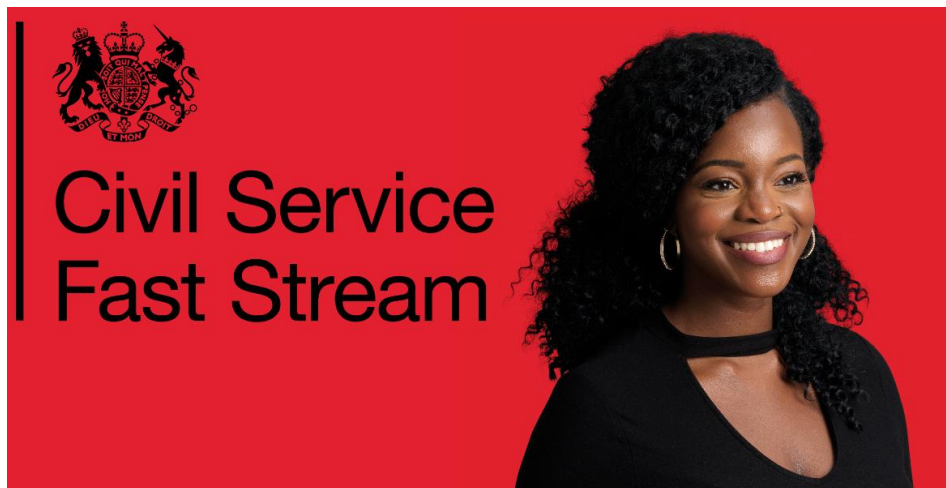


Fast Stream Assessment Centre (FSAC) 2020

Guide to Candidates

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Congratulations! You've reached the Fast Stream Assessment Centre (FSAC).

This guide tells you what to expect on the day and what happens afterwards.

What is FSAC?

FSAC is a half-day assessment centre that selects graduates with the calibre and potential to join the Fast Stream. Research shows that assessment centres make more accurate predictions about how you will perform at work than other recruitment methods. Fast Stream standards are high and to have reached the assessment centre is a significant achievement. You now have the chance to show that you have the skills and personal qualities to be a successful Fast Streamer.

Our aim is to measure each candidate's skills, aptitudes and abilities against set criteria. You will complete a variety of exercises using an iPad and a laptop, including a group exercise, in which you'll be working with fellow candidates from a wide range of backgrounds.

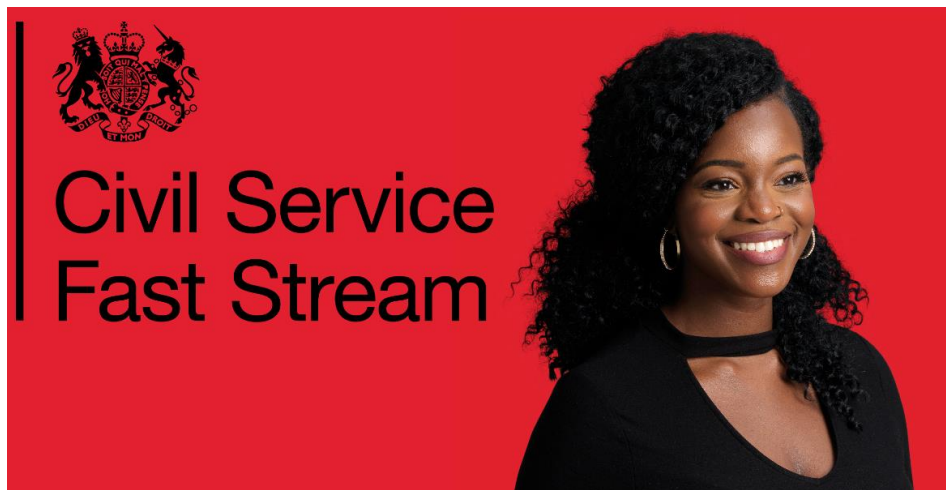
You will attend FSAC either in Newcastle or London. Please be aware that no preference is offered.

How can I prepare?

Before you arrive

There's a limit to what you can do to prepare for FSAC, but here are a few pointers.

- Try to remember the behaviours and have those in mind during the FSAC to help direct your performance.
- Read this guide carefully. It sets the scene and gives examples of the exercises you'll come across during your time with us.
- Find out as much as you can about what civil servants, and particularly Fast Streamers, do. The Fast Stream website (www.faststream.gov.uk) has a lot of information on this.



- Get a good night's sleep!

What you Need to Bring

All FSAC candidates must bring the following with them to the Fast Stream Assessment Centre:

1. Your **login details** to the Fast Stream application system
2. Your **valid Passport**
3. If you do not have a current Passport, or are unable to have this in your possession in time for your FSAC, you will need to provide a formal form of photo ID, preferably a valid photo driving licence.
4. If you do not have a current Passport and you are unable to provide formal photo ID then please bring your birth certificate and one passport sized photograph, signed by you on the back. We will countersign and retain the photo on the day to confirm your identity.

Optional documents to bring

If you have your Degree Certificate to hand please bring it with you to the Assessment Centre when you attend for either your initial Assessment or Specialist Board. If you do not have it to hand or have not yet finished your course we will request sight of your certificate at a later date.

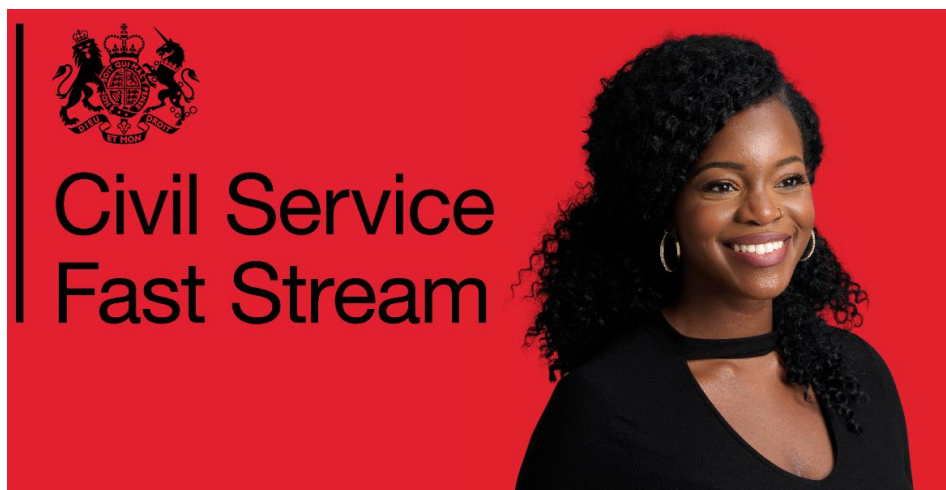
All original documents that you bring to the FSAC will be photocopied and returned to you on the day.

Attending the FSAC

You will be invited to attend either the Newcastle or London Fast Stream Assessment Centre.

Specific start and end times will be communicated in your invite. The majority of morning sessions will run from 7.45am to 12.50pm and the afternoon session will run from 12.15pm to 17.35pm. Please ensure that you arrive promptly and allow enough time for travel.

The Fast Stream Assessment Centre is a formal assessment process and you should treat it as you would any other interview situation (smart dress is advised).



Plan Your Journey

Travelling around London can take longer than you think, so it's worth allowing extra time. It's also a good idea to work out how you are going to travel here in advance. You'll find directions to help you navigate your way from each of the main London railway stations on the map on the recruitment site.

The Newcastle Assessment Centre is **not** located in the City Centre. Approximately 30 minutes onward travel via the local Metro network is necessary. Please allow adequate time for your journey. There is also a delay at the Security gatehouse in Newcastle so please arrive early to ensure you are in time.

