



# Member of the Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM)

Information pack for applicants

**Closing date: Midday on Monday, 28 February 2022**  
**Reference no: VAC-1740**



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# Section 1 – The Role

## 1.1 Role description and person specification

### Introduction

Ministers are seeking to make 5 appointments to the board of the Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM).

### Role and Responsibilities of a Member

COM is an important committee reporting to the Chief Medical Officer, and the Chair of the Food Standards Agency on all aspects of mutagenic risks to man from exposure to chemicals in food, consumer products and the environment (see terms of reference).

As a specialist in toxicology or epidemiology with a particular expertise in cancer studies, Members will be expected to:

- Contribute to discussions of the Committee working alongside recognised experts who assess other aspects of the detailed technical data on genotoxins under consideration (e.g. mode of action/mechanism studies, traditional and novel toxicity testing strategies, statistics);
- Contribute to the Committee's discussions and to the consideration of detailed statements and conclusions from the Committee.
- Contribute to other discussions (such as in working groups or to draft text within your specialism if the need arises).

### Person specification

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and encourages applications from all sections of the community.

The boards of public bodies should reflect the population they are there to serve. Boards also benefit from fresh perspectives, and we are always keen to encourage candidates with private sector experience to consider applying for our roles.

### Essential Criteria

To be considered applicants must demonstrate how they meet all of the essential criteria.

All applicants must:

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- Be able to provide credible advice independent of government or industry
- Be a good communicator with sound judgement
- Be able to demonstrate an ability to contribute to the work of the COM
- Be able to demonstrate an understanding of committee membership and the role of COM, with the ability to provide independent scrutiny on the issues that fall within the remit of COM
- Have a sound understanding of **a field of genotoxicity** and be able to show a track record of achievement in one or more of the following areas:
  - Regulatory aspects of genotoxicology- Development of novel in vitro (non-animal) methods for the assessment of genotoxic risks from chemicals
  - Development and understanding of the application of New Approach Methods to genotoxicity testing and application to chemical regulation
  - Expertise in reproductive toxicology
  - Expertise in epigenetics
  - The application of quantitative structural activity relationships to genotoxicity

## **Remuneration**

- The COM Member role is not remunerated.

## **Time commitment**

The role involves a time commitment of three days per year

## **Location**

London

## **Tenure of office**

Ministers determine that the length of the appointment will be up to 3 years.

## **Accountability**

Members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and are accountable to the Secretary of State via the Chair for carrying out their duties and for their performance.

## **For a discussion about the role**

For further information regarding the role of COM and the role of a Member please contact:

Name: Ovnair Sepai

Tel: 01235 825163

Email: [Ovnair.sepai@phe.gov.uk](mailto:Ovnair.sepai@phe.gov.uk)

## **1.2 Role and responsibilities of the Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment**

COM advises government on the mutagenicity of chemicals used in pesticides, pharmaceuticals and other products.

The committee provides independent advice to government departments and agencies on the potential mutagenicity and genotoxicity of chemicals (whether they are likely to cause mutation in cells), from natural products to new synthetic chemicals used in pesticides or pharmaceuticals. It also advises on strategies and research for genotoxicity testing

The committee also advises on important general hazards (the inherent property of the substance) or risk (the likelihood of mutagenetic or genotoxic effects occurring after a given exposure) and gives recommendations for genotoxicity testing.

COM is an advisory body and has no regulatory status. However, it may provide advice to agencies that have a regulatory role.

## Section 2: How to apply

### 2.1 Making an application

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of a Member to COM.

The Department of Health and Social Care's Appointments and Honours Unit is managing this recruitment campaign.

To make an application please email your **CV**, a **Supporting letter** and completed **Monitoring form** to [appointments.team@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:appointments.team@dhsc.gov.uk) – please quote **ref: VAC-1740** in the subject field.

If you are unable to apply by email, please contact Qasher Mahmood on 0207 972 3085.

Applications must be received by **midday on Monday, 28 February 2022**.

