



A HANDBOOK  
FOR THE NEW  
CIVIL SERVANT

THIRD EDITION  
CODE 13-22-1.



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# A Handbook for the New Civil Servant

Issued by H.M. Treasury

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THE purpose of this handbook is to welcome you to the Civil Service; to explain to you a little about what the Civil Service is and how it works; and to give you a brief outline of what will be expected of you as a Civil Servant.

People choose a job in the Civil Service for many different reasons. You may have chosen it because the idea of public service attracted you; because your father was a civil servant; because your teachers advised it; because you felt that it was secure and respectable; because you could manage to pass a Civil Service examination and had no particular leanings towards anything else. Many of those who enter the Civil Service have only got rather vague ideas of what they will actually be expected to do and how they will be expected to do it; and that is why this handbook has been written.

It would be quite impossible to describe completely in a short booklet "what civil servants do." There are many totally different kinds of jobs in the Civil Service. Employment exchange clerks; school inspectors; postmen and telephone girls; research scientists in Government laboratories; these and many more are civil servants. This handbook deals with some of the features that are common to most Civil Service jobs. In some ways it stresses the obvious; in others you may find, after you have had some experience of Civil Service work, that it rather oversimplifies things. If you have come to the Civil Service straight from school, college or university, you may very well feel you are tired of book learning and want to get down to work; so it should be said straight away that you don't have to learn this handbook by heart, or read it all at once. Some parts of it will be of particular interest to you when you are new and learning your way around; other parts may seem less interesting at first but will be useful to refer to later.



In any case, it will, of course, have to be supplemented by much more detailed information and instructions about your particular grade and job, which will be given to you as part of your training by the Department or Ministry to which you have been appointed. Some of these detailed instructions will have to be expressed in more formal language: this handbook is written quite informally as a general guide, and it does not replace or overrule any more formal instructions which you may receive.

### *The Development of the Civil Service*

The term "Civil Service" is comparatively recent. Civil Servants in this country used to be known as "officers of His Majesty's civil establishments"; and the old name is a reminder that the Civil Service is composed of separate Departments or Ministries. The oldest of these Departments are older than the Civil Service itself: that is to say, they existed as separate Departments before there were any general rules or traditions to unify the Service.

But civil servants and the work of the Civil Service have existed for a very long time. Wherever there is an active Government, civil servants are needed to help in carrying on the work of government. There were government officials in ancient Egypt and to some extent in Greece; and there was a highly-organised Civil Service in the Roman Empire under Augustus, divided into Departments very much as our own Civil Service is to-day. In mediæval England civil servants were generally clergy, appointed direct by the King to assist in collecting the royal revenue and managing the royal property.

Many famous men of whom you have heard in other connections have been civil servants. Chaucer was an official of the Customs department, Milton a civil servant working on correspondence with foreign countries, Pepys secretary of the Admiralty, Wordsworth a distributor of stamps for the county of Westmorland, Burns an Excise Officer, and Anthony Trollope a surveyor in the Post Office. In this and other ways, the profession of civil servant has a long history behind it.

Nowadays a civil servant in this country is, in the simplest definition, one of the staff appointed to assist one of His Majesty's

Ministers\* to carry out his functions. As Ministers are individually responsible to Parliament for the efficient carrying out of their functions, it follows that within certain limits each Minister must have freedom to organise his Department in the way he thinks best. All appointments to a Department are made in the name of the Minister, and everybody employed in the Department is subject to his orders, in particular in matters of discipline. Most civil servants—though not by any means all—spend all their official life in one Department, since this makes for efficiency as a general rule; and Departments have the final authority in making promotions, dismissals, etc.

Until about the middle of the nineteenth century, Ministers were entirely free to choose their own staffs and there were practically no common standards. About the year 1850, Sir Charles Trevelyan, the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, and Sir Stafford Northcote undertook an inquiry into the general principles of Civil Service administration, and particularly into methods of recruitment and promotion. They recommended, among other things, the establishment of a proper system of examinations, conducted by a central board of examiners, for entry to the Civil Service; frequent transfers from one part of a Department to another, to let people acquire a wide range of experience; and promotions by merit. These recommendations, published in 1853, are the beginning of central organisation of the Civil Service.

In 1855 the Civil Service Commission was established. Its function was to grant certificates of qualification to candidates for junior posts in the Civil Service, and it was laid down that no candidate should be appointed to such a post in future without a certificate. In 1870 competitive examination was made the normal method of entry to all the important Departments, although the Commission could dispense with examinations, if they thought fit, in certain cases. At the same time, the Treasury was given power to approve rules respecting the age, health, character, knowledge and ability of candidates, the times at which examinations were to be held, the fees, the number of vacancies and the grouping of situations.

\* Some Departments have at their head not a Minister but a Board, a Commission or some other executive authority. The principle is exactly the same in those cases.



This was the beginning of Treasury control over general personnel questions in the Civil Service, which still continues.

Thus, recruitment is not now carried out by each Department for itself, and this has two advantages. In the first place, it means that the Civil Service is now generally recognised to be free from any taint of nepotism or favouritism (which could not be said for it in the days before the Trevelyan-Northcote reforms). And, secondly, candidates can to a considerable extent be sorted out by the Civil Service Commission and allotted to the Departments for which they seem likely to be most suitable: Departments do not bid against each other for the best candidates.

When there is work of very much the same kind to be done in more than one Department, the people who are going to do it are appointed to a common grade with a common scale of pay. The most obvious examples, perhaps, are typing and shorthand, but the principle has been carried much further and covers the whole of what are now known as the administrative, executive and clerical classes, among others. Rules affecting the Civil Service as a whole have been laid down on various matters—*e.g.* the rules regarding hours of attendance, superannuation, and standard rates of pay for common grades; these must be accepted by all Departments.

What is even more important, there has been developed slowly a tradition and a code of behaviour which belongs to the whole Civil Service and not to any one Department or to any one grade or class of civil servants. In the past some have thought it a rather one-sided tradition; it has laid great stress on impartiality, and perhaps too much stress on accuracy and caution, but not enough on speed, sympathy and imagination. It is often asserted that Civil Service methods are made up of unnecessary formalities, delay, and unwillingness to take responsibility—in short, of “red tape.” Nevertheless, there has also been a general recognition that the civil servant is fair, as between one member of the public and another; completely free from corruption, and almost completely free from prejudice. The Service has won a sincere respect and admiration on those grounds in the past; it is for you and for every other new entrant to the Civil Service to see that that respect and that admiration are renewed and extended, by your better understanding and clearer interpretation of the job you have to do and the right way to do it.

### *What is a Civil Servant?*

Oddly enough there is no simple and authoritative definition of the term “civil servant.” The word “civil” is easy enough; “His Majesty’s civil establishments” are those of His Majesty’s establishments which are not military, *i.e.* not part of the armed forces. “Servant” needs a little more thought.

Legally, you serve the King. That means, in practice, that you serve the responsible Minister in charge of your Department, who exercises powers as a member of His Majesty’s Government; and since the Minister is responsible to Parliament, you serve Parliament, and hence the community. For instance, when Parliament passes an Act saying that old age pensions should be paid to certain classes of people, the responsible Minister will probably have to make detailed regulations about the conditions on which the pensions are to be paid; civil servants will have to advise him on the points which the regulations should cover, and civil servants also will have to see, as a rule, that the regulations are properly and fairly applied to individual cases when claims for pensions are received.

As a civil servant, you must never forget that, however well qualified and expert you may become in your job, you have not been elected to it by any vote; and in a democratic country it is the elected representatives—Parliament—who must settle the lines on which the government of the community is to work. In other words, as a civil servant you are not entitled to do things according to your personal taste just because it is your personal taste. You must do what Parliament wants you to do. Your Minister holds his office because he belongs to the majority in Parliament which has formed the Government, and therefore what you do must be in accordance with what he wants you to do. He has the job of explaining to Parliament what you are doing, and justifying it if Parliament chooses to ask questions about it. The responsibility for the doings of his Department is his and he must shoulder it. So you must serve him loyally, to the best of your ability, and carry out his decisions, and the decisions of senior officers acting on his behalf. Your loyalty is to the Minister of the day. When a new party comes into power, your new Minister may require radical changes in the policy of your Department. Your duty is to carry out the new policy with the same loyalty that you gave to the old.

