



Department  
for Education

## Commercial Lead – Category Manager

**Closing Date:** 21 March 2019

**Department for Education**

**Business Area:** Commercial Directorate, Operations Group

**Grade:** Grade 7

**Salary:** 48,493 - 55,912, GRADE 7 National

**Working Pattern:** Flexible working, Full-time, Job share, Part-time

**Contract Type:** Permanent

**Number of posts:** Multiple

**Hours:** 37

### **Location:**

Sheffield, Darlington, Manchester, Coventry

### **About the job:**

At the Department for Education, we're responsible for providing children and young people with the lifelong learning they deserve. It's a passion that's fuelling positive change as we aim to build a world-class commercial directorate and enhance our workforce with fresh talent. With a commercial category spend of £6.4bn, we're working on complex, high-value contracts that will create tangible results for schools, colleges, universities and young people across the country. Perhaps you'll have the skills and ambition we need to join us.

### **Who we are**

The Department for Education is responsible for education, children's services, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England, and equalities. We work to achieve a highly educated society in which opportunity is equal for all, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

Operations Group is responsible for the main corporate functions of the department including: analysis, commercial, data, estates and security, finance, human resources, international education, Operations and Delivery Unit, technology and the governance and relationship standards with the DfE's public bodies. Its role is to support the business to deliver ministerial priorities by ensuring that:

- the department is sufficiently resourced (people, data / information, finance, IT) and organised right to deliver its business objectives; and
- efficient and effective systems and processes, driven by customer needs, underpin our services.

### **Commercial Directorate**



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This leadership position is based within the Department's commercial function, which has a crucial role in delivering the Departmental priority of making every pound of our funding count. Approximately £23.5bn of the Department's expenditure is through commercial arrangements so we have a great responsibility to achieve best value, choice and efficiency.

We have a bold ambition to be the best commercial function in government. To achieve this we are transforming the way in which we deliver a commercial service, moving to direct leadership and delivery of the Department's most complex and strategic commercial projects through the implementation of end-to-end Category Management. This will deliver improved commercial outcomes, drive value for money, embed a stronger commercial focus, reduce commercial risk and improve commercial capability across the Department.

To be the best commercial function in government we need to recruit the best people.

The commercial function operates five key categories with responsibility for a broad portfolio of activity spanning policy development and operational delivery. You could be placed in any one of these categories.

The Social Care, Mobility and Disadvantage category manages multi million pound contracts with a range of specialist children's services providers and charities in the areas of social work reform, adoption, fostering, child protection, Local Authority children's services interventions, special educational needs and supporting disadvantaged children.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is responsible for £58 billion of funding for the education and training sector for children, young people and adults. The ESFA also regulates academies, FE colleges, employers and training providers, intervening where there is risk of failure or where there is evidence of mismanagement of public funds. The ESFA category team are responsible for the delivery of major projects and operate key services in the education and skills sector, such as the National Careers Service and the National Apprenticeship Service. The significant scale and value of these projects presents unique commercial challenges to ensure that children, young people, adults receive world leading education, apprenticeships and training.

The Higher Education and Further Education category brings together the key policy areas of post-Sixteen education including the delivery of technical education reform and reform of apprenticeships. Recently the commercial team have supported the delivery of the National Careers Service, European Social Fund and Institutes of Technology exercises.

The Early Years and Schools category supports the delivery of curriculum development, school workforce capacity and capability, and other measures to grow system capacity, leadership and governance. The category team are currently working with the Standards and Testing Agency to secure the development and operational delivery of national statutory testing and assessment.

The Operations category is responsible for the main corporate functions within the department including ICT Hardware, Software (Support & Solutions), Digital Services and professional services. Recently, the team have completed the delivery of the department's Technology Modernisation programme – leading the way across government.

### **The Role:**



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As a Commercial Lead Category Manager, you will have a unique opportunity to lead the development of category strategies as we transform the way we deliver a commercial service.

You will work directly with the business and with suppliers in the delivery of a seamless end-to-end category model and be exposed to an exciting, challenging and diverse range of commercial challenges. Key to this will be building strategic relationships and leveraging your influencing and analysis skills to identify and deliver the best commercial outcomes.