In making an application please note the following:

### Disqualification from appointment

Individuals are disqualified from appointment as a Member to COM, if any of the following apply:

1. Bankruptcy
2. Current police investigations
3. Unspent criminal convictions
4. Disqualification as a company director may disqualify you from appointment

Please inform us if any of the above apply to you.

For further advice please contact Ben Jones on 0113 254 6557.

### Supporting letter

The supporting letter is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. It will benefit the Advisory Assessment Panel if you can

be clear which specific evidence you provide relates to which criterion. Providing separate paragraphs in relation to each criterion is common practice.

We will commission a pre-assessment of candidate applications which will then be provided to the Panel for consideration and to inform the shortlisting process. By applying, you are agreeing to your application being shared with another party for pre-assessment. It is the responsibility of the panel to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who will be invited to interview.

Please ensure your full name, the role to which you are applying and the corresponding reference number for the post are clearly noted at the top of your letter.

Please write all acronyms in full first, limit your letter to two pages and type or write clearly in black ink.

## **Conflicts of interest**

If you or a party related to you have any interests which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your Supporting letter.

Conflicts of interest may include (without limitation), any personal or business interests (including direct and indirect financial interests), positions of employment, other appointments or other positions of authority, that you or any party related to you have and which may influence your judgement in performing your public appointment or may be perceived by a reasonable member of the public as having scope to do so.

A 'party related to you' could include for example (but without limitation) a spouse/partner, a business partner, a close family member or a person living in the same household as you or a close family member.

Failure to declare a potential conflict of interest may become grounds for withdrawing an offer of appointment. If offered the role, you will also be required to make a Declaration of Interests and to keep the Declaration up to date throughout the tenure of your appointment. The requirement to declare interests will also be included in your Terms and Conditions of appointment. Failure to disclose an interest may, subject to the interest and the circumstances, become grounds for suspension or termination of your appointment.

## Standards in public life and ensuring public confidence

If there are any issues in your personal or professional history (including any convictions or bankruptcy) that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment to Ministers or COM or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue/s in your Supporting letter.

In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media and blogs. Due Diligence may be carried out on any publicly available information and shared with the Panel. The Panel may explore any issues with you before they make a recommendation on the appointment.

Failure to disclose such information could result in an appointment offer being withdrawn or the appointment being terminated, as the person appointed to this role will be expected to demonstrate the highest standards of corporate and personal conduct and in line with standards set out in the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, which includes the Nolan Principles regarding conduct in public life. As part of agreeing to the terms and conditions of appointment you will be expected to agree to meeting the standards set out in this Code. You can access this document at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies>

## CV

Please ensure your CV includes:

- Your full name, title, home address, personal contact telephone numbers (land line and mobile), personal email address and details of any Twitter accounts and LinkedIn accounts, including your Twitter handle/username.
- Contact details for two referees who will support your application. One referee should be the person to whom you are/were accountable in your current/most recent appointment or position of employment. Please indicate the relationship of each referee to you. References will be requested for short-listed candidates prior to interview
- Brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role, and any past or present Ministerial appointments.

## Monitoring form

Please complete the monitoring form. Diversity monitoring information will not be seen by the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application.

Political activity information is primarily for monitoring purposes only, however if you are shortlisted for interview, this information will be shared with the selection panel. The reason for this, is that it is appreciated that such activities may have given you relevant skills, including experience gained from committee work, collective decision-making, resolving conflict and public speaking. If you have had such experience and you consider it relevant to your application for this post, you should also take the opportunity to include it separately in your supporting statement. If possible, you should not, however, identify the relevant political party in your statement. Any political activity you declare may be published in line with the principles set out in the Governance Code on Public Appointments

## Disability Confident Scheme

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all and to the appointment of disabled people. As part of the Disability Confident Scheme, we guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability who applies under the Scheme and whose application meets the essential criteria for the post.

### What do we mean by a disability?

To be eligible for the Disability Confident Scheme you must have a disability or long-term health condition, which could be physical, sensory or mental and must be expected to last for at least 12 months. You do not have to be registered as a disabled person to apply under this scheme.