So wide is the scope of Civil Service work that it is difficult



for Ministers and Parliament to keep an eye on every detail. It is all the more important in this kind of work to remember that the civil servant acts under the authority of his Minister and as the servant of the public. But even in this area he is not his own master, and not free to decide according to his personal ideas. For where he ceases to be directly and obviously the servant of Parliament, he is still the servant of the public.

This is perhaps the most fundamental thing of all that you have to remember—that as a civil servant you are the servant of the public: of the public as a whole and not of any sectional interest. You must be scrupulously fair, you must be quick, accurate and efficient, you must be courteous to the members of the public with whom you have to deal, and within the limits of your Department's powers (as laid down by Parliament) you must be as sympathetic and helpful as possible. That is your job.

### *Present Structure of the Civil Service*

The public service requires civil servants of many different grades and qualifications to carry out the wide range of its functions. How wide this range is can be seen by considering the main categories of Government activity and the Departments responsible for them.

<i>Function</i>	<i>Chief Departments responsible</i>
1. Central Government	Treasury, Home Office.
2. Service and Supply Departments	Admiralty, War Office, Air Ministry, and Ministry of Supply.
3. Social Services	Ministries of Labour & National Service, Health, Education, National Insurance, Pensions, Assistance Board.
4. Trade, Industry and Transport	Board of Trade, Ministries of Food, Fuel and Power, Agriculture and Fisheries, Transport, Civil Aviation, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.
5. Foreign and Imperial	Foreign, Colonial and Commonwealth Relations Offices.
6. Post and Revenue	Post Office, Boards of Inland Revenue and of Customs and Excise.

7. Common Services      Ministry of Works, and Stationery Office (*i.e.* the Departments whose chief function is to service the Departments in the other six groups.)

Some of the general service classes—administrative, executive, clerical, clerical assistants, typists, and shorthand typists—are needed in all Departments. Some Departments also require civil servants of widely different professional and scientific qualifications, scientists, lawyers, doctors, engineers, architects, to give but a few examples at random out of a very long list. Other Departments have specialist classes to carry out the specialist functions of the Department, like the Tax Inspectorate of the Board of Inland Revenue, the regional and local staff of the Ministry of Labour (including employment exchange managers), the postal, telephone and telegraph staff of the Post Office, etc. All are civil servants and it is vital that the specialists and the general service classes should understand each other's place in the machine and work together as a team.

In this handbook space will not allow a description to be given of the duties of all classes but the new entrant may find it convenient to have a short account of the main general service classes to be found in all Departments.

**ADMINISTRATIVE.** This is a small class—before the war its total size was approximately 1,500; but in future it is likely to be a good deal larger. It is responsible for advising Ministers on policy—that is, on problems which arise in deciding the general lines on which the country ought to be governed; on new proposals which ought to be put before Parliament; and on how Parliament's wishes can best be carried out. It is responsible also for handling the difficulties which arise in carrying out existing policy; for forecasting the probable effects of new Acts and regulations; and for organizing and directing the work of Departments. It has in addition to assist Ministers in their Parliamentary duties (*e.g.* by preparing "briefs" for speeches and answers to Parliamentary Questions and to letters from Members of Parliament, etc.). Most members of the administrative class are employed at headquarters offices, where policy is usually formulated, but in some Departments, either as part of their training or because the needs of the work demand it, they may spend part of their career in regional or local offices.



The junior grade of the administrative class is called Assistant Principal, and most entrants come to it at the age of 22 or 23, after having taken a University degree, though there are also opportunities of promotion to it from other grades within the Civil Service. It is a training grade, and its members spend most of their time in drafting letters, summarising information, and suggesting action on particular problems that have arisen. After a few years they may serve as Private Secretaries to Ministers or to senior civil servants. The next grade is Principal, and at this level decisions on the less important questions of administrative policy are taken. Next there is the grade of Assistant Secretary, usually in charge of a Division of the office and controlling a fair number of subordinate staff; and higher still there are Under-Secretaries, and the permanent Heads and Deputy Heads of Departments, who are concerned in major questions of policy. Normally an entrant to the administrative class may expect to rise in due course to the grade of Assistant Secretary: some, of course, will rise to the very top.

**EXECUTIVE.** This is the second of the four main classes. It numbered approximately 18,500 before the war, and is expected to be larger in the future. Executive staff are responsible for carrying out a settled policy, and for dealing with individual cases where judgment and discretion are needed. In some Departments they may specialize in accountancy, statistics, contracts, control of stores, audit work, or some other particular type of job.

The junior grade is called Executive Officer, and it may be entered straight from school at the age of 18, or by promotion from within the Service at a somewhat later age. The higher grades, in ascending order, are Higher Executive Officer, Senior Executive Officer, and Chief Executive Officer; above this level there are "top" posts carrying different titles according to the type of work they do, *e.g.* Accountant-General on accounting work, Director of Contracts on contracts work. The normal career for an entrant to the executive class goes up to Senior Executive Officer, though of course some go higher, and some are selected for promotion to the administrative class.

**CLERICAL.** This is the largest of the main classes of the Service: before the war it numbered approximately 77,000. Its members undertake ordinary clerical work, such as the handling of straightforward correspondence, the preparation of accounts

and statistics, the management of official records, etc., and in some Departments they may also have to do a good deal of interviewing when members of the public come to call.

The clerical class is organised differently in different Departments, but in the majority of Departments the junior grade (entered from school between the ages of 16 and 18, by promotion from lower grades, or by establishment after service as a temporary clerk) is known as Clerical Officer, and the next as Higher Clerical Officer. In most cases, Higher Clerical Officers are occupied in supervising junior clerical staff; they are the co-ordinators who see that the routine and straightforward work of the Service is competently and thoroughly done. This, however, is not the only promotion opportunity open to Clerical Officers; they may be promoted into the executive class, and in future there is to be a special competition for that class each year, confined to Clerical Officers under 28.

**CLERICAL ASSISTANT, TYPIST AND SHORTHAND-TYPIST.** Clerical Assistants do the simplest clerical duties—copying, envelope-addressing, keeping card-indexes up to date, preparing simple accounts subject to a check by someone else, etc. Shorthand-Typists do shorthand and typing, of course, and may be called upon to do this type of simple clerical work as well. Typists have opportunities of promotion to Shorthand-Typist, and all these grades have opportunities of promotion to the Clerical Officer grade, normally within the first ten years of their service.

**TEMPORARY STAFF.** Most civil servants in normal times are established staff—that is to say, they hold permanent and pensionable posts. All of the general grades mentioned above are established grades. The Civil Service also requires temporary staff, however, for work which is temporary in nature: in war-time, in particular, the number of temporary staff grew until it far exceeded the number of established staff.

**LOCATION OF OFFICES.** Most Departments have their headquarters in London, though nowadays Whitehall (the traditional centre of the Civil Service, next door to the Houses of Parliament) cannot accommodate them all. But some headquarters offices will in future be located in the provinces; and besides several of the big Departments (*e.g.* the Ministry of Labour and National Service, the Assistance Board, Customs and Excise, Inland Revenue, the War Office, Admiralty and Air



Ministry, and of course the Post Office) have local offices all over the country. The Civil Service is thus not by any means confined to London.

### *Methods of Work*

This handbook cannot attempt to tell you about the particular job, out of the thousands of different jobs in the Civil Service, which will be your first job; and even for the same type of job, there are apt to be different procedures in different Departments, so it is impossible here to go into details. But the following general remarks and advice will probably apply to you sooner or later, whatever your job. More detailed advice and instruction will be given to you in the course of your training.

The first thing that strikes many people, when they come into a Government office for the first time, is the importance that the Civil Service attaches to papers—files, memoranda, written records of all kinds. A good deal of the work of the Civil Service, of course, is done by telephone or by personal conversation, but you will find that anything important or new has to be recorded on paper somewhere, sooner or later; and in all probability a large part of your work will consist of dealing with papers—reading them and writing them.

