



Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

Head of External Communications

Reference: 369730

Closing Date: 03 November 2024

Location: Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Swansea

Salary: £51,997

External recruits will almost always be brought in on the minimum salary scale. Cross civil service transfers and promotions are subject to separate provisions.



Helping you **stay safe** on **Britain's roads**

DVSA - who we are

Great Britain's roads are among the safest in the world.

At the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), we play a vital role helping millions of people stay safe on our roads – our vision is safer drivers, safer vehicles and safer journeys for all.

What we do

We help millions of people every year. We make sure learners are safe to drive, by approving driving instructors and conducting driving and theory tests. We help people keep their vehicle safe to drive by approving MOT testers and inspecting vehicles. And our teams help protect the public from unsafe vehicles and drivers through roadside enforcement activities.



1.9 million
driving tests each year



38.5 million
MOT certificates issued each year



2 million
theory tests each year



31,958
defective vehicles discovered each year

Why join DVSA?

This is an exciting opportunity to join the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), and help us to help everyone stay safe on Britain's roads for a life time of driving.

Our teams play a central role in helping people stay safe on Britain's roads.

We help put customers at the heart of everything DVSA does. And we protect and enhance DVSA's reputation and relationships – making it easier for people to do business with us and for us to achieve our front-line outcomes.

Across the range of roles we have you could be working with people who:

- Promote our work and our contribution to road safety through effective internal and external communications that changes attitudes and behaviours
- Use our insight and expertise to guide and support effective engagement with our staff, customers, and stakeholders
- Plan and manage ministerial and Parliamentary requirements and engagement

Or you could be working on our new plan to help ensure our customers:

- Do the right thing for themselves, first time round
- Are more likely to use or recommend our services
- Trust our information, guidance and advice
- Find it easier and quicker to engage, reducing the effort they have to make
- Recognise us as a modern, customer focused organisation

We'll invest in you and your talent and help you to bring the best of yourself to work.

Thank you for your interest in working with us.

Good luck with your application.



Adrian Long

Director of Corporate Affairs and Commercial

Working at DVSA

We offer a wide range of employee benefits, such as:

Personal development	Rewards	Great work/life balance
Access to in-role apprenticeships up to level 7	Employer pension contribution rate of up to 30.3%	Fast, modern IT kit and phones enabling seamless working from home and collaboration across the agency
Study leave	Tax free childcare scheme	Generous parental and carer schemes
3 paid volunteer days per year	25 days annual leave, increasing on a sliding scale up to 30 days. Plus 8 public holidays and one further day of paid privilege entitlement to mark the King's Birthday.	Flexible working, including part-time working and job share options
Individual Personal Development Plans	Special recognition awards	Free health checks including workplace adjustments
Minimum of 5 funded training days per year, plus 6-month development opportunities	Cycle to work scheme	Help and support with your home and work life, and wellbeing

You can find out more about working with us on the Department for Transport careers website: <https://careers.dft.gov.uk/our-dft-family/driver-vehicle-standards-agency/>

Diversity and equality

The Civil Service is committed to becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK.

At DVSA, you'll be part of an innovative organisation that invests in all our people, ensuring we have the diverse skills to deliver transport that moves Britain ahead now and into the future.

We welcome applications from every part of the community. We're particularly interested to hear from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic people, women, disabled people and those who identify as LGBT+. We believe everyone is involved in making DVSA an inclusive and great place to work.

The Civil Service strives to have diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all. There is a Disability Confident Scheme (DCS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the essential criteria.

For more information on Civil Service Recruitment Principles, see the [Civil Service Commission](#) website.

Why DVSA?

Our vision is to support and develop everyone who works for us. Our passion for diversity and equality helps us create a positive working culture for all employees, and we're friendly, welcoming, respectful and full of opportunities for professional and personal development.

As well as being a DCS employer, we are proud to be members of Business Disability Forum, The Prince's Responsible Business Network, ENEI and Employers for Carers.



About the job

The Head of External Communications is responsible for developing and delivering a consistent, effective and measurable external communications strategy and for overseeing DVSA external communications plans. This will ensure customers and stakeholders are informed about, understand and can engage with DVSA's strategic direction, policies and programmes, raising DVSA's profile.

You will do this by directly managing external communications activities that promote, enhance and protect DVSA's reputation, ensuring that all activities are aligned to DVSA strategic direction.

