



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

SPICe

The Information Centre
An t-Ionad Fiosrachaidh

Delivering for Excellence

Senior Researcher, Financial Scrutiny Unit, SPICe (Scottish Parliament Information Centre)

The Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) supports the scrutiny and legislative functions of the Parliament by providing impartial, accurate and timely information and briefings to Members of the Scottish Parliament, their staff, and Parliamentary staff. It comprises a research and information service. SPICe forms part of the Research, Communications and Public Engagement Group and is led by three joint office heads.

You will work within the Financial Scrutiny Unit (a team of seven including this post), and will be involved in answering enquiries on public finance, economics and/or local government issues. You will prepare committee briefings and analysis to help MSPs scrutinise the spending and tax plans of the Scottish Government.

Your work will be driven by the demands of the Parliament and will include supporting other FSU and SPICe staff. For example, this may include the analysis of tax proposals, briefing on the operation of the fiscal framework, analysing local government finance data, or estimating the costs of policy announcements and alternative spending proposals.

You will have detailed subject knowledge and considerable experience working in analysis, research or policy development in an area relevant to the FSU's remit. You will also have a degree in a relevant subject or equivalent experience.

You will be able to communicate complex issues with brevity, accuracy and impartiality, both orally and in writing, to tight deadlines.

The Scottish Parliament is a values-led organisation which means our values (Stewardship, Excellence, Inclusiveness, and Respect) are at the centre of everything we do. These values are embedded in this role and you will be expected to actively demonstrate the standards and behaviours set out below in the Main Duties and Key Requirements.

Main Duties and Key Requirements

Stewardship: Focusing on the longer term to ensure we are leaving things better than we found them and putting our shared interests ahead of any individual or team.

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Contributing to the continuous improvement of the research and information services that SPICe provides to Members, parliamentary committees and to the staff of the Parliament.
- Using your research skills, working to help the Parliament achieve its corporate objectives, including improving the quality and effectiveness of scrutiny.

And in delivering these you will have:

- A thorough understanding of current political issues and of the role of SPICe and the FSU.
- Understanding of the opportunities and challenges involved in keeping Members and committees well informed on matters relevant to the governance of Scotland.
- The ability to operate in a fluid political environment to deliver impartial and impactful research to MSPs, Committees and parliamentary officials.
- A commitment to producing high quality research and analysis.

Excellence: Taking care to enhance our reputation in everything we do. Using our skills and resources efficiently and effectively to deliver high-quality sustainable results.

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Delivering high quality analysis in the range of subject areas covered by the FSU (public finance, economics or local government) in response to requests from committees, or individual MSPs and their staff.
- Providing high quality briefing material, in both detailed briefings and blog articles, in anticipation of parliamentary business.
- Working in situations where there is incomplete information and an innovative and robust approach is required.
- Further developing your own knowledge and skills to better provide research and analytical support in relevant subject areas.

And in delivering these you will have:

- Detailed knowledge of at least one aspect of the FSU's remit (public finance, economics or local government).
- The ability to communicate complex issues with brevity, accuracy and impartiality, including the ability to produce comprehensive and clearly written briefings in an accessible format.
- The ability to work under pressure and on your own initiative to tight deadlines.

Respect: Appreciating difference, building cohesive teams and fostering the values and experiences of diversity.

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Establishing effective relationships to enable you to work closely with colleagues to deliver high quality services.
- Role modelling the values of the Parliamentary Service and contributing to an inclusive working environment.
- Coaching and mentoring academic fellows and student placements as required, to reach their potential and contribute to the work of SPICe and the Parliament.

And in delivering these you will have:

- Well-developed interpersonal skills and the ability to build relationships with colleagues at all levels through open communication and constructive feedback.
- A commitment to equality, diversity and tackling exclusion including showing respect for colleagues' expertise, skills, experience and knowledge and valuing their strengths and contribution to the work of the Parliament.
- An understanding of the needs of the end-user when developing and delivering services.

Inclusiveness: Understanding the big picture and seeking out alternative perspectives. Every colleague feels they can make a valued contribution and deliver their best work.

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Developing and maintaining a wide range of contacts within the external analytical and policy community and with information providers.
- Representing the Parliament at external events and networks to increase the visibility and profile of SPICe and our work.
- Positively contributing to and participating in organisation-wide projects and initiatives.

And in delivering these you will have:

- A track record of working collaboratively with others, and a willingness to share knowledge and information to improve SPICe services.
- The ability to develop and enhance strong internal and external relationships, with our client groups, academia and others.
- A proactive and flexible approach to work including the ability to work effectively in a team and on your own initiative.