You may think this is a slow and cumbrous way of doing things; but there are two reasons for it. The first is the Parliamentary system of government. Parliament has the right to inquire into any action taken by a Government Department, and a Parliamentary Question may be asked at short notice, perhaps a long time after the event, perhaps in the absence of the civil servant who actually took that particular action. So that Parliament may get the information, it is essential that there should be a written record of the action and, as far as possible, of the reasons for it. Secondly, the written record is necessary to preserve the impartiality of the Civil Service to the public. The Civil Service cannot, as a private business sometimes may, give one customer a bargain and make up for it by charging another customer extra; it has to deal with all on the same terms. Therefore, there must be a written record of what has been done in the past, so that it may be done again in the future when the same problem arises. That does not mean that the Civil Service is bound by precedent. Very often there will be no precedent, in other cases it is clearly right to modify earlier policy. But this

should be done not by intuition but deliberately after considering what previous practice has been.

Another thing that may strike you is that very few problems seem to be settled by one person alone: the papers may sometimes pass through several hands before a letter is answered or a decision given. This is partly due to the need for looking at the records—a job which is done by the juniors—partly because very often a subject will concern more than one branch of a Department. The process need not cause delay and is essential if there is to be a consistent policy.

From the very first you must learn to be precise and honest in your work. You must fully appreciate the problem to be solved; you must then collect and check all the relevant facts, and set them out clearly and fairly. Don't take anything for granted: there is always more than one point of view, and it may be dangerous to accept somebody else's statement without verifying it for yourself. Don't be lazy and try to pass off a guess as an accurate figure or statement; it may not be questioned, but if it is you must be prepared to justify it. If you see a snag, or a difficulty, or a point which you don't understand, don't ignore it in the hope that nobody else will spot it; it is your job to straighten it out, or if you can't, at least to point it out to your chief and let him deal with it. Whatever shortcomings civil servants may have, they must never be found wanting in this kind of honesty.

Moreover, you must be accurate. You must learn the importance of using words in their exact meanings, so that they convey, to somebody you have never seen, exactly what you intend to convey, and not just something roughly approximating to it. If there is any ambiguity in your phrasing somebody is sure to misunderstand; so say what you mean, simply and clearly. Keep your sentences short and avoid officialese. Read "Plain Words," the book by Sir Ernest Gowers, published by the Stationery Office at 2s.

Having considered your problem fully, make up your mind what you think ought to be done about it. Unless the matter is clearly one of high policy, which will have to be settled by somebody very much higher up than you, you should decide it yourself if it is a matter which you feel competent to settle. If not, always suggest a definite course of action. Your chief may not agree with what you suggest, but (whether he admits this or not) it will almost always help him to clear his own



thoughts and make up his mind. If you suggest a letter should be written to somebody, draft the letter as you would send it. Always think ahead, carry the action as far as you can, and leave your chief with as little as possible to add to it. His time is more valuable than yours.

In dealing with a member of the public, or with another civil servant, try to put yourself in the place of the other person, and think whether your answer (whether it is by letter, minute, telephone or interview) is going to satisfy him. Be polite always; don't be vague; answer the question you are asked and not some other question; and don't be deliberately obscure, or use phrases or references which you know the other person won't understand. If you have to turn down a request, make it as clear as you can *why* you are turning it down. Don't try to mask the responsibility for a decision and do try to explain how you arrive at the decision. Nothing is more irritating than to be refused and not to know why one is being refused.

Though accuracy is important and is never to be disregarded don't sacrifice speed too much for accuracy. Deal with your work promptly; especially, see that letters are answered promptly. Even if a complete answer is impossible, it is better to send an interim reply than to be completely silent. There is very rarely any good reason for silence, and nearly always something that is worth saying, if you think it out with sufficient frankness and understanding.

Keep your desk tidy. However high you may rise in the Civil Service, you should never let yourself lose the habit of tidiness, and never grudge the time you spend in keeping your papers in order. An occasional spell of more or less mechanical work on tidying-up will give you time to rest and clear your brain; and your brain will be all the clearer and more methodical in the important things if you are methodical as a matter of habit in the little things.

Deal with the urgent things first; after that, deal with the others in their turn, and deal with them thoroughly. This sounds simple, but you will find that it is very easy to seem busy to other people, and even to deceive yourself into thinking you are very busy, by taking always the easiest things first. Resist this temptation. In spite of the importance which the Civil Service attaches to papers, moving papers around is not an end in itself. Your usefulness is measured not by the number of papers you

get rid of, but by the amount of constructive thought you have contributed to them. So take things in their turn and think them out fully, whether they are straightforward or complicated, and don't dither over them.

Occasionally among the piles of papers which the messengers deposit in your in-tray you will find something which doesn't seem to be your job. Find out at once whose business it is and send the paper on to the right quarter at once. Don't let the paper remain in your tray. Don't on the other hand send it on to another branch, till you are sure that branch is the right one. If you make this your drill, much delay will be saved.

Use discretion in the inquiries you make, in this as in other things. Don't make them at an unnecessarily high level. If you want to know whether a Division deals with a particular subject, it isn't usually necessary to ask the Head of the Division. Always, before you trouble a senior officer, think carefully whether you could get the information you want from someone who is junior and less busy.

See that you understand your job. It may seem unimportant and pointless to you at first; but even the most routine job in the machinery of Government has its own importance and can be done with some degree of pride, if it is approached in the proper way. If you don't see the purpose of what you are doing, ask your chief and go on asking until you fully understand the purpose. It may not be a very colourful or glamorous one, but it is there, if you look for it.

Don't be shy of suggesting ways and means of improving the organisation of your job, or of doing it more rapidly or with less effort. You come to it with a fresh mind, and you may have some useful suggestions to make. But think them over very carefully first and make quite sure that they *are* improvements and that you haven't through inexperience overlooked some obvious snag. Don't begin to criticise until you have learned the reasons behind the existing method of doing things, and don't assume that every existing method is just "red tape."

Finally, in case all this good advice should have made you feel that an ordinary human being like yourself can never hope to be a successful civil servant, remember that everyone makes a blunder at some time or other, and that even the worst of blunders doesn't always have such disastrous results as you may think at the time. But try not to make the same blunder twice!



### Staff Rules and Conditions of Service

The following is an outline of the main rules and conditions applicable to civil servants in general. Staff administration in each Department is the responsibility of the Establishment Officer, and his staff usually includes a Welfare Officer and a Training Officer. Each Department has its own detailed staff rules; you will be told about them separately; and if you are in doubt on any point you should consult your senior officer.

**PROBATION.** Every new entrant to the established Civil Service has to serve a period of probation, one year or two years according to grade, with extensions in certain cases. Until this period of probation has been satisfactorily completed, the new entrant is not finally appointed to the Civil Service; and anyone who during probation shows himself or herself to be really unsuited for Civil Service work will (perhaps after a trial on a different type of job) be dismissed. Temporary staff are usually appointed for a period of trial in the first place, and may be dismissed at any time; the period of notice to be given is prescribed when they are appointed.

**PAY.** Most established civil servants are paid on scales of pay, with regular annual increases known as "increments"; though some are paid at fixed rates. In some cases, particularly for young entrants, pay is fixed according to age and an increment is given on one's birthday; but more usually the date of the increment is the anniversary of one's appointment to one's grade. On some scales there is an "efficiency bar," and advancement beyond that point depends upon capability to perform the full range of duties of the grade. All increments depend upon satisfactory service, and may be withheld for serious inefficiency or misconduct; even an increment already granted may be taken away again, *i.e.* salary may be reduced, if the inefficiency or misconduct is sufficiently serious. Temporary staff in some grades have regular increments like established staff, but in other grades they have "ranges" of pay and are paid at varying rates within the range, with varying increases, according to individual merit.

Salaries expressed as so many pounds per annum are usually paid monthly, in equal twelfths; though some Departments

work them out quarterly, and advance roughly one-third of the quarterly amount each month, which means that the amount you receive may not be exactly the same each month. Wages expressed as so many pounds or shillings per week are paid weekly. Income tax and national insurance contributions are deducted before the payment is made. You may also arrange to have deductions made from your pay to meet other contributions or subscriptions, *e.g.* to national savings schemes within your office, or to benevolent funds, sports associations, certain insurance societies, etc.: the main funds, etc., for which deductions may be made free of charge are the Civil Service Benevolent Fund, the Civil Service Nursing Aid Association, the Civil Service Sanatorium Society, the Civil Service Insurance Society, the Civil Service Sports Council, the Hospital Savings Association, and the Hospital Saturday Fund, but there are many departmental funds, etc., as well in particular Departments. For certain other subscriptions, etc., deductions from pay are allowed but a charge of 2½ per cent. on the organization concerned is made by the Department to cover the expenses of collecting the subscriptions.

