rather than methodically following instructions • Anticipates and flags up problems early on • Makes use of people, physical and digital resources to improve efficiency
Analysis and judgment	• Analyses complex issues from multiple perspectives, weighing up evidence and challenging assumptions to support effective decision-making. • Recognises patterns, risks and underlying issues within complex information, applying sound judgement and using insight to make informed strategic and high-profile decisions. • Ability to explain robust and justifiable methodologies in decision-making with understanding and mitigation of risks and consequences.
Effective communication and managing relationships	• Influences, negotiates and builds consensus at senior levels. • Adapts communication style and approach to influence, engage and build understanding across a diverse range of audiences and stakeholders. • Builds understanding and trust through active listening, respectful engagement and constructive communication. • Represents SPSO externally with authority and professionalism.

	• Builds and maintains credibility with stakeholders and networks that provide mutual benefit and support to SPSO • Promotes collaboration and shared accountability, fostering a culture where knowledge, ideas and expertise are openly exchanged to achieve improved outcomes and organisational objectives.
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