Travelling to the Assessment Centre

The Fast Stream Operations Team will book your travel to the Assessment Centre and any accommodation requirements; this includes Rail and Air Travel.

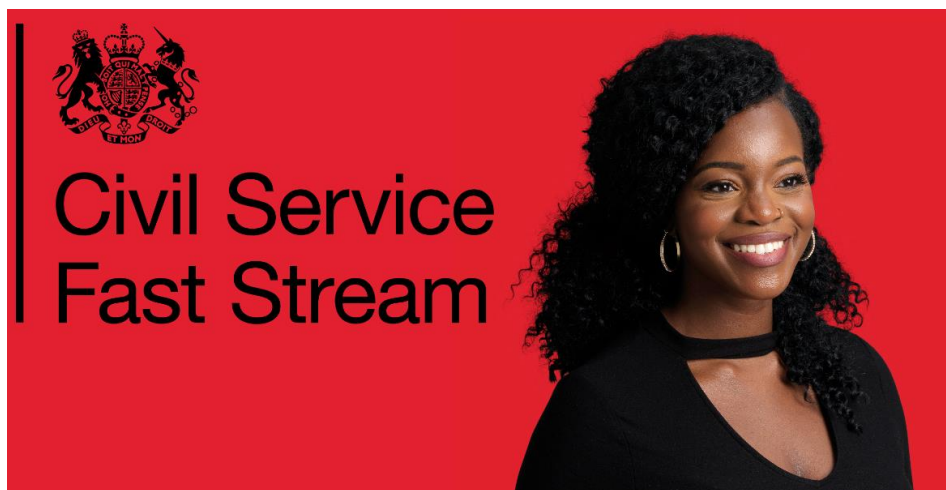
You must complete the [Travel Booking Form](#) and send it to the Operations Team by emailing it to faststream.travelbookings@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

In order to make your booking the team must receive this **no later than 2 working days before your date of travel** to the assessment centre (please note: this does not include Saturday & Sunday).

Travel and accommodation will be booked in line with the Candidate Expenses Policy documented below.

If you are not able to utilise our booking process, you can make your own travel arrangements. We will refund your travel expenses from the place where you normally live or study to the Assessment Centre. Your journey should be by the most economical method of travel.

Please retain all original receipts and submit them with your claim form. Please complete the [Expenses Claim Form](#) and return with scanned or photographed copies of the receipts to faststream.travelbookings@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.



Please annotate in the subject box of the email: Expenses Claim.

All claims must be submitted within 30 days of your attendance at FSAC. We aim to action claims within 28 days.

Once you have completed all mandatory sections of the form you will need to:

1. Click the "**SAVE AS**" button in the File Menu
2. Save the document as Your Name and Date (e.g Joe Bloggs 7th June 2018)
3. Send your saved document to faststream.travelbookings@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Important Note: Fast Stream reserves the right to refuse to pay a claim that does not comply with the Candidate Expenses Policy.

The Fast Stream operates purpose-built assessment centres in both Newcastle and London, you will be expected to travel to one of these assessment centres to complete your assessment day.

Candidates are assigned to assessment centres based on postcode, transport links and applicant numbers whilst ensuring candidates based across the country are treated fairly and do not have excessively long journeys.

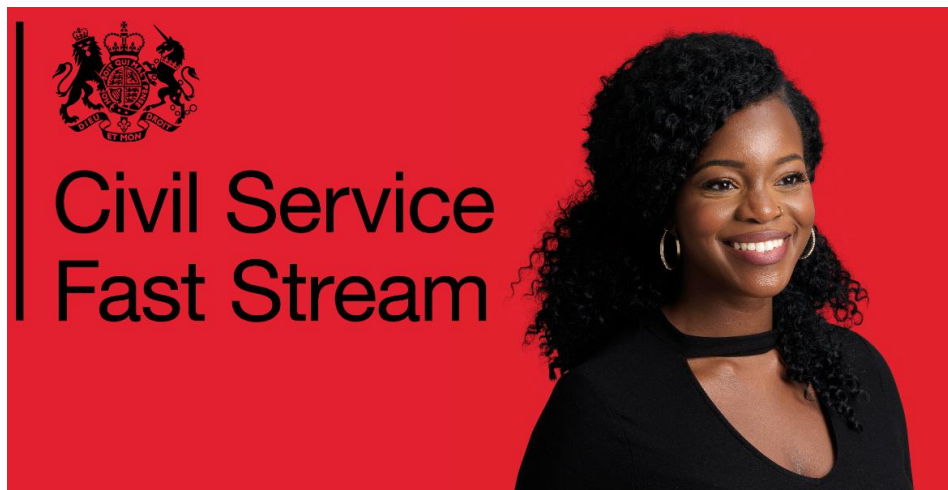
In exceptional circumstances you may be able to change your allocated assessment centre. Specific requests should be made by email to: faststream.applicationsupport@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Any expenses incurred related to attending your allocated assessment centre will be reimbursed subject to the Expenses Policy.

Candidate Expenses Policy

1. Rail

We can only reimburse standard class fare, however, please take advantage of any available cheap or discounted fares by booking ahead where possible. Please avoid booking open train tickets as these are the most expensive. Only the cheapest ticket available will be reimbursed and if a more expensive ticket is purchased (ie a flexible



or open ticket) the cost cannot be claimed. We will only reimburse for the train journey to the location city of the Assessment Centre and are not responsible for local tube or metro journeys.

2. Private Car

If it is more cost effective to travel by private car you will be refunded at the rate of 26p per mile. You cannot claim mileage if you are a passenger in another candidate's car. However, you can claim 2p per mile for a passenger.

Please note: Taxi fares and car parking fees are not reimbursed. The London Assessment Centre is within the London Congestion Charging Zone and any charges or fines incurred will not be reimbursed.

3. Motorcycle

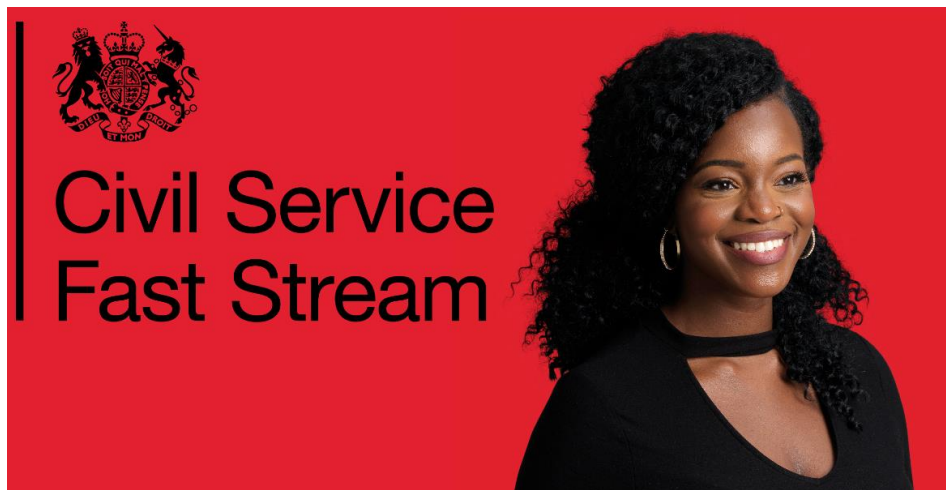
You will be refunded at a rate of 24p per mile.

4. Candidates travelling from Abroad

You may claim travelling expenses, as above, only between the place of arrival in the United Kingdom and the interview or test centre. We cannot reimburse the cost of entry into the UK. Exceptionally, candidates' expenses direct from Eire may be refunded if this is cheaper than the cost of travelling from the nearest point of entry in the UK. You may not claim overnight expenses for nights spent in the UK because flight or sailing times do not match the interview date or because departures are delayed.

