

1. How does the OBR assess candidates at application stage against the knowledge, technical skills and experiences required for OBR jobs?

The OBR, and the wider Civil Service, uses Success Profiles to assess which candidate is the best for the job and to attract and retain talented people with diverse experience from a range of sectors and all walks of life. The OBR uses a blended approach, which means that candidates may be assessed against more than one element of the Success Profile Framework.

During the application process, you will be asked to provide a 250-word statement against the first criterion which will be a specific behaviour or technical skill. This will be used as an initial shortlisting stage by the panel if large volumes of applications are received. The first criterion is designed to assess your potential to succeed in the role.

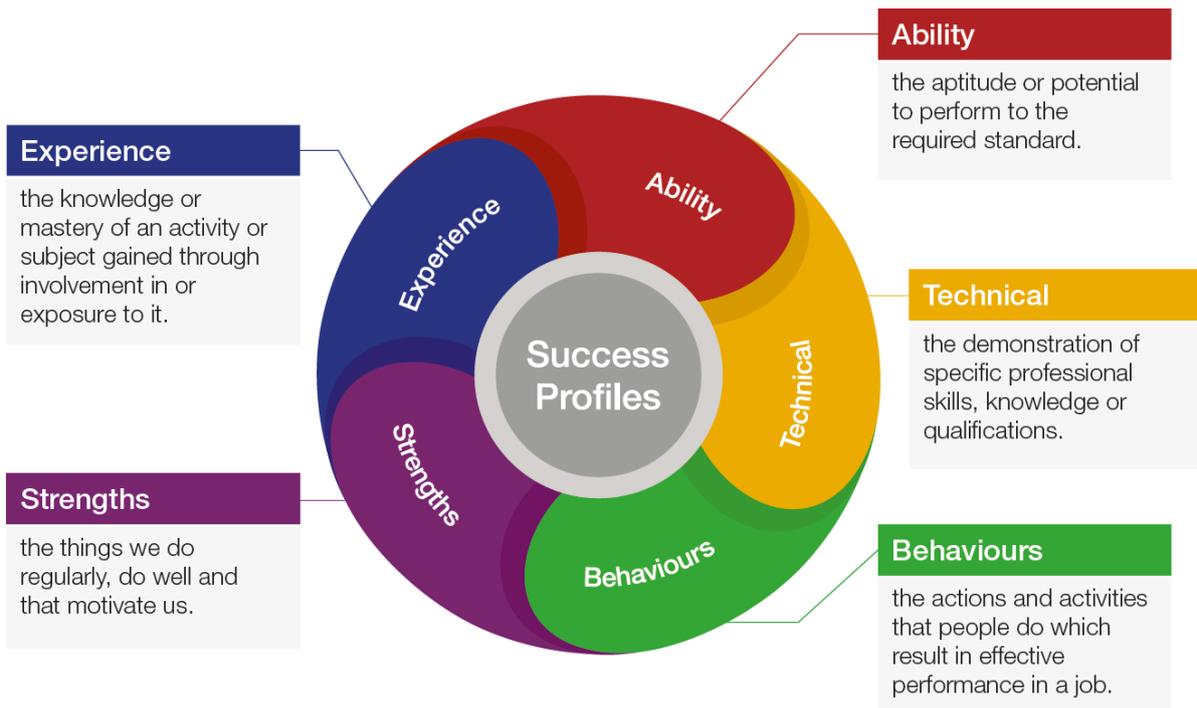
You will also be asked to provide a personal statement against the technical skills, behaviours and experience outlined in the role profile. You should write 250 words per each criterion outlined in this section.

- Use the Success Profiles [Behaviours](#) to think about occasions when you have previously demonstrated the behaviour described, and make sure your example explains how you meet the assessment requirements set out for each behaviour.
- [Technical](#) elements of the role will directly link to the professional skills, knowledge or qualifications required by the role itself. In your application, you should demonstrate that you have the required skills by giving an example of a time you have used these technical skills, for example during your studies or previous work experience.
- [Experience](#) criteria will assess your mastery of a certain activity or subject gained through involvement or exposure to it. You should use this as an opportunity to highlight how you meet the essential criteria within the job description and provide an example of how you have demonstrated the skills to tackle similar tasks.

The OBR operates a blind recruitment process, which means that only your application answers are used to assess you for the role. It's important therefore that your written answers are comprehensive and include as much context as possible. We will ask you for your Employment History, but you will not be assessed on this, and as a result we would encourage you to keep it brief and not spend too much time on it. In particular there's no need to use this section to further demonstrate how you meet the technical skills and behaviours, which will only be judged via your 250-word answers. It's therefore much more important to put your effort into those bits of the application, not your employment history. You must not include any personal information within this section otherwise you risk your application being withdrawn.

The OBR always provides the Hiring Manager's contact details in the job description and we encourage you to contact them if you have questions about the role.

Candidate Frequently Asked Questions



2. How should I structure my 250-word statements?

Using the STAR approach helps you to set the scene, show what and how you did, and the overall outcome:

- **Situation** – Describe the situation you found yourself in and what happened.
- **Task** – The Hiring Manager will want to understand what you tried to achieve from the situation that you found yourself in.
- **Action** – What actions did you take and how did you do it. Make sure to use “I”, not “we” to explain how your actions lead to a result.
- **Result** – Use facts and statistics to demonstrate the results that your actions produced. Explain whether it was a successful outcome, and if not, what you learned from the experience.