For many grades, pay is lower in the provinces than in London; though there are exceptions to this in certain grades where transfers from London to the provinces, and *vice versa*, take place very frequently. The system of reduced pay in the provinces is known as provincial differentiation, and the reason for it is the lower cost of living outside London. Apart from certain grades, mainly in the Post Office, which have special arrangements, offices are classed in three ways for this purpose:—

*London*—Within the London Postal area.

*Intermediate*—Outside the London Postal area but within a 12 mile radius of Charing Cross; and Belfast, Bristol, Birmingham, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool (including Birkenhead and Bootle), Manchester (including Salford), Newcastle (including Gateshead), and Sheffield.

*Provincial*—Elsewhere.



And the differences in pay are as follows:—

London Pay	Difference	
	Intermediate	Provincial
Up to £275 ... ..	£5	£10
£276 to £450 ... ..	£10	£20
£451 to £750 ... ..	£15	£30
£751 to £1,000 ... ..	£20	£40
£1,001 to £1,200 ... ..	£30	£60
£1,201 to £1,500 ... ..	£40	£80
£1,501 upwards ... ..	£50	£100

For staff on weekly wages the differences vary somewhat according to grade; *e.g.* for established Clerical Assistants, Typists and Shorthand-Typists 3s. intermediate and 6s. provincial, for Temporary Clerks 2s. intermediate and 4s. provincial, etc.

Pay is usually lower for women than for men, except for young people when they first enter the Service. The exact amount of the difference varies, but as a rule the woman's rate of pay is four-fifths or more of the man's.

**HOURS OF ATTENDANCE.** Attendance books are kept in every Department and you will be required to record the actual time when you arrive at the office and the actual time when you leave each day. The hours when you will have to work will depend upon your office and your grade: before the war most London offices worked rather shorter hours than those in the provinces, but there were exceptions, and during and since the war the Civil Service has had to work longer hours than before, and also to stagger its times of travelling to and from work. You are in any event expected to live within a reasonable distance of your office; the fact that you live at a considerable distance or have a difficult journey will not be accepted as an excuse for irregular attendance or as a sufficient reason for applying for special hours of attendance.

You will be told that you are "conditioned" to a given number of hours of attendance per week. The number of hours will vary with your grade and office, but is most likely to be either 42, 44 or 48. This *includes* lunch intervals, and tea intervals where they are allowed. Being "conditioned" to a number of hours does not mean that you will always have to work that number of hours as a minimum; even apart from the lunch and tea intervals, it was a common arrangement for London staff

before the war to have their normal Saturday afternoon half-holiday included in their "conditioned" hours. What it does mean is that, if you are in a grade eligible for overtime payment, your overtime does not begin until you have worked at least that number of hours; in some cases there are special arrangements whereby a few hours *above* the "conditioned" hours must be worked before overtime payment begins.

Overtime is not as a rule paid to the higher grades of the Service: their hours of work cannot be exactly regulated by the clock but must depend on the amount of business to be done, so their rates of pay are fixed on the assumption that they will work any long hours that may be necessary without extra payment. The non-overtime grades include all the administrative grades, most of the professional, scientific, and technical grades, and the grades of Higher Executive Officer and above in the executive class. Other grades, when it is necessary for them to work overtime (and the necessity for it must always be approved in advance by a senior officer) are paid at varying overtime rates according to the grade and the amount of overtime worked: the usual system is payment by the hour at a rate based on the annual or weekly pay of the person concerned. For example, if you were paid 88s. for a 44 hour week, your hourly rate of pay would be 2s., and you might be paid for your overtime at "plain time rate," *i.e.* 2s. per hour, or at "time and a quarter rate," which would be 2s. 6d. per hour (2s. plus a quarter of 2s.), or even at "time and a half rate," which would be 3s. per hour. The exact conditions applying to your grade will, of course, be explained to you more fully when you have to work overtime. Sunday duty is usually treated separately: if you have to work on a Sunday, you will be compensated for it either by having another day off in lieu, or by a separate extra payment for the number of hours worked, or in certain cases by having both a day off and a small extra payment.

Whatever your hours of attendance don't waste time while you are on the job. See that you spend your time in the office as fully as possible on useful work; if you are not kept fully occupied tell your chief about it and go on telling him until you have enough work to do. You must of course go slowly at first while you are being trained and learning your way around; but after that you will enjoy your job a great deal better if you are kept busy and feel that you are really pulling your weight.



STAFF UNDER 18. Young people are generally released one day a week, or the equivalent, to attend classes to continue their general education. There are also arrangements for staff who are under 16 to have free midday meals, and for those between 16 and 18 to have cheap meals.

ANNUAL AND SPECIAL LEAVE. You will be allowed a certain amount of leave each year, the amount varying according to your grade and length of service. The "leave year" usually is not the same as the calendar year; it varies from Department to Department, but is usually the same for all grades in a Department. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, you must take your annual leave within the "leave year" to which it belongs: if you are prevented from taking it, or do not choose to take it, you are not allowed to carry it over and take more in the next leave year. Within limits, you can take your leave at any season of the year you choose, provided that you receive approval in advance: but of course everyone must not be away at once, the senior officers have first choice, and you may find that as a junior your plans have to be altered to fit in with theirs. And at all times, the needs of the work must come first; if your office is too busy to let you have your leave at any particular time, or even to let you have it at all, you have no claim to receive any kind of compensation. But you may feel assured that you will not be unreasonably prevented from having your full amount of leave.

You may not take annual leave in lieu of sick leave, and usually you may not take annual leave immediately following a period of sick leave unless your doctor gives you a certificate that you are fit to return to duty. If you fall sick during your annual leave, and immediately send a medical certificate to your Department, the period of sickness will be treated as sick leave and not annual leave, and you will be allowed if possible to take that amount of annual leave at some later date.

The whole Civil Service has the usual public holidays such as Christmas, Easter and Good Friday, up to a maximum of nine public holidays in the year. In some Departments it is necessary to have skeleton staffs on duty on those days: if you are required to be on duty on a public holiday you will be allowed if possible a day off in lieu later on, and in certain cases an additional payment.

You are expected to use your annual leave as far as possible for attending to your private affairs, but in addition to annual leave and public holidays, special leave with pay may be allowed in certain exceptional circumstances (*e.g.* on marriage, on the death of a near relation, for jury service, and for attendance at a Civil Service examination). Special leave is also granted within certain limits for absences connected with Whitley Council and staff association business. (Whitley Councils are described later in this handbook.)

Special leave *without* pay may be granted, in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of your Department; as a rule, special leave without pay does not reckon as service for the purpose of increments on your scale of pay (*i.e.* your next increment will be delayed by a period equal to the period of the special leave) or for the purpose of pension.

SICK LEAVE. Established staff may be granted sick leave on full pay, less any National Insurance benefit received, for up to six months in any period of twelve months. Thereafter they may have a further period on reduced pay subject to deduction of National Insurance benefit in certain cases and to a maximum of twelve months' sick leave in any period of four years or less. After the twelve months' sick leave on full pay or half pay has been exhausted, pay may be allowed during any further sick leave at a rate not exceeding the amount of pension for which the civil servant would then be qualified if he were to retire, or at half pay if that is less. For temporary staff different periods are allowed.

If you are too ill to attend the office, you must make every effort to let the head of your branch or section know as soon as possible (preferably by getting someone to telephone him) why you are absent. You need not send a medical certificate for an absence of four days or less (this rule was introduced as a war-time measure: the pre-war rule was two days), but if you have more than one sick absence during any period of twelve months, not more than seven days in all during the period of twelve months may be taken as sick leave without medical certificate. Always, if your illness lasts for more than four days, you must send to the head of your branch or section on the fifth day a medical certificate by a duly qualified doctor stating the cause of your absence (this information will be kept confidential), and further medical certificates must be supplied as and when your Department asks for them, if your illness continues. In most



cases the Department will require a medical certificate weekly or fortnightly.