5. Air Travel

Air fares will only be refunded where they are cheaper than the cost of travelling a surface route; including overnight expenses where necessary. However, you may claim the tourist airfare (please send a scanned copy of your tickets with your claim) if at the time of your assessment you reside in:



- Shetland or Orkney
- Isle of Man
- Inner or Outer Hebrides
- Isles of Scilly
- Northern Ireland, Channel Islands.

6. Overnight

You will be refunded any actual expenses subject to the following:

- FSAC held in London - up to £150 per night (including bed and breakfast)
- FSAC held in Newcastle - up to £110 per night (including bed and breakfast)
- Sleeping berth on a train or boat - cost of berth plus £10 per night.

Please note: We can only book one overnight stay per candidate.

The cost of lunches or evening meals are not refundable within the policy. However, if you stay with a friend or relative you can claim a flat rate sum of £25 to cover a 24 hour period.

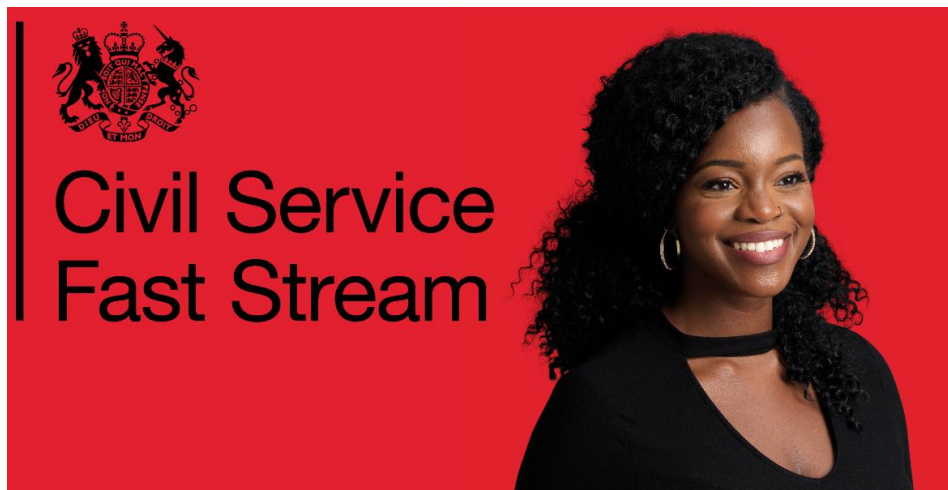
7. Candidates requiring a Personal Assistant or assistance with mobility.

If you have a disability and you need a personal assistant or supporter to assist you whilst undertaking assessment activities or if you will experience difficulty with travelling arrangements please consult the Fast Stream Operations Team on 0207 451 8079.

Queries

We will ensure that you are notified of all travel arrangements at least 48 hours before you are due to travel.

If you have any queries please contact faststream.travelbookings@cabinetoffice.gov.uk or telephone 0207 276 6969 if you are due to attend your Assessment Centre within 24 hours.



Travel information - London

London FSACs take place at 100 Parliament Street, London, SW1A 2BQ. FSAC has a dedicated entrance around the corner on King Charles Street.

If you are unable to attend the Assessment Centre or are delayed on the day, please call us on 0207 451 8129 (messages can be left on the answerphone outside of office hours).

London travel information

Visit www.tfl.gov.uk. All London mainline stations are within Travel Zone 1 – ask at the ticket office for the best travel card to buy.

London Underground

You need to travel to Westminster station. Take exit no 6. Go past the main entrance to 100PS and after 100 yards turn left into King Charles Street. The Entrance is then on the left hand side beneath the arch which spans the end of King Charles Street. Our telephone number is **0207 451 8129**.

Euston or King's Cross St. Pancras

Take the Victoria line to Victoria, change to the Circle or District line for Westminster.

Liverpool Street, Paddington or Victoria

Take the Circle or District line to Westminster.

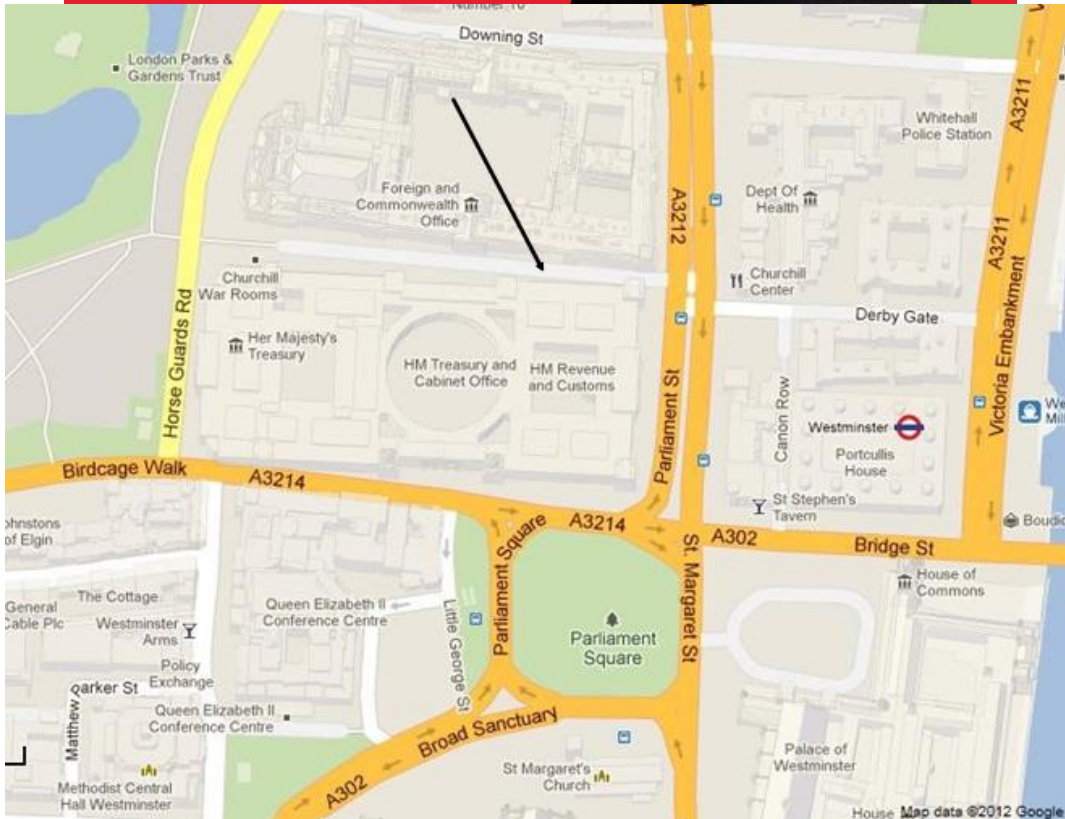
Waterloo

Take the Jubilee line to Westminster (1 stop).

The walk to FSAC from Westminster Underground station takes about 5 minutes.



