

Personal Assistant to  
Programme Directors  
Application Pack 2019  
(PA1906)



## Welcome from the Director

I am very pleased that you are interested in applying for the position of Personal Assistant at the Institute for Government. The Institute was established in 2009 with the aim of making government more effective and improving the way it makes decisions. Our aim is to be a catalyst for improvements in government – we don't just conduct research but work closely with people in Westminster and Whitehall to fulfil our mission.

We offer you the opportunity to be a part of an organisation which is making an impact in the world of government and politics and to work in a stimulating and challenging environment. We are based close to Whitehall and Westminster and offer excellent working conditions.

We are keen to provide opportunities for our staff to learn and develop. As well as working with colleagues from a wide range of backgrounds and experience, we offer opportunities to enhance skills through a mix of internal and external training courses and informal skill sharing sessions.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bronwen Maddox". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

**Bronwen Maddox**  
Director, Institute for Government

# Personal Assistant at the Institute for Government

This is a busy and varied role primarily focused on providing support to the Institute's seven Programme Directors/Senior Fellows who lead our research projects. Your workload will vary from day to day and according to the requirements of different Programme Directors but will include diary management and managing communications with senior stakeholders, including senior politicians, civil servants and business people.

You will need to be able to juggle priorities, keeping a number of tasks going simultaneously and completing them in a timely fashion. The right candidate will be capable of taking the initiative when appropriate and will develop an understanding of our research projects, including the involvement of the various stakeholders.

Reporting to the Director of Finance and Resources, this role will also be responsible for the Institute's recruitment process, including liaising with line managers, creating application packs, advertising, coordinating diaries for interviews, and facilitating candidates. Additionally, this role will take ownership of the main phone line to answer and directing external phone calls to staff.

These are interesting times. This role offers the opportunity to make a contribution to the Institute's mission of making government more effective. The key requirements are accuracy, reliability and good-natured flexibility.

## Job description

### First point of contact for Programme Directors

- To act as an initial point of contact for Programme Directors in their absence, assessing priorities and re-directing calls, enquiries and requests as necessary.

### Personal Assistance to Programme Directors

- To ensure efficient and effective use of Programme Directors' time:
  - manage the diaries and appointments of the Programme Directors
  - organise domestic travel and co-ordinate accommodation upon request
  - prepare and/or draft correspondence for Programme Directors for their approval
  - carry out a range of administrative tasks, including photocopying, filing, and compiling papers for meetings.
- To work co-operatively and collaboratively with colleagues in the Research, Communications, Events and Operations teams.

### Support for meetings

- To support the organisation of high level external meetings, both 1:1 and larger groups:
  - arrange invitations and monitor responses
  - book venues, arrange accommodation, prepare papers and take minutes as required.
- To make arrangements for and prepare agendas for internal meetings, liaising with other staff.

### Recruitment

- To help draft and publish recruitment advertisements.
- To coordinate the recruitment process from start to end, monitoring applications, responding to applicants, arranging interviews, facilitating candidates as necessary.

## Person specification

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience of providing administrative assistance in an office environment preferably within a senior management team</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience of diary management and scheduling</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience of taking and writing minutes, summarising discussions and writing reports</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience of using Microsoft Office packages, particularly Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and Sharepoint</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to work on own initiative with minimal supervision</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An organised and thorough approach to work</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to see projects through from start to finish, managing time and tasks effectively</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to manage at times conflicting priorities as well as tracking progress on a wide range of tasks</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excellent interpersonal skills</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, and excellent telephone manner</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excellent writing skills with the ability to draft grammatical correspondence appropriate in style to the context and the recipient, using the correct forms of address</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A willingness to undertake varied responsibilities working alone or as part of a team and a team player approach to all the activities of the Institute</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A flexible approach to working and an interest in the aims of the Institute for Government</li></ul>

# About the Institute for Government

## Who we are:

The Institute for Government is the UK's leading independent think tank promoting more effective government. We work with all the main political parties at Westminster and with senior civil servants in Whitehall, providing fresh thinking through research, events and leadership development.

## Our mission is:

To help to improve the effectiveness of government in the UK.

## Why is that important?

Good government is one of the most important factors driving the UK's social and economic performance and the health of democracy. But while Whitehall ranks among the world's best administrations, the sheer scale of today's political challenges demands ever more capable leadership from government, and challenges public trust in institutions. The Institute's role is to inform and support the process of improvement, working at the highest levels of politics and the civil service to improve capacity and provide evidence-based advice that draws on best practice from across the globe.

## What we do:

We focus equally on the needs of all political parties and of senior decision makers across Whitehall. We stimulate change by challenging current thinking and providing new ideas and models for shaping and developing better government.

## How we do that:

- We undertake high quality qualitative and quantitative research, focused on the mechanics and processes of government, producing practical recommendations for change.
- We provide tailored development opportunities for senior decision makers and their teams.
- We offer consultancy and advice to departments and political parties, leading and shaping opinion on improving performance and effectiveness.
- We organise and host regular high-level events addressing different aspects of government in the UK and internationally.
- Our headquarters are also a meeting place where senior officials from across Whitehall can discuss the challenges of making government work and access practical insights from public servants, academics and opinion formers from across the world.

## Our core values:

We seek in all our activities to be:

- **Innovative:** we will push at the boundaries of current knowledge, exploring and experimenting with diverse approaches to find the best solution.
- **Rigorous:** we will be thorough and precise in our methods and aspire to produce the highest quality data and services.
- **Impartial:** we will be neutral and politically non-aligned.
- **Trusted:** we will earn the confidence of all those we work with, being open and challenging as well as a trusted guardian of knowledge.