As a corporate senior leader (CSL) you will also work in collaboration with other leaders across DVSA to help shape the longer term aims of the business; developing the culture, mission, vision, values and behaviours.

Activities may include:

Strategy (30%)

- Develop, manage and implement a multi-channelled external communications strategy to support DVSA's strategic direction and align with DfT Communications Strategy.
- Create communications strategies and plans that will allow DVSA to enhance meaningful relationships with targeted, external audiences, media and key influencers, to favourably position DVSA.
- Ensure external communications objectives are clearly identified at the outset of all DVSA activities, that planned activities are monitored and the outcomes are evaluated.
- Oversee the development and implementation of new, innovative and effective ways of communicating to meet DVSA's strategic needs and to identify opportunities for expanding reach and influence.
- Ensure all external communication strategies are continually developed, monitored and updated to reflect customer segments and plan targeted customer interventions.

External Communications (45%)

- Lead the development and delivery of a highly effective, professional and creative external communications function, ensuring the preparation and implementation of an external communications strategy and plan for DVSA. Oversee the effective co-ordination, preparation and delivery of clear and timely messages to external stakeholders and audiences.
- Set standards for external communications across DVSA and ensure they are aligned to Government Communications Service requirements. Ensure external communications activity is monitored so that the service is continuously improved
- As subject matter expert, provide sound external communications advice to directors and corporate senior leaders on communications strategy, risks and opportunities
- Manage a team of strategic communications managers whose primary focus is on external communications
- Ensure all external communication campaigns are aligned to strategy and DVSA priorities and have a strong narrative, which is consistent with other communications campaigns and delivered in a timely manner
- Manage the introduction and development of new external communications channels which meet the needs of external customers
- Work with Head of Internal Communications and Engagement, Head of Publishing and Head of Campaigns and External Affairs to ensure consistency of communications, including tone of voice.
- Build effective and proactive working relationships with DfT and across Government, in order to drive efficient and high-quality delivery of communications, sharing best practice
- Lead or support larger external communication programmes and events; preparing, organising and co-ordinating multiple stakeholders and participants
- Raise awareness of government, DfT and DVSA digital agenda externally to promote use of digital media and online services for cost effective communications activities and to support channel shift
- Oversee the planning, approval and development of social media and digital communication tools and their evaluation. Oversee the development and implementation of DVSA's social media strategy

- Identify challenges and emerging issues faced by the organisation. Work with senior leadership team to recognise external communications opportunities and solutions, and define and execute appropriate strategies to support them
- Work closely with Head of Customer Insight and Experience, the External Affairs team and other CSLs to ensure external customer experience is tracked to enable DVSA to monitor, understand and improve customer experiences
- Establish and maintain a personal network which includes high level contacts within external stakeholder areas; including Traffic Commissioners, Transport for London, the trade associations, Government Communications Service, central government and DfT. Work with them to ensure ideas are shared and plans developed
- Seek out and pursue opportunities for networking across the sector to build relationships and raise DVSA's profile

Press and Media Management (25%)

- As subject matter expert, provide professional advice and guidance to directors and CSLs on press and media matters
- Oversee the effective delivery of a proactive and reactive press office, in line with DVSA, Departmental and Government requirements
- Ensure the provision of sound media handling advice to senior colleagues and the preparation of media handling plans/advice
- Prepare draft press releases and presentation and handling advice for ministerial briefings/submissions
- Work with teams across DVSA in providing media handling expertise for Freedom of Information requests and Parliamentary Questions
- Ensure the processes for collating information, data and intelligence post external meetings/events/press releases is channelled into the correct team and ensure subsequent actions are taken to address the impact upon DVSA's strategic direction and monitored appropriately
- Work with directors and CSLs to develop a clear, strong and targeted public presence for the organisation, managing DVSA's press and media profile across key sectors and stakeholders
- Assess the impact and effectiveness of communication. Review achievement of objectives and identify lessons learnt and share feedback

Management

- Executes management responsibilities effectively, working with, leading and acting as a role model for team members and colleagues, ensuring capabilities to achieve successful delivery of business performance whilst maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of the financial resources delegated in line with the Civil Service values

Leadership

- Demonstrates leadership by providing influence, direction and guidance to staff to support the delivery of objectives. Establishes a strong direction and a persuasive future vision; managing and engaging with honesty and integrity, and upholding the reputation of the Agency, Department and Civil Service.
- Works in collaboration with fellow CSLs across all functions for the good of DVSA and to create a high performing and well-respected agency

