

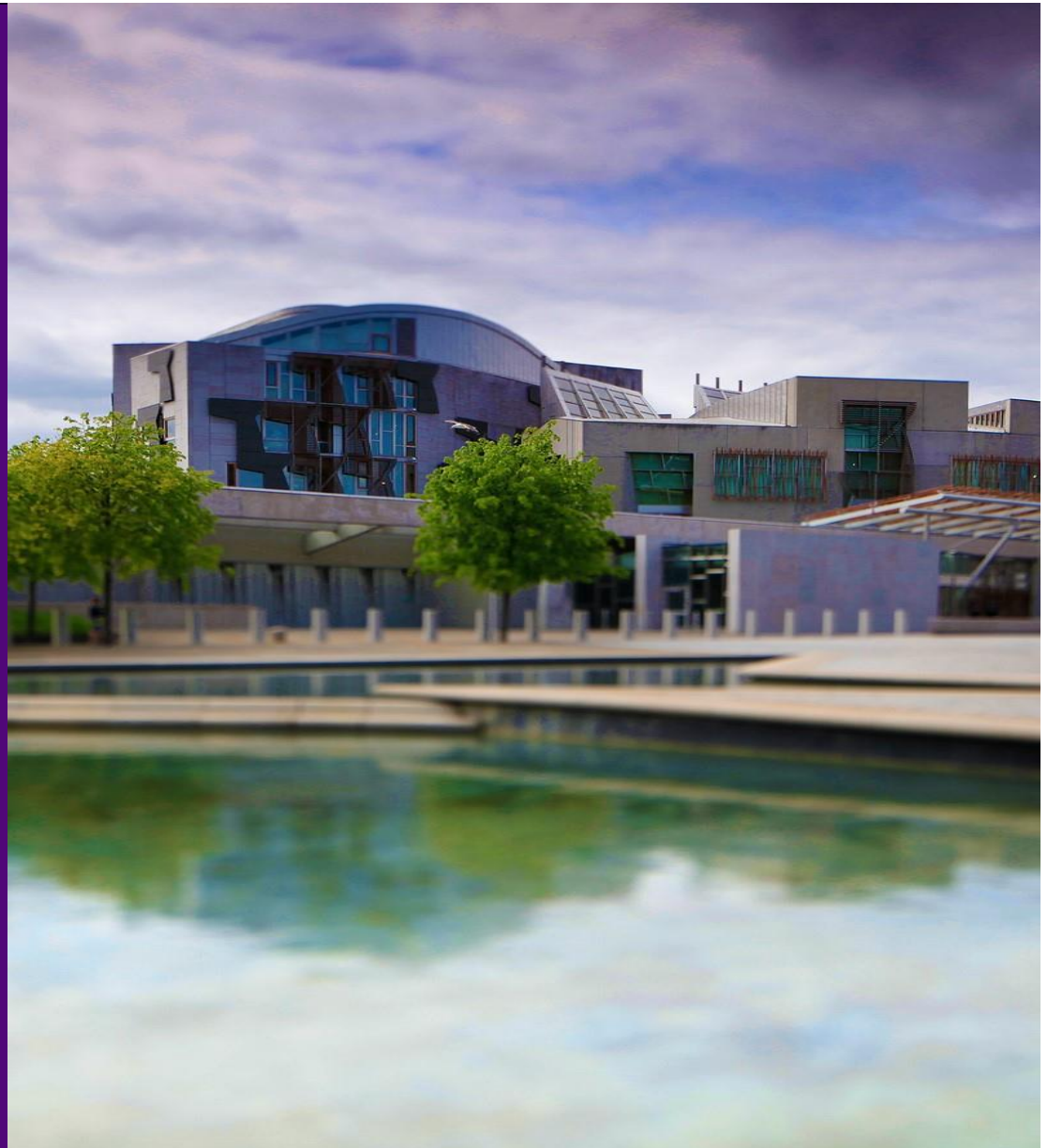


The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe)

**Senior Researcher,
Rural Affairs,
Agriculture and Land
Use**

Application Pack



Welcome from Graeme Cook, Head of Research and Sustainable Development Scrutiny, SPICe

Thank you for your interest in this Senior Researcher role – a key role supporting MSPs, their staff and parliamentary committees in their scrutiny roles. You'll be working in SPICe, the Scottish Parliament Information Centre, an office of about 50 staff - responsible for providing impartial research, library and information services to the Parliament. You'll work in a supportive team, our Environment, Rural, Constitution and International Research Unit – and you will be the lead on agriculture, rural affairs and land use issues.

These subjects are equally complex and fascinating – and you'll be at the front line in researching, analysing and synthesising for MSPs, their staff and staff of the parliament to support scrutiny of the Scottish Government. You'll do this alongside experienced colleagues working in related subject areas – and you'll be involved in lots of collaborative work, including with other researchers, analysts, data visualisation and information specialists.