Civil Service Fast Stream



Travel information - Newcastle

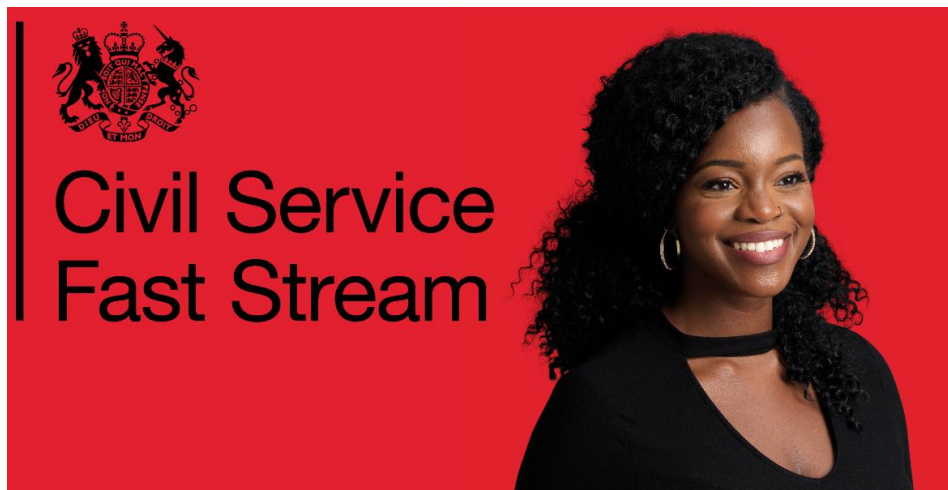
FSAC is located in Tyne View Park, D Block, Tyne View Park, Whitley Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 9RZ. Upon reaching the site, please report to the Tyne View Park Security Gatehouse. There is a map on the next page. Our telephone number is **0207 451 8110**.

If you are unable to come or are delayed on the day, please call us (messages can be left on the answerphone outside office hours).

Newcastle travel information

Visit www.nexus.org.uk

By train



Newcastle Central Station is the nearest mainline station.

By Metro

Take the Metro to Benton on the Tyne and Wear Metro Yellow line

By bus

Bus stops are located nearby, further details can be found on www.nexus.org.uk/bus

Park and ride

Park and ride facilities are provided at various Metro station, further details can be found on www.nexus.org.uk/metro/metro-park-and-ride-stations.

By car

Please note that there are no parking facilities available and car parking fees are not reimbursed.

Northbound from A1(M)

- Follow A194(M) just past Washington Moto Service Station
- Continue to A19 Northbound towards Tyne Tunnel
- Continue through the Tyne Tunnel (Toll £1.80) and follow A19 North
- Take Exit for A191/A186 from A19
- Follow A191 towards Gosforth
- Tyne View Park entrance is situated approximately 100 yards past Blue Flames Leisure Centre on the left

Southbound from A1(M)

- Exit A1(M) at Seaton Burn/Fisher Lane Interchange and follow signs for A19 Southbound
- Continue southbound and take exit for A191/A186 from A19
- Follow A191 towards Gosforth
- Tyne View Park entrance is situated approximately 100 yards past Blue Flames Leisure Centre/Whitley Park on the left

Taxis

Please contact the Operations Team on 0207 451 8110, if you require local taxi firm details. **Please note that taxi fares will not be reimbursed.**

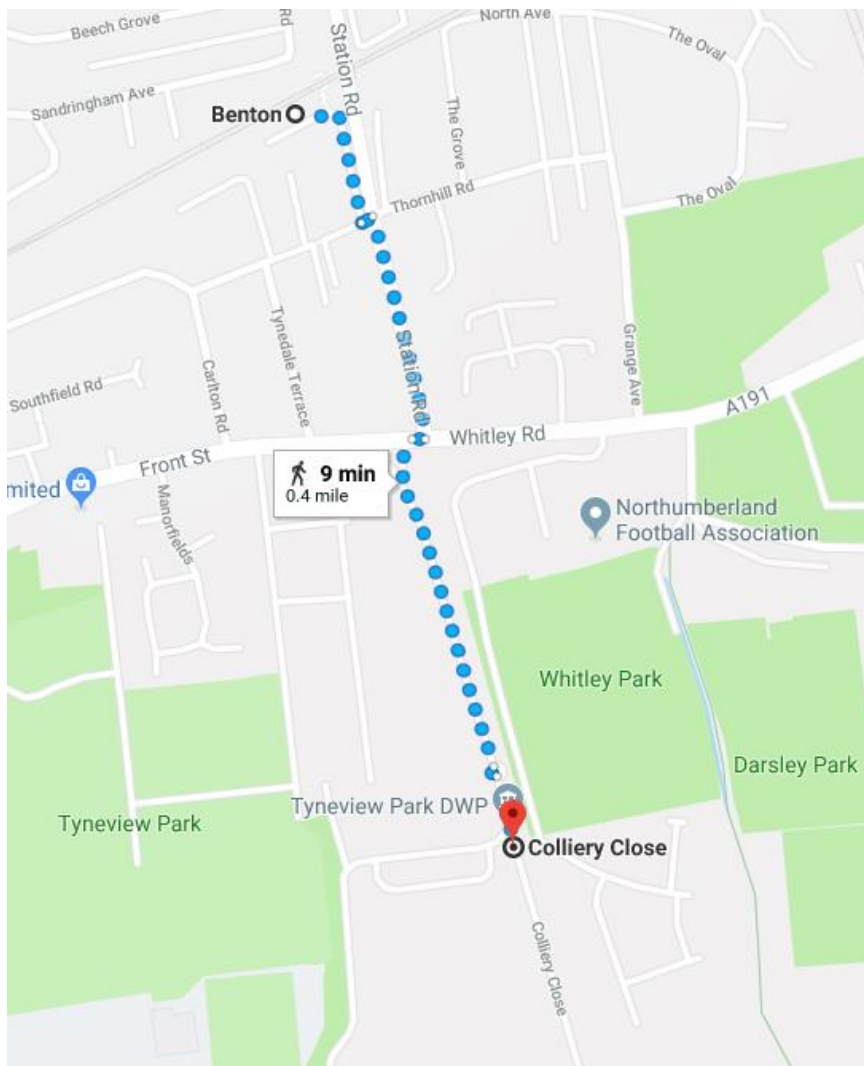
The walk to FSAC from Benton Metro station takes around 10 minutes.

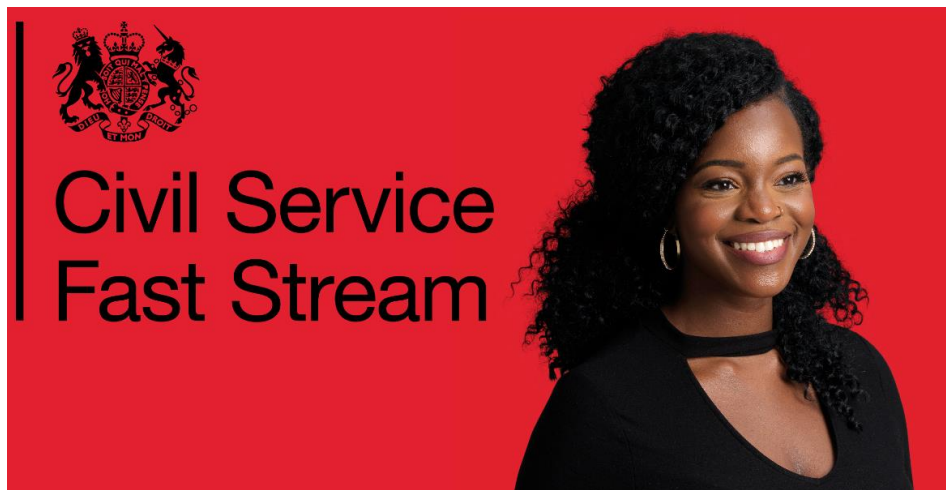


Civil Service Fast Stream



1. Cross footbridge and exit
2. Walk along Station Road
3. At traffic lights cross Whitley Road and continue ahead for Tyne View Park.





Who are the assessors?

“The Fast Stream selection process is award winning and we pride ourselves on ensuring fairness throughout. Our aim as assessors is for you to have a highly positive candidate experience and the opportunity to perform at your very best.”