Applicants should be aware that this role is in scope to move to sit within the Government Commercial Organisation (GCO) from June 2019. While the GCO is the central employer of senior Commercial staff across all central government departments, the role content and accountability will not change as a result and the position will continue to sit with DfE following transition to GCO.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

Reporting to the Senior Category Manager, the post holder will be responsible for:

- Leading a team, the function and customers through change, building a culture of continuous improvement, and providing high quality support to leadership
- The creation and delivery of world-class, market-leading category strategy which manages and develops supplier markets to meet current and future DfE needs
- Quickly gaining a deep understanding of the supply market, category, and business context and using this knowledge to inform commercial strategy
- Leading negotiations of high value DfE procurements and contracts ensuring accurate, comprehensive and transparent analysis, with robust recommendations to senior decision makers.
- Managing the lifecycle of large, complex contracts and grants (existing and new) across the category, and the commercial management of key suppliers.
- Working with policy leads to understand requirements and define optimal commercial strategies
- Maintaining an up to date procurement pipeline
- Contributing to Strategic Supplier Relationship Management including the development of Supplier Action Plans to agree performance improvement goals, identification and delivery of savings initiatives and innovation opportunities
- Developing and delivering a savings plan for the category, ensuring that savings are identified and realised
- Ensuring that commercial risks are identified and managed at all stages of the category lifecycle, and that ongoing risks are transferred into contract management.
- Using an e-procurement system to effectively manage and capture data on end to end category management activity
- Complying fully with EU procurement law, DfE commercial procedure, policy, and assurance processes.
- Gaining the expected value for money over the full contract term, from tendering to contract wind-down.
- The line management of a category team and coaching and developing staff within the function



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- Identifying and implementing improvements to commercial processes, systems and skills.
- Supporting other category teams as required to balance workload across the DFE commercial team.

You will need to bring a commitment to high standards, excellent influencing and relationship management skills, and clear, incisive thinking to bear on a range of areas relating to the department's most important priorities.

### **Essential Criteria:**

To be successful, candidates will need to demonstrate capability against the following criteria:

- Evidence of taking the strategic lead on securing value for money in a complex commercial environment
- Experience of analysing complex information to make informed strategic commercial decisions
- Evidence of influencing key senior stakeholders towards commercial solutions which balance optimal commercial performance with delivering business strategy
- Evidence of applying effective communication skills to influence customers at senior levels
- Evidence of the design and delivery of end-to-end strategic category plans and commercial strategies
- Evidence of leading teams at a strategic level to manage and deliver competing business priorities in large-scale complex organisations

### **Desirable Criteria:**

- MCIPS qualified with evidence of putting theoretical knowledge into practice.
- Alternatively, you will have a minimum of two years experience in a procurement and commercial role (if you do not have MCIPS you will be expected to work towards it upon starting your post).
- A track record of achieving strong results through successfully building capability of yourself and others in a commercial function
- Evidence of successfully managing risk, mitigations and trade offs

### **Additional Info:**

To find out more about this exciting opportunity, visit [www.makingcommercialmatterdfe.co.uk](http://www.makingcommercialmatterdfe.co.uk)

This is a nationwide campaign with roles in Sheffield, Darlington, Manchester and Coventry. Candidates should be aware that they will be required to attend a full-day assessment centre in London as part of the recruitment process. Full briefing materials and instructions will be provided.

Applicants achieving an A at a GCF Assessment and Development Centre (ADC) will be invited to interview. Applicants achieving a B will be considered for invitation to interview. This decision will be taken by the panel, taking into account application and report outcomes.



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Applicants who have already attended an ADC and not achieved an A or B must be eligible to re-sit (in line with re-assessment policy).

Expenses incurred by candidates during the recruitment process will not be reimbursed by the Department except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance.

### **Background to the Commercial Function**

The Civil Service is one of the biggest and most complex employers in the UK employing over 400,000 Civil Servants serving both Ministers and the public to deliver the priorities of the Government of the day. These include major projects with a lifecycle cost of around £500bn, as well as programmes and services that affect everyone in the United Kingdom. The annual spend is c. £45bn per annum with a range of suppliers including Small and Medium Enterprises.

Following issues with some major contracts and key suppliers, the Civil Service has committed itself to dramatically improving its commercial performance. This has included establishing a Commercial Function that will operate with, and in support of, departments. A new, senior, Government Chief Commercial Officer has recently been appointed from the private sector to head up the Commercial Function. This is also aligned with the first set of Commercial Standards published for Government in February 2016.