There are a number of Civil Service organizations designed to help you should you fall ill, including the Civil Service Benevolent Fund, the Civil Service Nursing Aid Association, the East of Scotland Civil Service Nursing Aid Association and the Civil Service Sanatorium Society. You should obtain particulars about membership of these from the Departmental Welfare Officer.

There is a London sick bay where civil servants who are working in London and away from their homes may be nursed for minor illnesses. Again, details may be obtained from the Departmental Welfare Officer.

**NATIONAL INSURANCE.** When you have paid sufficient insurance contributions you will be entitled to draw sickness benefit; but to avoid unnecessary trouble for yourself and for your Department you will be invited to sign a voluntary undertaking not to draw sickness benefit but to draw full sick pay instead. If you prefer to claim benefit you may do so, but the amount of the benefit will be deducted from your full sick pay.

**CONTACT WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASE.** You need not stay away from the office if you have been in contact with a case of scarlet fever, measles, German measles, whooping-cough, chicken-pox or mumps, but you should report the facts to the head of your branch or section as soon as possible. If you have been in contact with any other notifiable disease you should ask your local medical officer of health whether you should stay away from the office or not; if you have to stay away on the orders of the medical officer of health, you will be allowed leave with pay. If you feel unwell after you have been in contact with an infectious disease you should stay away from the office and consult your doctor immediately. You will be allowed leave with pay for the absence. You will also be allowed leave with pay if you have been in contact with diphtheria and a swab has been taken. You should not return to work until the doctor has given you a clearance certificate.

**ACCIDENTS.** Any accident or injury on duty, however trifling it may appear at the time, should be reported to the head of your branch or section. You should give the names and

addresses of any witnesses. Delay in reporting an accident may prejudice any claim which you may later decide to make. An accident or injury off duty should also be reported if it means that you will have to be absent from duty, or if it was due to negligence on somebody else's part.

**LIABILITY TO TRANSFER.** Most established civil servants, in particular all new entrants to the administrative, scientific, executive and clerical classes, are liable for service anywhere in the United Kingdom or if necessary overseas. It is only in a comparatively small number of Departments (*e.g.* the Defence Departments, the Colonial Office, and the Commonwealth Relations Office) that overseas service is really likely to be required, but all members of those classes in any Department have the liability: a foreign service allowance is granted during service abroad to cover extra cost of living. Transfers within the United Kingdom are, of course, particularly likely to occur in Departments which have local offices all over the country.

**TRAVELLING, SUBSISTENCE, REMOVAL AND TRANSFER EXPENSES.** If you have to travel as part of your official duty, you can claim repayment of your travelling expenses—first-class or third-class railway fare, according to your grade, bus fare, or a standard rate of mileage allowance if you use your own car, motor-cycle or pedal cycle. This does *not*, however, apply to travel between your home and your office; you are expected to live within reasonable distance of your office and to pay your own expenses in getting there. If you are sent from the office on a journey on official business, however short, you are entitled to claim travelling expenses.

If you are sent on a journey on official business and have to be away from home overnight, or for more than five hours during the day, you are entitled to claim a subsistence allowance. The amount of the allowance varies according to your rate of pay and the length of your absence from home; full details will be explained to you if you have to make a claim. The purpose of the allowance is to help you to meet the extra expense of being away from home; but it would clearly be impracticable to measure the exact amount of the extra expenses in every case, so there are standard maximum rates of allowance which you may claim.

If you are permanently transferred from one town to another, in the interests of the Service and not purely at your own request or as a disciplinary measure, you will be allowed a reasonable



grant to meet your actual removal expenses; and in addition, if you are in a grade subject to provincial differentiation (*see* page 15), you will receive a lump sum "transfer grant" to compensate you for the general upheaval of transfer. The latter grant varies in amount according to salary and according to whether you are single, married, or married with more than one child at school.

If you are paid 70s. a week or less and are posted away from your home town (either on your first appointment or later), so that you have to live apart from your family, you will receive a weekly lodging allowance to help you to meet the extra cost of this. In some large towns, moreover, particularly in London, hostels are provided for young civil servants who may have difficulty in finding lodgings they can afford; the hostel charges are moderate, but if they fall below a certain amount the lodging allowance is correspondingly reduced.

ANNUAL REPORTS. Every year an annual report is made upon each established civil servant within the range of promotion, up to the salary level of £1,000 (though in some cases reports are dispensed with for those at the salary level of £800 and above). The report upon you will probably be made in the first place by the head of your branch, and countersigned by someone at a higher level, say the head of your Division or Directorate. You will be given markings for various qualities, which will probably include the following:—

Knowledge of branch	Accuracy
Knowledge of Department	Ability to express oneself clearly in writing, and orally
Personality and force of character	Address and tact
Judgment	Zeal
Power of taking responsibility	Official conduct
Initiative	

and the report will also contain a judgment of your fitness for promotion. The report will be kept by the Establishment Officer of your Department, and you will not be told how you have been marked, *unless* the marking for any item is "Poor"; you will be told about that, unless your chief thinks that the bad marking is clearly due to ill-health or inexperience, and will be given an opportunity of putting in writing anything you wish to say in your own defence before the report is passed on to the Establishment Officer.

PROMOTION. The final responsibility for making promotions rests with the Head of the Department; but in large Departments where the Head of the Department cannot know personally the qualities of every member of the staff, promotions at all but the highest levels (*e.g.* Assistant Secretary and above) are usually made on the advice of a promotion board consisting of three or four selected senior officers. The promotion board takes into account the annual reports mentioned in the previous paragraph, and may interview a number of the most likely candidates for promotion. (Candidates interviewed may claim travelling expenses and subsistence where necessary—*see* the last subsection but one.) It may receive representations from the Staff Side of the Departmental Whitley Council, and is bound to give full consideration to such representations, though, of course, not bound to act upon them.

Promotions in the Civil Service, generally speaking, are made according to merit and not purely by seniority. The aim is to secure the greatest possible efficiency in the public service, rather than to reward individuals for long and faithful service: to pick the very best man or woman for the job, even though he or she may not be the most senior candidate. No promise of promotion is made to any individual on entry to the Service, and no civil servant has the right to claim promotion at any specified time. But, of course, when other things are equal, seniority is naturally taken into account, and particularly so in promotions to posts where the work is of a routine character.

If you should ever see one of your colleagues promoted and feel that you yourself were better qualified for the job, or that you have not been adequately considered, you have the right to appeal. There is usually a time-limit for making such appeals, which is laid down by the Department. The procedure for considering appeals varies somewhat from Department to Department. If you are called to attend a fresh interview and wish to have a representative of your staff association or Whitley Council Staff Side with you, you will be allowed to do so; and indeed you would be well advised to consult your staff association before making any appeal, since the staff associations have long experience of such matters and know pretty well whether an appeal is likely to be successful or not. The majority are unsuccessful, because promotion boards do honestly try to make their selections fairly in the first place, but this need never prevent you from appealing if you feel that a real injustice has been done.



**SUBSTITUTION.** If you have to do the job of someone in a higher grade who is away for a long time (*e.g.*, on sick leave), you may, after a qualifying period, usually two months, receive an allowance on top of your pay in recognition of the extra responsibility you are carrying. Although this does not rank as promotion—since substitution is performed by the person who happens to be on the spot and knows the job, without regard to the merits of others in the same grade elsewhere—you are paid as though you are promoted and the time during which you have been paid for substitution in the higher grade will count if you are actually promoted to it later on. When the person whose work you have been doing returns to duty your pay at the higher rate ceases and you go back to your own job. For short periods you are expected to help with someone else's work in his or her absence without extra pay; and similarly if you yourself are away someone else in your branch or section will be expected to help with your job so that you do not find all the work piled up and waiting for you when you come back.

**RESIGNATION.** There is nothing to prevent a civil servant, established or temporary, from resigning at any time. Clearly, however, it would not be good for the Service if people had complete freedom to resign from permanent posts and then come back whenever they felt like it. If an established civil servant resigns, therefore, the resignation must normally be for good and all. It is only in exceptional circumstances that he or she can later be considered for reinstatement in an established post; and even then the reinstatement must normally be treated as a fresh start so far as pension is concerned, *i.e.* the previous service will not be reckoned towards a pension on retirement (though the previous rate of pay may be retained).