Top tips

- Ensure that you tailor your behaviour examples to the criteria set out beside the behaviour in the job description.
- Choose powerful examples where you have dealt with a demanding situation or made a significant impact.
- Focus on the “action” section of your written answer. Remember to convey why your action was important and what would have happened had you not taken a particular action to ensure your answer is action-oriented, rather than descriptive.
- Choose examples which best provides evidence of you demonstrating the specific behaviour or criteria being assessed. This will be outlined in the job advert.
- Focus on the “how” and why you took that action/approach throughout your statement.
- Let the Hiring Manager know how you were involved and got the results required.
- Use “I” not “we” throughout your application statements and articulate the exact role you played or impact you had.
- Use active voice and verbs when writing your application answers.

- Don't assume that the sift panel know the situation or context, and make sure the result(s) are clearly stated in your example.
- Write your application well. Your job application displays your written communication skills, so make sure to proof-read your application before submitting.
- Try to keep all your examples in the same style of writing (e.g. tense and language) and although it might go without saying, don't let anyone else write any of your examples for you!

Behaviour written statement example (changing and improving)

Situation: In my previous role as Digital Marketing Assistant, the CEO wanted to see an increase in the number of subscriptions to the company's monthly newsletter, which was performing worse than she wanted.

Task: I was tasked with reviewing how to improve the number of subscriptions, to improve company sales as a result.

Action: I emailed current subscribers and consulted with them to understand if they found the current newsletter useful, and to identify suggestions for improvement. I then organised a meeting with key stakeholders to lead the review of the newsletter, using feedback from current subscribers. I led discussions and agreed a list of priorities for revamping the newsletter which would have the most impact, and which would result in the most subscribers, including implementing an online social media marketing campaign and offering reward incentives for our current subscribers to recommend the newsletters to family and friends. I kept the CEO up to date at each stage of the process, and informed her of upcoming deadlines, so that she was aware that the project was on track.

Result: Following the referral and social media marketing campaign, the company saw a 33% increase in newsletter subscriptions in the first month. After 3 months, referrals became the company's top source of newsletter subscriptions, and resulted in a 20% increase in sales for the organisation. The CEO personally thanked me and recognised my success at project managing the review of the newsletter, but also for improving it.

3. How will I be assessed in my interview at the OBR?

Generally, your interview at the OBR will last between 45-60 minutes. Sometimes it may be shorter, and sometimes it may be longer. This is our opportunity to get to know how your skills, behaviours and experiences align with the skills required to do the job well.

As mentioned before, the OBR operates a blended approach to its assessment criteria. The job description will include which criteria you'll be assessed against at the interview. At the interview, you may be asked to give a short presentation. You will be told the topic in advance and you may be able to use slides. In the presentation, you should demonstrate your knowledge of the topic as well as your presentation skills.

Top tips

- Re-read your application form and the job description to understand your interview assessment criteria.
- Review behaviour definitions and prepare examples for each behaviour, matching your skills to the job requirements.

Candidate Frequently Asked Questions

- Practice! Video yourself responding to questions and/or delivering a presentation. Play it back or practice with someone else who you trust and ask for feedback.
- Stay positive, calm and get some sleep the night before.
- Prepare questions to ask the interview panel.
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand the question.
- Use examples when responding to strengths-based questions.
- If you have a presentation, make sure you stay inside the time limit.

4. Can I get feedback on my application and interview?

The OBR advertises all its jobs on Civil Service Jobs. The OBR uses a standardised scoring system for all its recruitment. Behaviours, technical and experience criteria are assessed on a 1-7 basis.

At application stage, we will release your scores to you, which you can access through your candidate portal on Civil Service Jobs. Unfortunately, due to the large volumes of applications which we receive for each role at the OBR, we are unable to provide more detailed feedback at application stage. However, if you attend an interview, we will release scores and provide written feedback to you through your candidate portal on Civil Service Jobs.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Demonstrated	Minimal Demonstration	Moderate Demonstration	Acceptable Demonstration	Good Demonstration	Strong Demonstration	Outstanding Demonstration
No positive evidence and/or substantial negative evidence demonstrated	Limited positive evidence and/or mainly negative evidence demonstrated	Moderate positive evidence but some negative evidence demonstrated	Adequate positive evidence and any negative evidence would not cause concern	Substantial positive evidence of the behaviour	Substantial positive evidence; includes some evidence of exceeding expectations at this level	The evidence provided wholly exceeds expectation at this level

We will always keep you updated at every stage of the recruitment process through your candidate portal on Civil Service Jobs. If you have any questions on the application process, please email HRRecruitment@HMTreasury.gov.uk

5. How can I request a reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process?

The application form will ask if you require any reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process. If you state that you do require reasonable adjustments, you will be asked to provide the reason for requiring the adjustment; adjustments that may help you, and any adjustments that you've previously been provided. This information is for the recruitment team's use only and is not used to inform any recruitment decisions.

If you are invited to interview, you will be asked again if you require any reasonable adjustments. These may be the same as for the application process, but they may differ. These will be passed onto the interview panel, if required. Any reasonable adjustments do not form part of the decision-making process. Some conditions may mean that some parts of the interview are less manageable so please feel able to raise any questions on this with the recruitment team via the email below.

If you have any questions about reasonable adjustments, please email HRRecruitment@HMTreasury.gov.uk or the Hiring Manager's email on the job description.