Phil Wilson, Chief Assessor

Each group of candidates will be seen by specially trained assessors. These are mainly experienced civil servants. There will also be occupational psychologists with experience in assessing candidates for employment, and some recently retired civil servants.

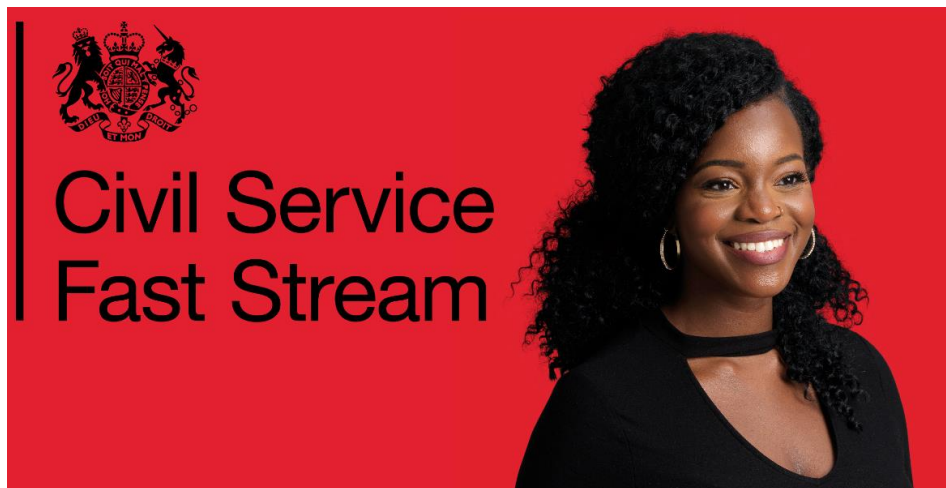
A trainee assessor, senior assessor or a visitor might accompany the assessors to observe this process but will take no part in your assessment. If you are uncomfortable about the trainee or visitor sitting in on your group or leadership exercise, please feel free to say so – this will not affect your assessment in any way.

What will be assessed?

Fair and open recruitment is important to us. We will assess you solely on your performance in the exercises.

The assessors will have no information about you except your name. They will not have seen your application form or your scores from earlier stages in the selection process. They will not know which university you attended or are attending. Nor will they know whether you have applied before.

The Civil Service is committed to equal opportunities, so your socio-economic or ethnic background, gender, disability, appearance, age, sexual orientation, accent, political views, religion, personal beliefs or previous employment play no part in our



final decision. We want you to feel free to express your point of view throughout the assessment.

You will be assessed against the following behaviours:

Seeing the Big Picture

Understand how your role fits with and supports organisational objectives. Recognise the wider organisational priorities and ensure work is in the national interest.

Changing and Improving

Seek out opportunities to create effective change and suggest innovative ideas for improvement. Review ways of working, including seeking and providing feedback.

Making Effective Decisions

Use evidence and knowledge to support accurate, expert decisions and advice. Carefully consider alternative options, implications and risks of decisions.

Communicating and Influencing

Communicate purpose and direction with clarity, integrity and enthusiasm. Respect the needs, responses and opinions of others.

Working Together

Form effective partnerships and relationships with people both internally and externally, from a range of diverse backgrounds, sharing information, resources and support.

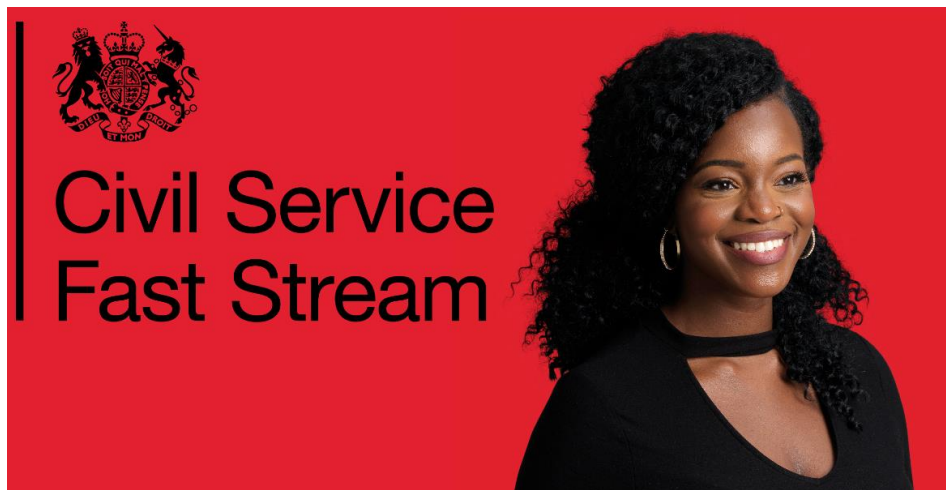
Developing Self and Others

Focus on continuous learning and development for self, others and the organisation as a whole.

Top tip

“Try to relax, sleep well the night before. Remember you will not do as well on all the activities so try hard to compartmentalise them and do not let a perceived bad performance in one affect you in the next – let it go.” Maya Desai, Fast Streamer

Approaching the FSAC – a Fast Streamer’s view



“The FSAC can sometimes be a somewhat worrying prospect. All those exercises packed into a half day; all those activities providing numerous opportunities to trip up or just not do yourself justice. The more you think about the tasks the worse it becomes.

In preparing for my FSAC I received loads of great advice, such as: Don't worry if you feel you performed better in some tasks than others. This is to be expected. Just don't dwell on those you wish you could redo and focus on the next task ahead.

To save you from the hours of worrying I am going to let you into the best secret for success for the FSAC I was given. It's not as practical as some of the advice you will hear and maybe harder to do when you first hear it, but I am convinced that when I was in your shoes it helped me pass and most importantly get this job:

Enjoy it.

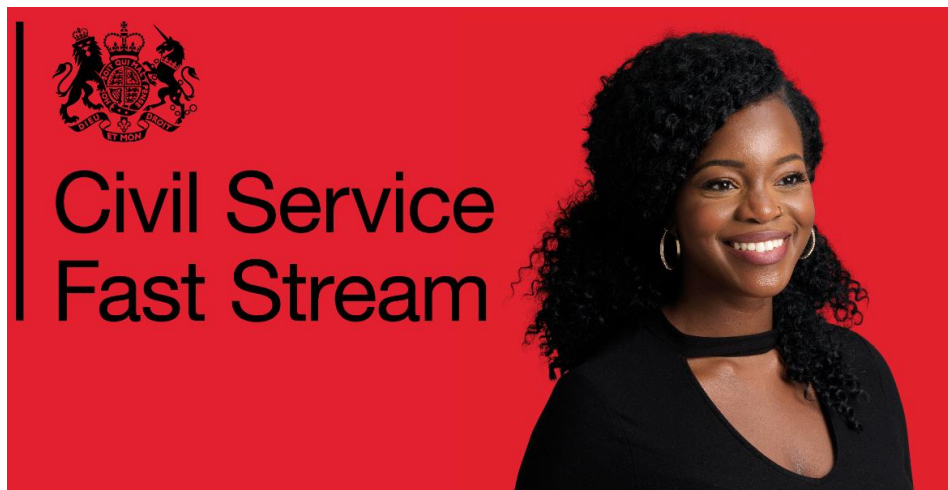
Enjoy the experience. Enjoy the task that you are doing. And by enjoying it you will give it your best shot.