Commercial resources overseen by the function number some 4000 staff across Whitehall, and consists of:

- A number of core interlocking central teams working together on Policy, Standards and Continuous Improvement, Complex Transactions, Markets and Suppliers (that will build pan-government relationships with key suppliers) and Commercial Capability
- Colleagues in the Commercial Directorates within Departments and Agencies, and
- The Crown Commercial Service, a trading fund sourcing common goods and services for the Civil Service and the Wider Public Sector

The Commercial Function is led by Gareth Rhys Williams, the Government Chief Commercial Officer (GCCO). He reports directly to the Chief Executive of the Civil Service, John Manzoni.

### **GCO (Government Commercial Organisation)**

As a valued employee of the Government Commercial Organisation (GCO), you will have access to all the benefits the centre has to offer; including flexible working, generous benefits, Career Coaches, Mentors, L&D, a Commercial College, active talent management and, most importantly, access to commercial projects that will far exceed the scale and complexity on offer elsewhere in the UK.

### **Benefits:**

As a member of the DfE, you will be entitled to join the highly competitive Civil Service Pension Scheme, which many experts agree is one of the most generous in the UK.



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You will have 25 days annual leave entitlement, increasing by 1 day every year to a maximum of 30 days after five years' service. In addition, all staff receive the Queen's Birthday privilege holiday and 8 days' bank and public holidays.

We offer flexible working arrangements, such as job sharing, term-time working, flexi-time and compressed hours, along with excellent childcare benefits.

As an organisation that exists to support education and lifelong learning, we offer our staff excellent professional development opportunities.

Applicants currently holding a permanent post in the Civil Service should note that, if successful, their salary on appointment would be determined by the Department's transfer / promotion policies.

To find out more about the benefits of becoming a member of the DfE, visit [www.makingcommercialmatterdfe.co.uk](http://www.makingcommercialmatterdfe.co.uk)

### **Allowances**

This post may attract a procurement allowance of £1,500 per annum for successful applicants holding the CIPS foundation qualification OR £4,000 per annum for successful applicants holding the full MCIPS qualification.

Successful candidates will need to supply evidence of CIPS qualifications in order to receive the allowance once in post.

Alternatively, the successful candidate will need to complete their study to achieve the qualification within an agreed reasonable timeframe. On achievement of the qualification, the procurement allowance will be paid at the above rates.

### **Things you need to know:**

#### **Security**

Successful candidates must pass basic security checks.

#### **Nationality statement**

Candidates will be subject to UK immigration requirements as well as Civil Service nationality rules.

If you're applying for a role requiring security clearance please be aware that foreign or dual nationality is not an automatic bar. However certain posts may have restrictions which could affect those who do not have sole British nationality or who have personal connections with certain countries outside the UK.

#### **Nationality requirements**

Open to UK, Commonwealth and European Economic Area (EEA) and certain non EEA nationals. Further information on whether you are able to apply is available [here](#).

#### **Eligibility**



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Candidates in their probationary period are eligible to apply for vacancies within this department.

### **Working for the Civil Service**

The Civil Service Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of civil servants. We recruit by merit on the basis of fair and open competition, as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's recruitment principles. The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equality of opportunity. There is a guaranteed interview scheme (GIS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria.

### **Terms & Conditions**

Please see attachment below for the DfE's terms & conditions.

### **Selection Process Details:**

This vacancy is using [Success Profiles](#) and will assess your Behaviours, Experience and Technical skills.

#### **Stage 1 – Application & Sift**

As part of the application process, you will be asked to complete a CV and a personal statement.

Your CV should cover details of education and professional qualifications, employment history, as well as giving details of relevant skills and experience.

Your personal statement (maximum 1,000 words) should include details of how you meet the essential criteria as detailed in the job description and person specification, including examples of evidence.

The first selection stage will be a paper sift of your CV and Personal Statement. You will be assessed based on your demonstration of the essential criteria for this role.

Candidates who pass the paper sift will be invited to a telephone screening. This is an opportunity for our recruitment team to better understand your suitability to the role to which you're applying. Please note this is a sifting stage of your application and you will need to pass this stage before progressing to the next stage. You will be asked to demonstrate your core experience against the principle criteria of the role to which you're applying. Please note your communication skills will also be assessed. This will also be an opportunity for you to ask any questions about the role, DfE and the process.

#### **Stage 2 – Assessment and Development Centre**

Candidates that successfully pass the sift will be invited to attend a full-day Government Commercial Function assessment centre in London as part of the recruitment process. Full briefing materials and instructions will be provided.

In cases where there are a high number of applications the sift pass mark may be adjusted and candidates will be invited to Assessment and Development Centre in merit order, i.e. those scoring the highest.