A key element of the role is support to parliamentary committees – working closely alongside colleagues from our clerking, legal services and participation and communities teams to deliver a seamless service - in pursuit of effective scrutiny of the Scottish Government, and better law. You can expect to be working particularly with the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee, and the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee in that regard. You'll also be expected to support MSPs in their parliamentary and constituency roles –answering enquiries and providing material for debates.

The Scottish Parliament is a great place to work, and grow in your career. If you're interested, please feel free to get in touch for a chat.



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Working in SPICe (Research and Enquiries)

I have worked in SPICe for almost 5 years, as the senior researcher covering topics related to land use and rural affairs.

Over the years I have worked on a wide variety of policy issues with different committees, including post-Brexit agriculture policy, food policy, animal welfare, climate change related to land use, and changes to agricultural tenancies.

With MSP enquiries you also come across a smorgasbord of different topics within your subject area which gives you the opportunity to learn about lots of new things.

The nature of the job means that we get to explore important issues from a range of perspectives, seeking to reflect different points of view and understand the available evidence. The work can be fast moving (for example, responding to questions about issues in the headlines) but is also about building up expertise in an area.

Colleagues in SPICe are supportive, collaborative and a great team to work in. It's a privilege to get to work alongside people with such varied areas of expertise – the lunchtime conversations are never boring! Our work also brings us in contact with people who have an amazingly wide range of experience and knowledge. As well as working alongside politicians, we connect with frontline organisations, academia, and other parliaments.



Anna Brand, Senior Researcher



The Scottish Parliament
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Fixed Term, Senior Researcher, Rural Affairs, Agriculture and Land Use, Scottish Parliament Information Centre, Grade 5

Salary range: £47,324.70 to £56,832.30 (£52,583 to £63,147 FTE)

Length of appointment: 9 months with the possibility of extension

Want to make a difference in one of the most influential places in Scotland? Now is your chance!

Applications for a secondment opportunity are welcome.

This is a great opportunity to join the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) as a Senior Researcher.

SPICe comprises a research and information service and supports the scrutiny and legislative functions of the Parliament. We provide impartial, accurate and timely research, information and briefings to Members of the Scottish Parliament, their staff, and Parliamentary staff.

Working alongside experienced colleagues within the Environment, Rural, Constitution and International Research Unit Research Unit, you'll be leading on Rural Affairs, Agriculture and Land Use policy areas. You'll be involved in answering enquiries on a wide range of subjects, including agriculture, farmed animal health and welfare, rural development, food, forestry, biodiversity and nature-based solutions to climate change - as well as support on issues including wildlife, natural heritage and fisheries. You'll prepare committee briefings and analysis to help MSPs scrutinise the related policies of the Scottish Government, and you'll publish briefings and blog articles on relevant issues.

We're looking for an experienced researcher with in-depth understanding of rural affairs, agriculture and land use policy. You'll be an excellent communicator who is able to produce comprehensive briefings with brevity, accuracy and impartiality, and have a commitment to producing high quality research and analysis.

You'll demonstrate a high level of personal credibility with excellent communication and influencing skills, with the ability to develop and maintain positive working relationships.



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This is a full time post but we are happy to talk Flexible Working

Fixed Term, Senior Researcher, Rural Affairs, Agriculture and Land Use, Scottish Parliament Information Centre, Grade 5 (Cont.)

If you're looking for a new challenge and the opportunity to contribute to the Parliament's vision, we'd love to hear from you.

We particularly welcome applications from candidates from a Minority Ethnic background and candidates with a disability. All appointments will be made on merit. We have a values-based culture of respect and inclusion embedded in our organisation, and everyone has the ability to make a difference.

We offer a great range of benefits including: 41.5 leave days (FTE, including public holidays), flexible working, paid professional subscriptions, family-friendly policies, Season Ticket advance loans, an onsite gym facility, Health and Wellbeing Schemes including discounted gym membership, a confidential counselling and information service, and the Cycle to Work Scheme.

You'll also have the opportunity to join the Alpha Civil Service pension scheme, where we'll offer you an employer contribution of up to 28.97% of your basic salary.

For full information about this role and to apply for this job click [here](#). Please visit [the recruitment process](#) for hints and tips on your application.



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This is a full time post but we are happy to talk Flexible Working

Delivering for Excellence Senior Researcher, Rural Affairs, Agriculture and Land Use, Grade 5

The Scottish Parliament is a values-led organisation which means our values (Stewardship, Excellence, Inclusiveness, and Respect) are at the centre of everything we do. These values are embedded in this role. Please visit our [values pages in our Staff Handbook](#).

Stewardship

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

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Contributing to the continuous improvement of the research and information services that SPICe provides to Members, parliamentary committees and to the staff of the Parliament
- Using your research skills, working to help the Parliament achieve its corporate objectives, including improving the quality and effectiveness of scrutiny
- Providing high quality written and oral briefing material in your subject areas, including detailed briefings and blog articles in anticipation of parliamentary business, and in dialogue with MSPs and parliamentary committees

And in delivering these you will have:

- A commitment to continuous improvement and positively contributing to and participating in organisation-wide projects and initiatives
- The ability to produce high quality research and analysis in your subject areas, communicating complex issues with brevity, accuracy and impartiality, including the ability to produce comprehensive and clearly written briefings in an accessible format
- A commitment to further developing your own knowledge and skills to better provide research and analytical support in your subject areas



Delivering for Excellence Senior Researcher, Rural Affairs, Agriculture and Land Use, Grade 5 (Cont.)