Having done this myself I know it works. I left the assessment centre exhausted, but travelled home reflecting on how it had been a great learning experience for me and I had done all I could to show not only how much I wanted a place on the scheme but also that I would also be capable of doing it.” Jill Young, Fast Streamer

FSAC - a taste of life as a Fast Streamer

As well as giving us a chance to assess you, FSAC will offer you the opportunity to sample the life of a Fast Streamer. The exercises are designed to stretch you: a group discussion, a written analysis exercise and a leadership exercise.

To give you a feel for the type of work a Fast Streamer does, you will find that the tasks given to you whether in the group meeting, written exercise or individual meeting exercise, will give you a flavour of the varied work you might do as a Fast Streamer. They will show you the kinds of tasks which you might do from the start of your career.



The Group Exercise

This oral exercise is designed to test your ability to make decisions, to work with others, to show leadership and to communicate well. You will be given approximately **30 minutes** to prepare for the exercise by yourself.

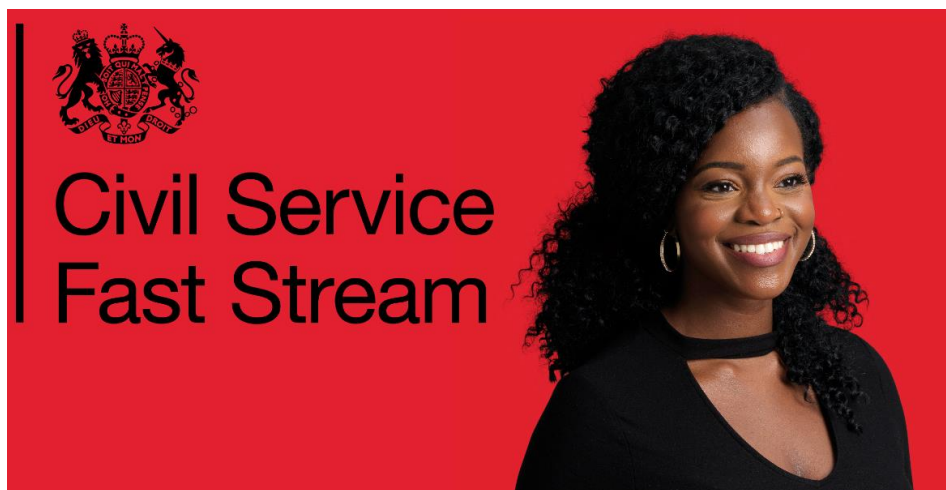
In your group of **4, 5 or 6**, you will be presented with a fictitious scenario where you and your colleagues form a task group set up to advise on a government objective or commitment. You will be given several options, typically in the form of different proposals or projects. The group will have **up to 40 minutes** (exact time depends on group size) to agree which one of these should be recommended.

You will receive a brief summarising the overall scenario, which gives detailed information on the main issues and on the position you are representing. All group members will have the same core information about the scenario and an overview of the options. You will each also have **further information on two of the options; one option** you should **promote** to the group, and the **other option** you should **oppose**. Your task is to gain the best outcome for the position you are representing as well as for the whole group.

All the information will be presented on your iPad and will be provided in a variety of formats, which may include emails, videos, articles and data. You will also be given paper to write notes on and you can annotate or highlight the text on your iPad. You will be able to refer to your iPad and notes during the group discussion.

Tips on handling the exercise:

- Group members are regarded as equal; do not to appoint someone to chair the meeting.
- Not only will you be expected to present a strong case, you will also need to listen to what the other candidates have to say and then negotiate to come to an agreed position. All members of the group are expected to contribute to the discussion on all of the projects.
- Keep to the information in the briefs, remembering that the scenario is fictitious and avoid introducing information or assertions that contradict evidence from the brief.



- You are not competing with other members of your group. Seek to establish cooperative relationships within other team members, rather than try to score points off each other.

Your assessor will be evaluating your performance against three of the Civil Service behaviours:

- Making Effective Decisions
- Working Together
- Communicating and Influencing

Example of the Group Exercise

The following gives a flavour of this exercise – the actual exercise differs in content each year.

Recovering from Disaster

You are part of a task group in the Department for Foreign Affairs, Support and Development (FASD) and have been asked to review six aid options for supporting the small British overseas territory of Pérola Verde which suffered a hurricane six months ago. The UK government plans to commit £500 million in one “focused strategic intervention” to create a better long-term future for the island’s inhabitants.

Each of you represents a different government department and have been told to **promote** one specific option to the group, and another option to **oppose**.

From:	Christine Mills, Head of Strategic Development Projects
To:	You
Subject:	Pérola Verde aid project



Civil Service Fast Stream



In anticipation of your meeting, I thought it would be useful to share some background information on the current situation and what we're aiming to achieve through the intervention.

The disaster has led to many questioning the value that Britain brings to the Commonwealth, so it is important that we are seen to be supporting those most in need.

Much of the hurricane damage was made worse by inadequacies in building construction, emergency services, transportation, power supply as well as a breakdown in law and order. There is also a high level of corruption, with a lot of previous aid given to improve the island's infrastructure wasted.

There are various criteria you may use to evaluate the options, but these are not an exhaustive list. These include: resilience to future disasters; economic benefit to the country; promoting the UK's prosperity and reputation; complexity; and risk of failure.

I have also provided you with a map of the island and a link to a short documentary, which gives you information on the historical, social and economic background of the country. **(Please note the documentary link is not provided in this example exercise)**

I look forward to hearing your recommendations.

Christine




Civil Service Fast Stream



Attachment: Map of Pérola Verde



Project	Key Characteristics	Current Provision	Concerns Raised
 Housing	<p>10,000 homes re-built using island labour. Homes gifted or sold at discounted price. Most damaged areas of capital relocated further inland on land less prone to flooding.</p> <p>All homes built /strengthened with new polymer material (designed by UK University) which protects against wind/water damage and is more hygienic and secure.</p>	<p>Over 65% of housing classified as ‘inadequate’ with poor ventilation, built with poor quality materials, often located on flood plains with little protection from weather conditions.</p> <p>Over ¼ homes uninhabitable due to hurricane.</p>	<p>Too focused on the capital – what about supporting other poorer regions?</p> <p>Some residents may be unwilling to move – will the Government force them?</p> <p>Building materials are unattractive – would people want to live in the homes?</p>
Emergency Services	<p>Creation of a volunteer police and fire & rescue service (F&RS) in rural areas, trained to provide basic emergency care. Volunteers will receive a financial allowance.</p> <p>Provision of UK designed Multiple Terrain Vehicles for police and F&R (at a discounted price) to navigate difficult terrain.</p> <p>Provision of additional medical and fire supplies throughout the country, including a new hospital.</p>	<p>Limited police service seen as “complacent and lazy”; most crime (petty in nature) is rarely investigated.</p> <p>F&RS service in capital, but limited in remote regions with slow response times.</p> <p>Basic free medical care for islanders, but long waiting times.</p>	<p>How will the volunteer service be run and monitored? Scope for bribery and new equipment potentially being mis-used.</p> <p>How will volunteer service work with existing force? Will they be accepted?</p>