## Our work programme:

Our work programme is structured around the following themes:

- The role of ministers and civil servants
- Parliament – the political and constitutional context
- Brexit – the UK’s future relationship with the European Union
- Public finances – the management of public spending and tax
- Outsourcing and procurement – what has worked and what hasn’t
- Public Services – performance and transformation
- Devolution – assessing the performance of the devolved administrations, evaluating different approaches taken across the country and developing recommendations for what and how responsibilities can be devolved effectively
- Policy making and delivery
- Digital – the impact of digital and AI on the civil service
- Professional development – for senior government decision-makers

## Publications:

Examples of recent Institute publications include:

- [Negotiating Brexit: preparing for talks on the UK’s future relationship with the EU](#)
- [How academia can work with government](#)
- [Whitehall Monitor 2019](#)
- [Moving On: the cost of high turnover in the civil service](#)
- [Government procurement: the scale and nature of contracting in the UK](#)

Further information about our work can be found [on the IfG website](#).

# Information for applicants

<b>Employer:</b>	Institute for Government
<b>Location:</b>	2 Carlton Gardens, SW1Y 5AA
<b>Who can apply:</b>	<p>Applicants who can demonstrate they have the relevant skills and experience as set out in this pack and the person specification.</p> <p>Applicants must be able to and be entitled to work in the UK.</p>
<b>Key dates:</b>	<p>Expected key dates are:</p> <p><b>Closing date:</b> 10am Wednesday 15 May 2019.</p> <p><b>Interviews:</b> 28 and 29 May 2019</p> <p>Shortlisted applicants will be contacted as soon as possible. Please let us know if you have any specific requirements so we can make any necessary reasonable adjustments in advance.</p>
<b>Start dates:</b>	The start date will be as soon as notice periods allow for.
<b>Terms:</b>	Successful candidates will join on a permanent contract subject to a three-month probationary period.
<b>Salary:</b>	The salary will be £28,000 - £32,000 depending on experience.
<b>Benefits:</b>	<p>The Institute has a pension scheme which you will be auto-enrolled into in your third month of employment. The contribution is a minimum of 5% from the employee and a fixed 10% contribution from the employer.</p> <p>Death in service life assurance of 4 x salary is given to all staff.</p>
<b>Working hours:</b>	You will normally work a five-day week of 37.5 hours (9:00 – 17:30 with a one-hour lunch break) but you will, as the occasion requires, work outside these hours.
<b>Annual leave:</b>	For a full-time post your annual leave allowance will be 30 days in addition to eight days of bank and public holiday. Annual leave and public holidays will be pro-rated for non-full-time posts. The Institute's leave year runs from September to August.
<b>Equal opportunities:</b>	<p>All job applicants and employees will receive equal treatment.</p> <p>The Institute for Government collects equal opportunities monitoring information with applications. This information is anonymised and is not given to those involved in the recruitment process. It is used only for monitoring purposes and to help us better understand how we, as an employer, can ensure equality of opportunity for all.</p>
<b>Privacy policy:</b>	<p>When you apply for a job with the Institute, we collect and process information (personal data) about you according to data protection law. For full details of our privacy policy please visit:</p> <p><a href="http://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/recruitment-privacy-policy">www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/recruitment-privacy-policy</a></p>

# How to apply

## Stage One

The Institute uses an anonymised online application process for the first stage of its recruitment. To apply, follow this link:

<https://app.beapplied.com/apply/qlszyj0fby>

The online stage of our application process has three parts:

- **About you:** Here we ask you for some personal details. This information will only become visible to the Institute if you are shortlisted. All applications are assessed blind by multiple reviewers.
- **Multiple choice test:** Here we ask you to complete a multiple-choice test, which is formed of 6 basic arithmetic questions. You will have 10 minutes to complete the test. Once you start the test a timer will count down in the top right corner of the screen. Please ensure you have a calculator to hand.
- **Short answer questions:** Here we ask you to provide answers to how you would deal with five scenarios you might encounter in your work. Each section has a 250-word limit. There is no time limit.
- **Statement: Here we ask you to provide a statement about:**
  - Your motivation for applying to the Institute
  - Why you believe yourself to be a suitable candidate

Again, there is a 250-word limit.

Once you have completed all of these questions you will see a page with your answers and have the opportunity to amend these before finally submitting your application.

## Stage Two

Interviews will take place on Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 May.

## Equal Opportunities

We believe in equal opportunity for all and welcome applications from sections of the community that are currently under-represented at the Institute for Government, including disabled, black and minority ethnic candidates. Our process is anonymised up to and including the point of deciding who to invite for interview in order to eliminate as much bias as possible.

## Contacts

If you have a disability that might affect your ability to complete the timed multiple choice test, then please contact us at: [recruitment@instituteforgovernment.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@instituteforgovernment.org.uk). We will arrange for a member of staff to get in touch.

If we invite you to progress to the next stage of the process and you are unable to meet the requirements of the timetable set out above, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate you.

**Further information about the Institute for Government:** [www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk](http://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk)

We send out a weekly newsletter with a summary of current publications and research. We also send out regular emails about our current research, publications, commentary, news and forthcoming events (including research forums). To receive these emails, please visit

[www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/newsletter](http://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/newsletter)