If you wish to apply under the Disability Confident Scheme please ensure you complete Section E of the Monitoring form and return it with your application.

## 2.2 The Assessment Process

We will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will advise you of the likely timetable at each stage.

### Planned timetable

- Closing date: Midday on 28 February 2022
- Shortlisting: TBC
- Interviews: TBC

### Advisory Assessment Panel

The panel will include:

- Will Jones, Deputy Director for Health Protection Policy, DHSC senior sponsor for COM, as panel chair
- Gareth Jenkins, Chair of COM
- Nicole Mather, Health Research Authority NED, former Director at the Office for Life Sciences

### Assessment

- The Panel will select for interview only the strongest applicants who it feels have demonstrated that they best meet all the criteria set out in the person specification. However, if you have applied under the Disability Confident Scheme and you meet all the essential criteria, then you will also be invited for interview.
- If you apply under the Disability Confident Scheme and you are not shortlisted for interview, we can provide a summary of the assessment of your written application, if you choose to request feedback. However, please note that due to the volume of applications that are received it is not possible to routinely provide feedback to all other applicants not shortlisted for interview
- We will email you to let you know whether you have been invited to be interviewed. Interviews will be conducted either face-to-face, in central London or by video/teleconference. We will confirm arrangements to shortlisted candidates in due course.

- If you are invited to interview and are unable to attend on the set date, then an alternative date can only be offered at the discretion of the Panel.
- If invited to interview, the Panel may invite you to make a brief presentation at the start of the interview and will go on to question you about your skills and experience, including asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post
- The Panel will also explore with you any potential conflicts of interest or any other issues arising from your personal and professional history which may impact on an appointment decision (see section 2.1 for further details).
- Candidates whom the Panel believe are 'appointable', will be recommended to Ministers who will make the final decision. Ministers may choose to meet with candidates before making a decision. Candidates should therefore be prepared for a short time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.
- If following interviews your application is unsuccessful, we will notify you. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles, and prepare for and attend an interview, and that feedback is a valuable part of the process. Following interviews, the letter which confirms the outcome of the appointment process will provide the details of who you may approach for feedback on your interview and application, if you so wish.

## **Offer of appointment**

If you are successful, you will be contacted by Officials to inform you of the offer and to confirm if you would be willing to accept. If you would, then you will receive a letter from Ministers appointing you as a Member of COM, which will confirm the terms and conditions on which the appointment is offered.

## **Announcement**

All public appointments are announced on GOV.UK. The announcement will include the length of your appointment, the remuneration for the role and whether you have declared any political activity. We will share the draft announcement with you before it is made.

## **Queries**

For any queries about your application status or the selection process, please contact Ben Jones in DHSC's Public Appointments and Honours Unit:

Email: [Ben.Jones1@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:Ben.Jones1@dhsc.gov.uk)

If you choose to apply, we would like to thank you in advance for your time and effort in making an application.

All applications will be acknowledged by email after the closing date. Please quote reference VAC-1740 on all correspondence.

## **If you are not completely satisfied**

The Department of Health and Social Care will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact Ben Jones by emailing [Ben.Jones1@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:Ben.Jones1@dhsc.gov.uk)

## **2.3 How we will manage your personal information**

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail because of sending the Department of Health and Social Care any personal information. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes.

When we ask you for personal information, we promise we will:

- Only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information
- Ensure you know why we need it
- Protect it and insofar as is possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn't
- Ensure you know what choice you have about giving us information
- Make sure we don't keep it longer than necessary
- Only use your information for the purposes you have authorised

We ask that you:

- Provide us with accurate information
- Inform us as soon as possible of any changes or if you notice mistakes in the information we hold about you

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If you apply for a post, we will share some of the information you provide with the members of the selection panel for the post to which you are applying, so that your CV and supporting letter can be assessed.

The diversity information you provide will not be used in the selection process and will therefore not be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application at any stage.

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