**RETIREMENT, PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES.** Established civil servants ordinarily remain in the Service until they reach the age of 60, or perhaps a little longer; retirement is compulsory at the age of 65 unless special Treasury approval is given for an individual's retention beyond that age in the public interest.

On retirement, on grounds of ill-health, or age, after not less than ten years' service, a civil servant gets an annual pension of one-eightieth of annual salary for each completed year of service (subject, generally, to a minimum of twenty-eightieths and to a

maximum of forty-eightieths, or in certain circumstances forty-five eightieths), together with a lump sum of three times that amount. Salary for this purpose is averaged over the last three years of service. For example, a civil servant who had served 40 years, and who during his last three years of service had been paid £600, £620 and £640 respectively, would get a pension of £310 per annum and a lump sum of £930. The pension may be reduced by not more than 26s. per week when the individual reaches the age at which he or she becomes eligible for a retirement pension under the National Insurance Act: *viz.* 65 for a man, 60 for a woman. Civil servants are not required to contribute during their service towards the main pension scheme and accordingly the amount of pension granted does not depend upon any amount contributed but solely upon length of service and retiring salary.

If an established civil servant dies before reaching the age of 60 and after not less than 5 years' service, a gratuity of one year's salary (rather more for those with long service) is payable to his legal personal representative.

The Superannuation Act of 1949 introduced a scheme of pensions for widows and dependants of civil servants. The scheme is a contributory one, participants having the option of contributing 3d. in the £1 of their salary throughout their service, or of suffering a deduction of one-third of the lump sum which would be payable on their retirement. The scheme is compulsory for married male civil servants but voluntary for others. Full details of the scheme are set out in the handbook "Guide to the Widows', Children's and Dependants' Pension Schemes" but briefly, for example, the widow of a civil servant will, under the scheme, receive a pension amounting to one-third of the pension which her husband was receiving or would have received.

For certain scientific and professional posts where freedom of interchange between University and Civil Service employment is desirable, superannuation is provided under the Federated Superannuation System for Universities (F.S.S.U.) instead of under the normal scheme described in the foregoing paragraphs. F.S.S.U. is a contributory scheme, the civil servant contributing 5% of his salary each year and his Department contributing 10%.

Temporary staff who have served seven years or more receive a lump sum gratuity on retirement.



An established woman civil servant who resigns on marriage, (*i.e.*, normally within a period from three months before, to one month after marriage) after not less than six years' service may, with Treasury approval, be granted a marriage gratuity of one month's pay for each complete year of her established service, subject to a maximum of twelve months' pay.

**DISCIPLINE: DISMISSAL.** Every civil servant, established as well as temporary, holds his or her appointment at the pleasure of the Crown, which means that the Crown may dismiss him or her at any moment, without notice and without compensation. That is the legal position; but naturally the Crown does not act in that way without having an extremely good cause for doing so, and it is only if you should be guilty of really serious misconduct that you need be afraid of summary dismissal.

In fact, a settled procedure has been laid down to ensure that neither dismissal nor any other serious punishment is given unfairly, hastily, or without due consideration of the civil servant's point of view. The procedure is as follows:—

(*a*) When a serious disciplinary charge (other than one which may give rise to criminal proceedings) is made against an officer, he is given, in advance, a written statement defining the charge and setting out particulars of the facts relied upon to support it.

(*b*) The officer is required to submit a written reply to the charge made against him, but in cases where there is a conflict of evidence between the charge and the officer's written reply the officer may, if he so desires, represent his case orally.

(*c*) The officer, in such circumstances, has the right to represent his case orally before a suitable officer of his Department other than his immediate superior. In the case of Departments with large provincial staffs this officer will necessarily often be a local officer and not an officer from headquarters.

(*d*) In representing his case orally the officer is allowed, if he so desires, to have the assistance of a friend or colleague (who may be an association representative) present with him.

This procedure applies to established staff; for temporary staff the procedure is usually rather less formal, but the same general principles are observed.

The responsibility for dismissal rests with the Head of the Department, and the civil servant has no right to appeal to anyone else against his decision. The same applies to other disciplinary punishments, such as the withholding of an increment, reduction of salary, or reversion to a lower grade.

A civil servant may at any time be suspended from duty if the Head of the Department thinks that desirable in the public interest: he may be suspended, for instance, if he is arrested for any offence committed outside the office, or has civil or criminal proceedings taken against him, or he may be suspended while any charge of serious misconduct is being investigated. During suspension, pay may be withheld either wholly or partly if the Head of the Department so decides; and at the end of the period of suspension, whether it ends in dismissal or in return to duty, the Head of the Department may rule that the pay which the officer would have received if he had not been suspended, or part of it, is to be forfeited.

**RULES OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT.** (*a*) **OFFICIAL SECRETS.** Under the Official Secrets Acts of 1911 and 1920 it is provided (among other things) that, if a civil servant communicates any document, information, etc., which he has obtained or to which he has had access in his official position to any person to whom he is not authorized to communicate it, he is guilty of a misdemeanour. You should specially note that this provision applies to a civil servant even after he has retired or left the Service. You can expect to be asked, on appointment, to read the relevant sections of the Acts and sign a statement saying that you have read and understood them.

The chief purpose of the Official Secrets Acts, of course, is to prevent spying by possible enemies of the country; and nobody is going to prosecute you for a breach of the Acts if you happen to mention to someone outside the Service some quite harmless and trivial domestic incident that takes place in your office, even though it is strictly speaking "information to which you have had access in your official capacity." But you must be sure it *is* harmless and trivial. A piece of information may be rightly confidential even though it does not endanger the safety of the country (for instance, it would be one of the worst possible breaches of confidence for a civil servant in the Assistance Board to gossip outside about the amount of assistance some individual is receiving), and in that event both the Official Secrets Acts and the



addition of the Service forbid you to talk about it. When in doubt—don't say it.

This applies to the unauthorised passing on of information to *anyone*—even to another civil servant. You must, of course, be especially careful about any disclosure which might lead to publication in the press or any other widespread publicity.

(b) SECURITY. Papers marked "secret" or "confidential" must never be left lying about in unoccupied rooms; lock them up, and be careful to keep safely any keys of safes or cupboards that may be entrusted to you. It is very easy to get into the habit of thinking that these precautions are a nuisance and don't matter much anyway: that is what a careless motorist often thinks before a fatal accident. Safety first is the only sound rule.

Don't take secret or confidential papers out of the office unless it is absolutely essential; and if you do, take very special care of them. Any loss of secret or confidential official property must be reported at once to the head of your branch or section, as well as to the police; and if you are so careless as to lose anything of this nature, you must expect a punishment or reprimand, whether or not it is eventually found or not. Confidential official property found by the police is returned to the Department officially and not to the individual who lost it.

(c) GIFTS, BRIBES AND CORRUPT PRACTICES. You are not allowed to ask for or accept any gift or reward of any kind for any help or information given to the public on official matters, either inside or outside the office. This applies to hospitality as well as to actual gifts. Members of the public do not always realise how strict the Civil Service rule is on this matter: don't think, if someone older and more experienced than yourself offers you a present, or perhaps an invitation to lunch, for something you have done or could do in the course of your official work that it is probably quite all right to accept, but report the matter to the head of your branch or section.

A civil servant who corruptly accepts any kind of gift, tip or bribe, for himself or for anyone else, as an inducement or reward for doing or omitting to do anything in his official capacity, is guilty of a misdemeanour under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1906. The onus of proving that the payment is not corrupt rests with the civil servant, if any question is raised.

These rules do not, of course, apply to presentations by civil servants themselves to their colleagues on marriage, retirement, etc., or to the recognised practice of allowing postmen, etc., to accept Christmas boxes.

(d) USE OF OFFICIAL STATIONERY, ETC. Official paper and envelopes must not be used for private correspondence: the use of franked official envelopes for private purposes is a serious offence. Most Departments allow official telephones to be used for private calls if it is really necessary (all private trunk and toll calls must be paid for), but you should avoid this whenever possible; and you should also, as far as you can avoid receiving private letters or telephone calls at your office address.