Getting in touch

If you would like to have an informal discussion about the role please contact Allan Campbell, Head of the Financial Scrutiny Unit, on (0131) 348 5459 or email allan.campbell@parliament.scot

For any queries on the recruitment process, please contact Vicky McSherry, HR Manager, on (0131) 348 5350 or email vicky.mcsherry@parliament.scot

Terms and conditions of employment

Salary

The minimum starting salary for this post is per annum, paid monthly by bank credit transfer. You'll progress at the rate of one scale point per year on the anniversary of taking up the appointment grade. The salary range for this post is shown below:

Year	Salary
Minimum	£44,107
Year 1	£46,275
Year 2	£49,222
Year 3	£54,260

Hours

The way the Parliament works means that you may work varying hours and patterns. You may have to work longer hours when Parliament is sitting and reduced hours during recess periods. For this reason, we have very progressive flexible working hours (FWH) arrangements. You'll be required to work within these arrangements.

Considering your individual working pattern, you'll be contracted to work 1623.6 hours per year. This is the equivalent to a 37-hour week, excluding breaks. If you work on a part-time basis, you'll be required to work the number of hours specified in your appointment letter.

Annual Leave

Your annual leave allowance will be 30 days. Our annual leave year runs from 1 September to 31 August. If you take up your appointment during the course of the leave year, your annual leave allowance will be proportional.

In addition, you'll also receive 11.5 days public and privilege holidays. They are normally taken at fixed times of the year. If you are required to work on a public or privilege holiday overtime arrangements will apply.

If you work on a part-time basis, your annual leave and public and privilege holiday entitlement is pro-rated.

As with working hours, there may be restrictions on annual leave when Parliament is sitting.

Benefits

We offer excellent benefits including:

- opportunities for flexible working during your working week
- option to join the Civil Service pension arrangement
- comprehensive development programmes and
- access to a range of health and wellbeing initiatives including access to confidential counselling and information services, cycle to work scheme, an onsite gym facility and corporate gym membership at discount rates.

Full details can be found [here](#).

Pension

Unless staff choose otherwise we offer the opportunity to join the Civil Service pension arrangements. We'll make employer contributions towards the Civil Service pension. More information can be found on the [Civil Service Pensions website](#).

Age

The SPCB does not operate a retirement age policy. This means that there is no upper age limit beyond which you would be automatically retired. You're free to continue in employment for as long as you wish subject to the normal rules concerning Performance, Attendance and Conduct.

Travel and other expenses

We pay travelling and other expenses if you incur them whilst on official duty. We will not reimburse the cost of normal daily travel between home and office.

Unless we have stated otherwise in the advert, we do not reimburse travel or other expenses you incur in attending an interview or assessment with us. We are happy to explore alternative arrangements if this causes you difficulty.

Probation

You will be on probation for 6 months. Confirmation of your appointment is dependent on the satisfactory completion of this probation period, taking into account your job performance, conduct and attendance.

Outside and Political Activities

As an employee of the SPCB, you may not take part in any activity that would in any way conflict with the interests of the Parliament or be inconsistent with your duties and responsibilities.

You may not take part in national political activities. You may seek permission to take part in local political activities. If permission is granted, it will be subject to the observance of general rules relating to possible conflicts between your official responsibilities and your political activities.

Health and Safety

The SPCB is committed to promoting health and safety as a priority issue. Its aim is to take appropriate and reasonable steps to ensure that it conducts its business in such a way that employees and other people who may be affected by its work are not exposed to risks to their health and safety.

General Data Protection Regulation

For further details on how we will process your personal data please refer to the [HR Workers Privacy Notice](#) and [SPCB Recruitment Privacy Notice](#).

Suggestions

We want all applicants to feel that they have been treated fairly, even if they are not appointed. If you have any comments or suggestions about the way in which this recruitment campaign has been handled, we would really like to hear from you.

Referees

Please do not send references or testimonials with your form. If you are successful, we will approach previous and/or current employers for a reference. We can only make a formal offer of employment once we have received these references.

Health Assessment and Security Clearance

If you're successful at interview, you'll be asked to complete a health assessment form. If necessary, we may ask you to attend a medical assessment, carried out by our occupational health supplier. The reason why we carry out a health assessment is to make sure that the job you have applied for is suitable for you. It's also to find out if we need to carry out any adjustments to help you do your job.

Security clearance is required for this post. If you are successful we will ask you to complete a security questionnaire. The form will explain our security vetting policy. We can only make a formal offer of employment once the security clearance process is complete.

Visa and Work Permits

You must check whether there are any restrictions on your stay or your freedom to take or change employment in the United Kingdom before you apply for a post. If you are successful at interview, we will make a complete enquiry into your eligibility to work in the United Kingdom.

There are no nationality restrictions on who the SPCB employs.

Please note that this document is provided for information only and does not form part of the SPCB's terms and conditions of employment. Go to our [employee handbook](#) for full details of our terms and conditions of employment.