Excellence

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

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Delivering high quality analysis to requests from committees, individual MSPs and their staff, and staff of the parliament across rural affairs, agriculture and land use subject areas
- Supporting efforts to build parliamentary capacity to improve scrutiny on rural affairs, agriculture and land use subject areas
- Taking ownership of your own workload and prioritising work appropriately, including assisting colleagues where needed

And in delivering these you will have:

- Detailed knowledge of the rural affairs, agriculture and land use policy landscape in Scotland
- The ability to collaborate when working under pressure, and to work on your own initiative to tight deadlines
- Good organisational skills including the ability to prioritise and meet competing deadlines across many different work streams, often working in situations where there is incomplete information and where an innovative and robust approach is required



Delivering for Excellence Senior Researcher, Rural Affairs, Agriculture and Land Use, Grade 5 (Cont.)

Respect

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

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Establishing effective relationships to enable you to work closely with colleagues to deliver high quality services
- Supporting and working with colleagues to improve understanding of the systemic complexities of your subject areas, including interlinkages with other policy areas
- Keeping MSPs and committees well informed on matters relevant to the governance of Scotland

And in delivering these you will have:

- Well-developed interpersonal skills and the ability to build relationships with colleagues at all levels through open communication and constructive feedback
- A commitment to sharing your research expertise with colleagues to improve their understanding, as well as showing respect for colleagues' expertise, skills, experience and knowledge and valuing their strengths and contribution
- An understanding of the needs of the end-user when developing and delivering services



Delivering for Excellence Senior Researcher, Rural Affairs, Agriculture and Land Use, Grade 5 (Cont.)

Inclusiveness

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

Your main responsibilities will involve:

- Developing and maintaining a wide range of external analytical and policy contacts across your subject areas
- Representing the Parliament at external events and networks to increase the visibility and profile of SPICe and our work
- Coaching and mentoring academic fellows and student placements as required, to reach their potential and contribute to the work of SPICe and the Parliament

And in delivering these you will have:

- A track record of working collaboratively with others in your subject areas, and a willingness to share knowledge and information to improve SPICe services
- An inclusive approach and the ability to develop and enhance strong external relationships, working with a diverse range of stakeholders in a manner that respects their role and promotes the strategic direction of the wider organisation
- A coaching style of leadership, with experience of empowering and developing colleagues to reach their potential



About us

The Parliamentary Service of over 600 people is a high-achieving and professional organisation. We are public servants rather than civil servants; we serve the Parliament and its Members and not the Scottish Government.



The [Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body](#) is responsible for providing the Parliament with the property, staff and services required for the Parliament's purposes, in accordance with the Scotland Act 1998. It is made up of five Members elected by the Parliament and the Presiding Officer.

The Corporate Body delegates the day-to-day running of the Parliament to David McGill, our Clerk/Chief Executive.

David is assisted by his Leadership Group setting the strategic direction for the parliamentary service and for creating the conditions that helps to promote a positive workplace culture. You can view our Leadership Group in our [organisation chart](#) along with our different Offices.

Our vision is clear: To make a positive difference to the lives of the people of Scotland. This means putting people at the centre of everything we do.

We attach great importance to our commitments to [Diversity and Inclusion](#) and our core values of Stewardship, Excellence, Respect and Inclusiveness form a central part of our working culture.

Our performance framework helps us to communicate and implement our strategic priorities through the parliamentary service. The [strategic plan](#) sets out our aims and priorities. This provides a set of shared priorities for everyone across the parliamentary service and covers matters such as improving parliamentary scrutiny, developing and investing in our staff, aligning public engagement with parliamentary business and providing high quality support to our elected Members. Each of the aims is equally important as they are inter-related. This means that we cannot achieve one without the others and that every one of our colleagues plays an important role in delivering them.



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About us (Cont.)

We are committed to providing a great working environment where people enjoy coming to work and feel valued for their contribution and excel in their chosen careers. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity and we have a zero tolerance approach to bullying, harassment or victimisation of any kind. We recognise that improving employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on organisational performance. We know that ideas generated by colleagues can help shape the future direction of our services and contribute to the successful delivery of our goals, and our inclusive leadership style guides us in this approach.

We are committed to building a workforce which reflects the diversity of the people of Scotland. We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer that values and respects the people who work for us. We seek to ensure all job applications are treated fairly, with respect and without bias. We positively encourage applications from suitably experienced candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity. We particularly welcome applications from female and minority ethnic candidates who are under-represented at this level. All appointments will be made on merit.



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We are committed to agile working and currently operate a wide variety of work patterns and arrangements across the parliamentary service. We will be pleased to consider applications from candidates wishing to work flexibly and all requests will be seriously considered. Please include clearly any information about your preferred working arrangements in your application.