Civil Service Fast Stream




<p>Anti-Corruption</p>	<p>Build infrastructure for “cashless” economy to enable digital transfer of money. Provision of 6G mobile communication technology (built using local workers). Distribution of cheap mobile phones, with cashless payment app. Support for poor people to open mobile bank accounts and get access to financial services.</p>	<p>Endemic corruption has meant that 40% of pre-hurricane aid did not reach target population. Very low business investment into the country. Local businesses often have to pay bribes to officials to operate.</p>	<p>How accepting will locals be of a ‘cashless’ system? Many local banks, shop keepers and those living on tips may be resistant. Perhaps better to assume corruption is endemic and make island a tax haven?</p>
<p>Education</p>	<p>Provision of immersive virtual classrooms to all students aged 16+ to increase accessibility to remote regions and improve standard of educational qualifications. All students provided with tablet computers. Increase number of scholarships to UK universities. Measures aimed at reducing unemployment by improving skills and qualifications of islanders.</p>	<p>Very poor standards of education, due to poor funding of state schools and shortage of teachers. Most students leave school at 16. Most skilled roles on the island are filled by migrants. Most of the population do not have internationally recognised qualifications.</p>	<p>Will scholarship beneficiaries return to the island? Appropriateness of virtual classrooms and providing tablets? Potential for misuse. Would closer educational links with neighbouring countries be better?</p>
<p>Transport</p>	<p>Build new deep water dock for cruise and larger freight ships. Extend airport to take larger aircraft. Extensive road building programme between Charles Town and Port Isabella. Additional funding provided by consortium of UK based travel and holiday companies to expand tourism on the island. Mix of local and skilled migrant workers needed to fill roles.</p>	<p>Island lacks a deep water port. Small airfield – cannot handle freight or intercontinental passenger aircraft. Single track road between Charles Town and Port Isabella. High costs of manufactured goods due to import costs.</p>	<p>Cruise ships don’t contribute huge amount to local economy. Tourism is underdeveloped on island – may be better to focus on another industry? How beneficial will use of migrant labour be to the economy?</p>



Civil Service Fast Stream



<p>Energy Supply</p> 	<p>Improve energy network through renewables (wave, wind and solar). Remote communities have opportunity to set up energy collectives. Materials for energy infrastructure provided by UK company at a discounted price. Will lead to improved accessibility, reliability and affordability of electricity.</p>	<p>Electricity outages are very common especially in poor areas. Main power station runs on oil built in 1960s. Oil now imported from Venezuela. High electricity costs.</p>	<p>New equipment (e.g. sea wave platforms, wind turbines) may damage wildlife and unique ecosystems, and will be unattractive. High repair and maintenance long-term costs.</p>
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Top tip

“It’s really important to remember that this isn’t a competition, it’s a time for you to show that you can influence other people in a positive manner. Making sure that everyone feels involved is a good way to start.” Stephen Dick, Fast Streamer

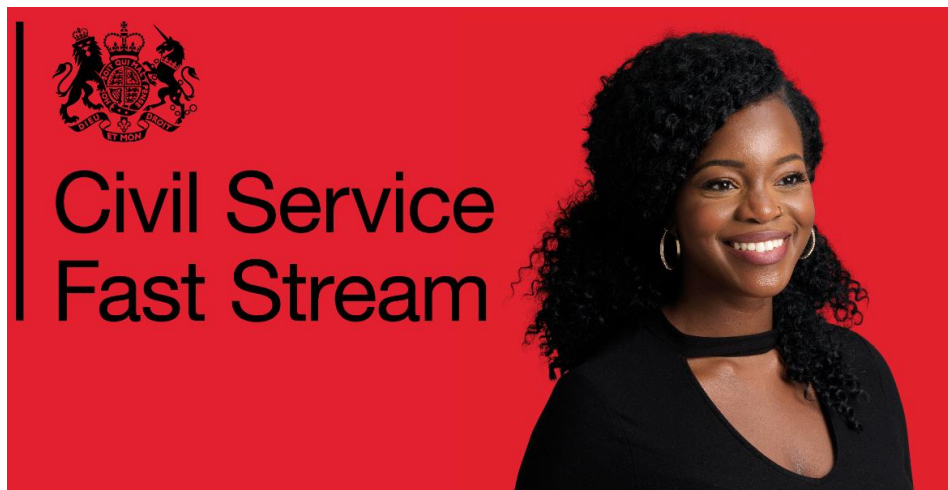
The Analysis Exercise

This written exercise lasts for **90 minutes**. You will be presented with various pieces of information, such as facts, figures, financials and public opinion polls, from different sources relating to a number of fictitious scenarios. Your task is to analyse the issues and answer a series of questions in a provided template before making a recommendation on which scenario to select. To do this you will need to compare and contrast the features of each scenario, using criteria you will be given, and explain convincingly the reasons for your recommendation.

All the information will be on an iPad and will be provided in a variety of formats, which may include emails, videos, interview transcripts and visual data. As well as being able to highlight and annotate the material on your iPad you will also be given paper to write notes on if you wish.

Tips for approaching this exercise:

- There is no right answer and a good case can be made for each scenario. The important thing is how you support your decision, using the facts and figures provided, along with how you express this in writing.

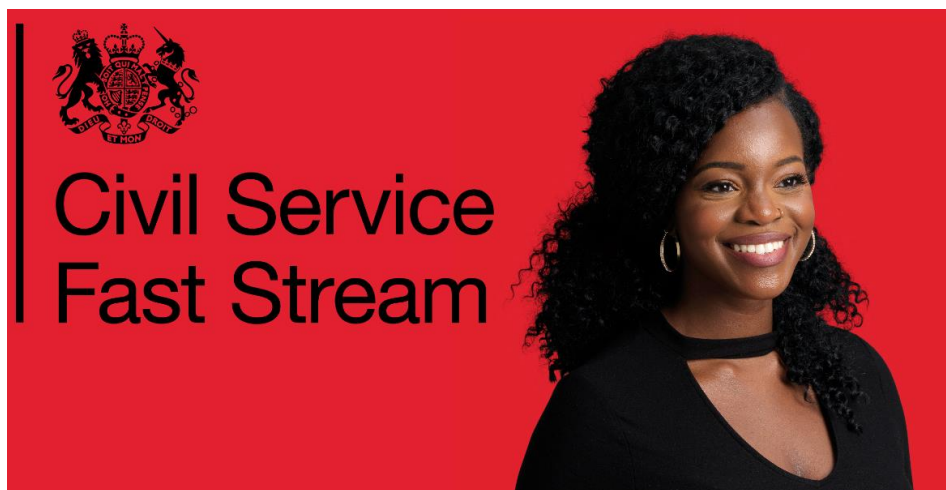


- You should pay particular attention to the time when completing this exercise. You will find you have no time to create rough drafts and you should work quickly and methodically through the material presented to you.
- We suggest you spend around 30 minutes looking through the material and then 60 minutes to carry out your analysis and produce your written response.

Your assessor will evaluate your written response against four of the Civil Service behaviours:

- Seeing the Big Picture
- Changing and Improving
- Making Effective Decisions
- Communicating and Influencing

The following material will give you a flavour of the exercise, however the actual exercise differs in content each year.



Example of the Analysis Exercise

Scenario

The year is 2027 and following a recent nuclear incident involving the UK's Ultra Modular Reactor (USMR) Project in Vanuata, your department has had an urgent request from the Chief Executive of the project for a clear decision on how the Government wishes to proceed with the project going forward. Your manager has requested that put together a written report for the Minister in charge, detailing your analysis of the potential options and your recommendation on which one to proceed with.

Example Exercise Material

To: YOU
From: Udeesha Gupta, Head of Policy Section (USMR Programme Office)
Date: TODAY
Subject: RE: USMR Project – Overview of options I would like you to consider
Attachment:  

Option 1 – Delay the roll out of new USMRs in the UK for two years

The aim of the delay would be to carry out further safety testing to give greater assurance that the reactors can be operated safely close to centres of population. The main impact of this delay in the programme is the loss of 4 GW of nuclear electricity generating capacity from 2029 onwards, which would need to be offset by installing gas turbine generators. These are quick to construct and much cheaper than nuclear reactors but have significantly higher running costs. Replacing this nuclear capacity with gas turbines would cost £2.5 billion and due to the loss of power generated by the reactors, more intensive use of other fossil fuel power stations would be needed and would increase running costs by a total of £3bn for the two years. We would need to consider stakeholder opinion if we proceeded with this option, as they could start to lose confidence in the USMR programme. Many members of the public (over 50%) have also voiced that they would now no longer be in favour of accepting reactors close to centres of population after the incident.