Expenses incurred by candidates during the recruitment process will not be reimbursed by the Department except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance.



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## Stage 3 - Interview

Candidates that successfully pass the Assessment and Development Centre will be invited to interview. At interview, you will be assessed using various assessment techniques aligned to the Civil Service Success Profiles.

You will be assessed using the following Success Profile Behaviours:

- Communicating and Influencing
- Delivering at Pace

In addition, your technical skills will be assessed using elements of the Government Commercial Function People Standards:

- Business Acumen and Commercial Judgement – Level CL
- Leadership Skills and Capability – Level CL
- Strategy and Policy Development – Level CL
- Understanding Needs and Sourcing Options – Level CL
- Procurement Process – Level CL

See the [Government Commercial Function People Standards](#) for further information.

For more information on how to develop a CV and personal statement, please refer to the Candidate Pack attached.

Feedback will only be provided at interview stage.

### Sift/Interview dates and location:

**Sift scheduled:** end March

**Assessment and Development Centre scheduled:** Throughout April

**Interviews scheduled:** April / May

**Interview Location:** Manchester, Sheffield, Darlington and Coventry

Whilst we will endeavour to meet the dates set out in the advert there may be occasions when these dates will change. Those candidates invited to assessment will be provided with sufficient notice of confirmed dates.

### Apply and further information:

#### Contact point for applicants

For further information on this vacancy please email: [dfepenna.com](mailto:dfepenna.com) or call 0800 049 6798

#### Further information

For more information regarding our roles, please visit our website at [www.makingcommercialmatter.co.uk](http://www.makingcommercialmatter.co.uk)

A reserve list may be held for a period of 12 months from which further appointments can be made.



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Applicants who are successful at interview will be, as part of pre-employment screening subject to a check on the Internal Fraud Database (IFD). This check will provide information about employees who have been dismissed for fraud or dishonesty offences. This check also applies to employees who resign or otherwise leave before being dismissed for fraud or dishonesty had their employment continued. Any applicant's details held on the IFD will be refused employment.

Terms and conditions of candidates transferring from ALBs and NDPBs;

1. Bodies that are not accredited by the Civil Service Commission and are not able to advertise on Civil Service jobs will be treated as external new starters and will come into DfE on modernised terms and conditions with a salary at the band minimum.
2. Bodies that are accredited by the Civil Service Commission but do not have civil service status will be offered modernised terms and will not have continuous service recognised for leave or sickness benefits. Salaries will be offered at band minima, but there is some flexibility where this would cause a detriment to the individual.
3. Bodies that are accredited by the Civil Service Commission and do have Civil Service status will be treated as OGD transfers. Staff appointed on lateral transfer will move on to pre-modernised DfE terms and staff appointed on promotion will move on to modernised DfE terms. Salaries will transfer over, but be capped at the DfE band maximum.

### Reasonable adjustment

If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes.

If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, you should:

- Contact Government Recruitment Service via [dferecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:dferecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk) soon as possible before the closing date to discuss your needs
- Complete the "Assistance required" section in the "Additional requirements" page of your application form to tell us what changes or help you might need further on in the recruitment process. For instance, you may need wheelchair access at interview, or if you're deaf, a Language Service Professional

DfE currently offer both a Salary Sacrifice and an enhanced "Salary Plus" childcare voucher scheme to support employees with childcare costs. "Salary Plus" will be open to employees who join DfE prior to 2 May 2018, but will close to new entrants who haven't made an application to the scheme by this date. Salary sacrifice will be open to staff until October 2018. Any move across the Civil Service on or after October 2018 may have implications on an employee's ability to carry on claiming childcare vouchers.

The Department for Education's recruitment processes are underpinned by the Civil Service Commissioner's Recruitment Principles, which outlines that selection for appointment is made on merit based on fair and open competition. If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the values in the Civil Service Code and/or if you feel the recruitment has been conducted in such a way that conflicts with the Civil Service Commissioner's Recruitment Principles, you may make a complaint, by contacting the Central Recruitment Team at the following address [CentralRecruitment.Operations@education.gov.uk](mailto:CentralRecruitment.Operations@education.gov.uk) If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint you have the right to complain to the Civil Service Commissioners.

Department for Education do not cover the cost of travel to your interview/assessment unless otherwise stated.

For more information regarding our roles, please visit our website at [www.makingcommercialmatter.co.uk](http://www.makingcommercialmatter.co.uk)



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