(e) OUTSIDE INFLUENCE. If you have a personal grievance of any sort in connection with your job, take it up with your staff association or direct with your chief or with the Establishment Officer of your Department. These are the only proper methods of raising a personal grievance or claim. You must not write direct to the Treasury as the Department responsible for settling the rules governing civil servants in general—the Treasury will disregard any communication from an individual civil servant unless it is submitted through the Department in which he or she is serving. And you must not write to any outside person—*e.g.* to a Member of Parliament—and ask him to put in a good word on your behalf.

A civil servant, like anyone else, may write to his Member of Parliament about a matter of general interest—even about a matter which affects the Civil Service, so long as it is a general problem affecting others besides the writer himself. What you must not do is to attempt, by writing to a Member of Parliament or anyone else, to pull strings so that you may get a personal advantage over other members of the Civil Service—for example, so that you may be promoted in preference to someone else. Your Department will be prejudiced against you, rather than in your favour, by such an attempt: the conclusion will be drawn that your claim cannot stand on its own feet and needs outside influence to support it, and in serious cases the attempt to introduce outside influence will be treated as a disciplinary offence.



*Outside the Job*

Many employers ask no more of their employees than that they should do their jobs conscientiously and intelligently, and you may feel at first that the State as your employer cannot reasonably ask any more of you. But the State can, and must. Nobody wants to control your private life for control's sake, or to place unnecessary restrictions on what you do outside office hours. But in order that the public may have confidence in the loyalty, efficiency, and devotion to duty of the public's servants, there are some limitations and rules of behaviour which civil servants must accept, not only during the working day but outside it.

In 1928 the Prime Minister appointed a Board of Enquiry to investigate certain statements which had been made about the conduct of civil servants. The Board of Enquiry consisted of three senior civil servants, and their report included the following paragraphs, which are the nearest things we have to a written "Civil Service tradition" and deserve careful study:—

"We think in conclusion that we shall not be travelling outside our terms of reference if, as three civil servants of some experience and jealous for the honour and traditions of the service, we indicate what we conceive to be the principles which should regulate the conduct of civil servants—whether engaged in Home Departments or on diplomatic missions—in their relations to the public.

"His Majesty's Civil Service, unlike other great professions, is not and cannot in the nature of things be an autonomous profession. In common with the Royal Navy, the Army, and the Royal Air Force, it must always be subject to the rules and regulations laid down for its guidance by His Majesty's Government. This written code is, in the case of the civil servant, to be found, not only in the Statutes, but also in Orders in Council, Treasury Circulars and other directions which may from time to time be promulgated; but over and above these the Civil Service, like every other profession, has its unwritten code of ethics and conduct for which the most effective sanction lies in the public opinion of the Service itself, and it is upon the maintenance of a sound and healthy public opinion within the Service that its value and efficiency chiefly depend.

"The first duty of a civil servant is to give his undivided allegiance to the State at all times and on all occasions when the State has a claim on his services. With his private activities the State is in general not concerned, so long as his conduct therein is not such as to bring discredit upon the Service of which he is a member. But to say that he is not to subordinate his duty to his private interest, nor to make use of his official position to further those interests, is to say no more than that he must behave with common honesty. The Service exacts from itself a higher standard, because it recognises that the State is entitled to demand that its servants shall not only be honest in fact, but beyond the reach of suspicion of dishonesty. It was laid down by one of His Majesty's judges in a case some few years ago that it was not merely of some importance but of fundamental importance that in a court of law justice should not only be done but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done: which we take to mean that public confidence in the administration of justice would be shaken if the least suspicion, however ill-founded, were allowed to arise that the course of legal proceedings could in any way be influenced by improper motives. We apply without hesitation an analogous rule to other branches of the public service. A civil servant is not to subordinate his duty to his private interest; but neither is he to put himself in a position where his duty and his interests conflict. He is not to make use of his official position to further those interests: but neither is he so to order his private affairs as to allow the suspicion to arise that a trust has been abused or a confidence betrayed. These obligations are, we do not doubt, universally recognised throughout the whole of the Service; if it were otherwise its public credit would be diminished and its usefulness to the State impaired.

"It follows that there are spheres of activity legitimately open to the ordinary citizen in which the civil servant can play no part or only a limited part. He is not to indulge in political or party controversy, lest by doing so he should appear no longer the disinterested adviser of Ministers or able impartially to execute their policy. He is bound to maintain a proper reticence in discussing public affairs and more particularly those with which his own Department is concerned. And lastly, his position clearly imposes on him restrictions in matters of commerce and business from which the ordinary citizen is free.



"Between the regular investment and management of a private fortune on the one hand, and speculative transactions in stocks, exchange or commodities on the other, there are obviously numerous gradations, and it may often be difficult to draw the precise line of demarcation between what is lawful and what is prohibited; it may even be inadvisable to make the attempt, because many things, though lawful, may yet be inexpedient. But some transactions fall indubitably on the one side of the line rather than upon the other. It might well be desirable for a civil servant in all circumstances to avoid transactions wholly speculative in character; but where he is employed in any Department to which, whether rightly or wrongly, the public attribute the power of obtaining special information, such as the future course of political or financial events likely to affect the rise and fall of markets, then we assert unhesitatingly that participation in such transactions is not only undesirable or inexpedient, but wrong. The knowledge that civil servants so employed are engaged in them could not fail to shock public confidence at home, and, especially if matters of foreign exchange are involved, to produce a deplorable effect upon opinion abroad.

"We content ourselves with laying down these general principles, which we do not seek to elaborate into any detailed code, if only for the reason that their application must necessarily vary according to the position, the Department and the work of the civil servant concerned. Practical rules for the guidance of social conduct depend also as much upon the instinct and perception of the individual as upon cast-iron formulas; and the surest guide will, we hope, always be found in the nice and jealous honour of civil servants themselves. The public expects from them a standard of integrity and conduct not only inflexible but fastidious, and has not been disappointed in the past. We are confident that we are expressing the view of the Service, when we say that the public have a right to expect that standard, and that it is the duty of the Service to see that the expectation is fulfilled."

**OUTSIDE OCCUPATIONS.** The general rule is that you must give your full energy and attention to your official job, for which you are paid, during official hours. Civil servants, whether established or temporary, are forbidden to accept any part in the management of any society, firm or company which would require their attendance at any time between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; but this is only a minimum provision. A civil

servant should not undertake any outside occupation which would in any way tend to impair his usefulness as a public servant, or which might in any way conflict with the interests of his Department or be inconsistent with his position as a public servant. It is difficult to define more closely the sort of thing which is not permissible, but remember that even though you yourself may know there is no real conflict of interest between your Civil Service job and an outside occupation, this may not be so obvious to the outsider. The only safe rule is to consult the Establishment Officer of your Department if you can imagine anyone having any doubt at all about the propriety of the particular activity you are thinking of undertaking.

There are various special rules about different kinds of outside activity—*e.g.* writing, lecturing, broadcasting, inventing—which are connected with the subject-matter of your job without actually being part of the job. The general principle here is that if you have made any use of official time, official papers, or official experience—and it is probably impossible to write or otherwise create anything that relates to your job without using at least the last of these, consciously or sub-consciously—you should tell your Department about it and ask permission before going ahead with it; but in general you will find that, so long as you have not used confidential information or transgressed the rules about political controversy (see below), there is no intention of depriving you either of a fair money reward of your labours or of your fair share of credit for them.

You must in every case ask the permission of your own Department before undertaking any work, whether paid or unpaid, for another Government Department, even if you are proposing to do it entirely in your spare time. If it is paid work, you will have to tell your own Department how much you are being paid for it. Similarly, you must ask permission before undertaking any form of service in any of the armed forces of the Crown.

**CONTRACTS, PURCHASES AND SALES.** No Government contract may be given to a civil servant in the contracting Department, or to any partnership of which he is a member, or any company of which he is a director (except as a nominee of the Government); and no civil servant may accept a directorship (except as a nominee of the Government) in any company holding a contract with his Department, unless he has first disclosed fully to the Head of his Department the extent to



which he is interested in the matter, and the Head of the Department gives his approval.