Internal and External Relationships

- Liaise with relevant internal departments to ensure that external customer needs are met and that these requirements are fully communicated throughout the business.
- Ensure good relations and communications with all members of the team and respond politely and in a timely fashion to internal and external customers
- Communicate with all major stakeholders (external) to achieve business objectives
- Work closely with the Head of Customer Insight and Experience and External Affairs team to manage key customers (existing and new), thereby improving DVSA key stakeholder relations
- Represent DVSA externally as requested/required as a subject matter expert (e.g., at networking events, conferences and exhibitions) to enhance and strengthen DVSA's profile
- Maintain an awareness of external factors (including government business initiatives and current and proposed legislation in relation to commercial activities) which impact the business. Communicate such information and any subsequent changes to the Chief Executive and Directors

Interested? Complete your application now at: www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk

Person specification

Please read this section carefully before applying. We will assess your application against the evidence you have provided within your CV and Personal Statement against the Job Description and Person Specification.

Essential skills and Essential experience

- An excellent understanding of external communications channels, techniques and approaches
- Experience of managing a press office in a complex and fast-moving environment
- An excellent communicator, with skills and experience of producing high level written and verbal communication products.
- Proven track record of formulating and implementing communications strategies and plans; delivering on key outputs. Able to translate big picture approaches to practical implementation plans.
- Excellent stakeholder engagement skills with the ability to create and maintain positive relationships and networks with a wide range of people.
- Proven experience of senior customer and supplier relationship management.

Qualifications:

If not already held, there will be a development opportunity for the successful applicant to work towards a professional qualification in communications (such as CIPR, PRCA or CIM). Applicants will be required to demonstrate a willingness to work towards the qualification.

Further Information:

This role can be based in [Birmingham](#), [Bristol](#), [Leeds](#), [Newcastle](#), [Nottingham](#) or [Swansea](#), your presence at one of these locations will form part of the working arrangements agreed with you. We operate a hybrid working model giving you greater flexibility about where and when you work. Our expectation is that you will spend a minimum 60% of your time at your base location. Visits to other DVSA sites or work locations count towards this.

This vacancy will require the successful applicant to travel to other DVSA sites on occasions, including overnight stays.

Whilst we welcome applications from those looking to work with us on a part time basis, there is a business requirement, for the successful candidate to be able to work at least 32 hours per week.

Please take note that DVSA does not hold a UK Visa & Immigration (UKVI) Skilled Worker Licence sponsor and are unable to sponsor any individuals for Skilled Worker Sponsorship.

Success profiles

We assess candidates using specified [Success Profiles](#).

You will be expected to demonstrate the following [Civil Service Behaviours](#) during the selection process.

- Communicating and Influencing
- Delivering at Pace
- Seeing the Big Picture
- Working Together

We'll assess you against these technical skills during the selection process:

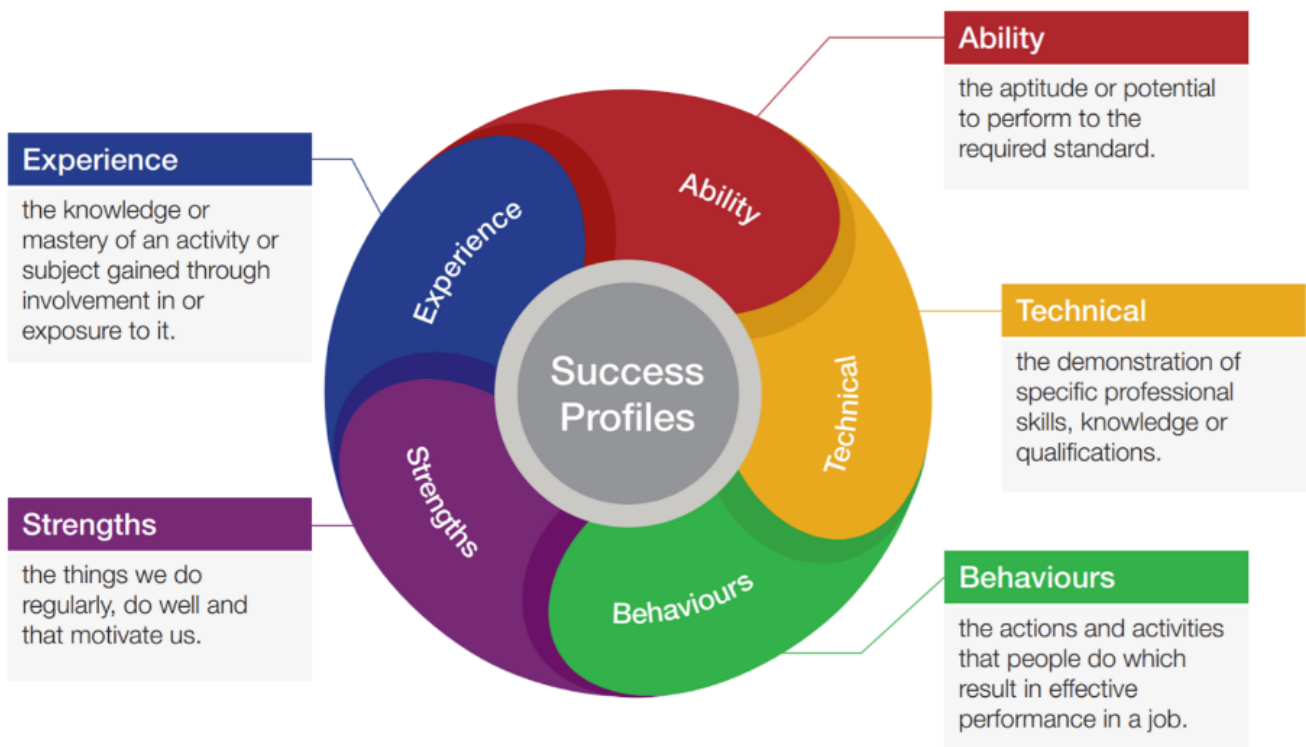
[Government Communication Service \(GCS\) Competency Framework](#): Grade 7/6s - Competency 2: Ideas. Communication disciplines - Press and media.

Success profiles

Here at The DVSA we use Success Profiles to assess applications and throughout our entire interview selection process.

Success Profiles were introduced to help attract and retain individuals from a wide range of professions to ensure a diverse and skilled workforce, in line with The Civil Service mission in becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK.

What are the elements of the Success Profile?



For further details please see [Success Profiles: Civil Service behaviours](#)

The application process: what to expect

Application

You need to submit your application via the Civil Service Jobs website - www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk, you'll need to complete:

- A CV setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements
- A personal statement (1,000 words) utilising the word count given, demonstrating your experience and suitability for the role.

Should you encounter any issues with your online application or if you have issues with the online jobs portal, please contact us (details on final page) within 48 hours.

Shortlisting

We will assess your application against the evidence you have provided within your CV and Personal statement against the Job Description and Person Specification.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome.

Interview and assessment

Interview

You will be invited to attend a panel interview to discuss of your previous experience and professional competence.

We've designed the selection process specifically for this role.

Full details of the assessment process will be made available to shortlisted candidates.

Timeline: Key dates and indicative timeline

Please note that these dates could be subject to change.

Closing date: 03 November 2024

Shortlisting: 05 November 2024

Interviews: week commencing 25 November 2024

Offer: Regardless of the outcome, we will notify all candidates as soon as possible.

Reserve List: A merit list may be created after interviews. If you are successful at interview, you will be placed on the merit list for up to 12 months.



Find out more about working with us

If you want to learn more about what we do, our culture, and what it's like working with us, please see below.

To apply for this role, and to see other vacancies at DVSA, visit Civil Service Jobs:
www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk

Find out more about working with us on the Department for Transport careers website:
<https://careers.dft.gov.uk/our-dft-family/driver-vehicle-standards-agency/>

Get more information about DVSA, our work and services, at GOV.UK:
www.gov.uk/dvsa



You can also follow us on social media:



Twitter – [@dvsagovuk](https://twitter.com/dvsagovuk)



Facebook – [DVSAgovuk](https://www.facebook.com/DVSAgovuk)



LinkedIn – [Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency](https://www.linkedin.com/company/dvsa)



Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

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Nottingham
NG2 1AY

www.gov.uk/dvsa

If you have questions about the role please contact: sarah.maddock@dvsa.gov.uk

If you have problems with the online portal or application process please contact:
dftrecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Helping you **stay safe** on **Britain's roads**