You should in no circumstances deal in your official capacity with any matter affecting a contract, purchase or sale in which you are interested in your private capacity, *e.g.* as a shareholder in the company concerned. If you should come in contact with any such matter, you should explain the facts to your chief and ask him to arrange for someone else to handle the case.

No private purchase may be made by the Government from, and no private sale made by the Government to, a civil servant, unless with the express sanction of the Treasury. This does not, of course, apply, however, to ordinary routine transactions like buying stamps, National Savings Certificates, Stationery Office publications, and other things which are normally on sale to the general public. And when surplus Government stores are offered for sale to the general public, civil servants may buy them for their own personal use unless they have been officially connected with the arrangements for the sale or have been able through their official position to get special knowledge about the condition of the goods to be sold.

**PRIVATE FINANCIAL AFFAIRS.** Civil servants are expected to conduct their private financial affairs in a satisfactory manner. Borrowing money from a junior officer is regarded as a serious offence. Serious financial embarrassment, however it arises, is regarded as something which impairs the efficiency of a public servant and renders him less valuable than he would otherwise be; and if it has arisen through imprudence or any other fault on the civil servant's part, he may find himself in trouble with his employing Department.

A civil servant who becomes bankrupt, or otherwise seriously embarrassed financially, even though he is not involved in any legal proceedings, is expected to report the fact at once to the Head of his Department. If he has not acted discredibly he will not be punished; indeed, the Department may possibly be able to help by means of a benevolent fund whose purpose is to assist members of the staff in genuine misfortune. If, however, he has acted dishonestly or in any other discreditable way, he is liable to dismissal from the Service; and if there is any evidence that he has misused public money, he will be prosecuted by the Department. Dismissal is also the penalty for concealing the fact of being in serious financial embarrassment, whether discredit-

able or not. A civil servant who is in serious financial embarrassment may not in any circumstances be employed on duties which involve the handling of public money.

In each Department there is a representative of the Civil Service Benevolent Fund. The Fund's aim is to relieve financial distress among civil servants and their dependants if they are in need because of long illness or some other unforeseen misfortune.

**ARREST.** A civil servant who is arrested on any charge, whether civil or criminal, must immediately take all reasonable steps to inform his Department of the fact that he has been arrested. A civil servant convicted of any charge which is considered by the Department to be of a serious nature will be liable to dismissal.

**POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.** Until the end of the seventeenth century, it was not uncommon for a person who had begun by serving the King in a humble capacity, as a civil servant, to rise to be the Minister in charge of a Department; there was no firm barrier between civil servants and Ministers. But for various reasons after the Revolution in 1688 it was considered advisable to diminish the King's influence over Parliament, and the Act of Settlement, 1700, contained a provision disabling any person who held an "office of profit" (*i.e.* a paid appointment) under the Crown from sitting in the House of Commons. This prohibition was later modified, and Ministers and holders of certain other "offices of profit" under the Crown are now allowed to sit in the House; but as a general rule civil servants are still excluded, and if a Member of Parliament should become a civil servant his seat in Parliament would automatically become vacant.

There are rather different rules governing the position of a civil servant who wants to become a Member of Parliament, from the disciplinary point of view. An Order in Council of 1927 provides that no civil servant may issue an address to electors or in any other manner publicly announce himself or allow himself to be announced as a candidate or prospective candidate for Parliament until he has retired or resigned from his civil service employment. (This does not apply to certain classes of industrial civil servants.) The reasons are plain. You cannot be a Member of Parliament and at the same time remain a disinterested and impartial servant of Parliament. The Member of Parliament must be



free to speak his mind about the Government of the day and to criticise its actions as and when he thinks fit; the civil servant cannot have this freedom.

On the same grounds a civil servant must not take any open part in political controversy even if he is not thinking of standing for Parliament. This does not mean that you may not have your private political opinions, that you may not vote at an election, or even that you may not belong to a political party; but it does mean that you must not do anything which might cause the general public, who do not know you, to doubt whether you can be an impartial servant. It makes no difference, of course, *which* political party you adhere to; the party which forms the Government to-day may be in opposition next year, or next week, and if your loyalty to the Government is not doubted now it may be doubted then.

It is left to Departments to decide whether members of their staffs shall be allowed to take part in local government elections or be members of local councils.

### *The Right of Association*

Since about the beginning of this century the right of staff associations to present claims on behalf of their members has been generally recognised in the Civil Service. Where a claim affects members of one Department only it is presented to that Department; where it affects a whole grade throughout the Service, or indeed the whole Service, it is presented to the Treasury as co-ordinating Department. Moreover, when an association can show that it has in its membership a substantial proportion of the total strength of any grade, it may be officially "recognised" as representing that grade, either nationally, or in a particular Department. This means that the Treasury, or the particular Department concerned, will normally consult the association before introducing any appreciable change in the conditions of service of the grade, so that the association can say what the staff are likely to think about the change; as far as possible changes will be made by agreement with the association; and in the event of disagreement on any proposal or claim affecting pay or certain similar matters, the association will have the right to seek a binding ruling from the Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal, a special and independent body established to settle such disagreements. (The Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal does not take disputes

connected with the industrial grades: they go to the Industrial Court.)

You are not only allowed but encouraged to belong to a staff association. Besides being a good thing for the individual civil servant to belong to an association, which can support him in his reasonable claims and put his point of view before the authorities on all kinds of questions affecting his conditions of service, it is also a good thing for Departments and for the Civil Service as a whole that civil servants should be strongly organised in representative bodies. It is only commonsense to meet the wishes of the civil servant about his conditions of service as far as possible, for a contented staff will work much more efficiently than a staff which feels that its interests are being completely ignored by the "management." But it is hopeless to try to find out the wishes of a scattered, unorganised body of individual civil servants each of whom may express a different view. When they get together in representative associations, their collective wish can be democratically determined and passed on to the "management" with real force and agreement behind it; the "management" knows where they stand, and can act accordingly.

So join an association and do your bit to see that it is a "live" and a really representative one.

Besides the method of negotiation through separate staff associations for different grades, there is in the Civil Service another method known as the Whitley system. This was introduced as the result of recommendations made in 1917 and 1918 by a committee under the chairmanship of the Right Hon. J. H. Whitley, M.P. A Whitley Council in the Civil Service is a joint body, consisting of representatives of the "Official Side," *i.e.* the Heads of Departments and other senior civil servants who are part of the "management," and the "Staff Side," *i.e.* the principal staff associations representing the rank and file of the staff. There is a National Whitley Council covering the whole of the non-industrial Service, and there are Departmental Councils in nearly every Department. For industrial civil servants there are separate Councils on the same principle.

The general object of these Councils is "to secure the greatest measure of co-operation between the State as employer and the general body of civil servants, with a view to increased efficiency in the public service combined with the well-being of those employed; to provide machinery for dealing with grievances; and generally to bring together the experience and different



points of view of representatives of the different civil service classes." Their functions include:—

Provision of the best means for utilising the ideas and experience of the staff.

Means for securing to the staff a greater share in and responsibility for the determination and observance of the conditions under which their duties are carried out.

Determination of the general principles governing conditions of service.

The encouragement of the further education of civil servants and their training in higher administration and organisation.

Improvement of office machinery and organisation and provision of opportunities for the full consideration of suggestions by the staff on this subject.

Proposed legislation so far as it has a bearing upon the position of civil servants in relation to their employment.

In several Departments committees have been set up to receive suggestions from the staff. So if you have an idea that might lead to more efficient working, or to staff or financial savings anywhere in the office, you can send it to the Staff Suggestions Committee.

The Whitley Councils have worked well and their effect on the Service is generally agreed to have been good. They have made possible frank and responsible joint discussions on the widest issues affecting all members of the Service, and they have developed a healthy spirit of co-operation and understanding by each side of the other's difficulties. Whitleyism is "a spirit as much as a piece of machinery." It is up to you, by taking an interest in it and keeping it alive in your own office, to carry on its successful working.

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As a civil servant, you belong to an interesting and a useful profession. What has been said in this handbook only scratches the surface of it; the rest you will find out gradually, by training, by experience, and sometimes no doubt by your mistakes. Good luck to you in your career in the service of the public.

H.M. Treasury.

December, 1949.