Option 2 – Carry on with the USMR programme



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This option would incur the least additional cost but is not without its risks. The advice from Advance Nuclear Technologies is that the fault in the Vanuata reactor was a one-off and will not be repeated. However there are risks with carrying on with the current programme. Arguably, the safety risks are no greater than before the Vanuata incident. However, at least one metropolitan district has threatened to withdraw planning permission for the USMRs it was due to have installed if they are not satisfied that their concerns over safety have been dealt with. Should this option be taken the Government will back it up with a major awareness and publicity campaign over the next couple of years to allay concerns over safety and this is expected to cost around £100 million. This will need to be successful if the urban areas and their populations are to agree to the planned installation programme. This option does not have the back up of temporary additional capacity from gas turbine generators and so if local populations do not agree to the USMRs there will not be sufficient generating capacity to meet peak electricity demand.

When reading the news this morning I came across an article related to the incident. I have attached a screenshot of the headline to give you an idea of the type of media coverage. The opposition party have also been very vocal on the subject; I have attached the latest tweet from one of the Senior MPs of the opposition and I also recommend that you watch his interview on yesterday evenings news.

Many thanks,
Udeesha

Email Attachments:



Government MP
@SeniorMP

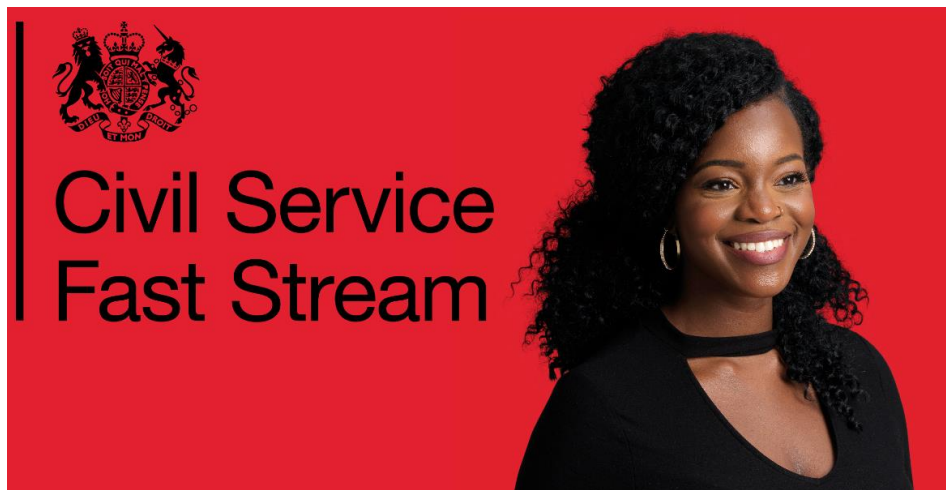


Vanuata shows Government nuclear programme is flawed - time to think again? Watch my interview on last nights news to hear what i have to say about it.

[Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

Today 9:13am · Embed this Tweet

“The most important part of this exercise is to remember that you do not want to spend too much time making a decision as each option can be justifiably argued. The assessors are looking at how you justify your decision and use the supporting evidence. Finally, even though each option can be argued equally it is important to



take time to structure your answer and demonstrate the correct logic while using the supporting evidence provided.” James Curran, Fast Streamer

The Leadership Exercise

This is a one-to-one role play exercise in which you play the part of a Fast Streamer in a UK government department who has recently been given the responsibility for leading on an important initiative, task or project. You will have 30 minutes to review various documents and videos relating to the progress of this initiative, following which you will have a 30-minute meeting with the assessor who will be playing the role of someone with a particular interest in its success.

The initiative is typically multi-faceted, complex and in places, is behind schedule or underperforming. The exercise is designed to test your ability to take on a leadership role by dealing with team members, stakeholders and the various issues they present, including handling unexpected problems, and identifying any other actions that need to be carried out to ensure delivery against the strategic objectives.

All the information will be presented on your iPad and will be provided in a variety of formats, which may include emails, videos, articles and data. You will also be given paper to write notes on and you can annotate the text on your iPad. You will be able to refer to your iPad and notes during the group discussion.

Tips on handling the exercise

- Once you have watched the videos, make an initial skim through the rest of the material so you know how much you have to read and how to allocate your limited time.
- There is sufficient information to enable you to do well in this exercise, but you will still need to be able to think on your feet, so prepare yourself for the unexpected and be prepared to think creatively if necessary.

Assessment criteria

Your assessor will be evaluating your performance against the following Civil Service assessment criteria:

- Seeing the Bigger Picture
- Changing and Improving
- Working Together
- Developing Self & Others
- Communicating and Influencing



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Example of the Leadership Exercise

The following gives a flavour of this exercise – the actual FSAC exercise differs in content each year and will be more detailed than the summary set out below.

Communities, not crime

It is October 2027. Violent crime is increasing in cities across the UK; central Government is



working closely with devolved national Governments and Mayors of Britain's major cities to tackle this. You are a Fast Stream Civil Servant recently seconded to the City Administration in Greater Bircaster, a major UK city. Greater Bircaster launched an initiative last year, following a sharp increase in the number of murders and violent street attacks in 2024-25. Your assessor will play the role of a more experienced leader who has been asked to

coach and support you through a critical stage of the project. Your job is to lead a project team of three with the specific objectives of:

- Reducing violent offences to keep people safe through preventing anti-social and criminal behaviour, particularly including drug-related crime.
- Strengthening communities – reducing deprivation, building resilient communities and protecting vulnerable people.

You report to the Deputy Mayor for Policing and are due to meet her tomorrow. She is a strong supporter of the initiative and has pledged to decrease violence on the streets. But, there has been media criticism that the initiative offers little new.

You are the second Fast Streamer to lead this team; your predecessor led it for the first year. Your line manager has suggested that you receive some coaching support from a more experienced manager from another part of the organisation, Chris Higson (who will be played by the assessor), to help you talk through the issues and develop ideas and solutions in preparation for your meeting with the Deputy Mayor.

The information available to you includes the following:



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Activity	Key performance indicators (KPIs) to be achieved by end of Year 3 (October 2029) from 2026 baseline.	Status at end of Year 1 (October 2027) ¹
Reduced crime using weapons	Knife crime 15% reduction: gun crime 25% reduction: acid attacks 30% reduction.	Amber – Knife crime up 12%, gun crime 18% down, acid attacks 1% up.
Violence reduction unit	Unit created to coordinate work of education, social work and probation to reduce offending.	Green - Unit in place, meetings held regularly between the three areas.
Witness Protection and Victim Support Schemes	Annual surveys show crime witnesses and victims feel increasingly well supported, so witnesses prepared to come forward to police.	Green – Surveys show 20% increase in Protected Witness satisfaction and 24% in Supported Victim satisfaction.
Stop and search	15% reduced use, better targeted to prevent violent crime; 10% reduction in racial profiling complaints.	Red – Use of stop and search increased 20%, complaints re racial profiling increased 15%.
Community groups set up in high risk areas	New community groups active in 5 high crime areas.	Green – 4 groups in place, 5 th being formed, all overseen by Advisory panel.
Employment	Support to 350 violent ex-offenders & potential violent offenders to find work.	Amber – 75 placements achieved, though 7 have broken down.

Apart from yourself, there are three members of your immediate team:

- Aslam Aziz, your deputy, is an ex-policeman. Very effective, but focused on Stop and Search and Offensive Weapons to the exclusion of anything else.
- Elaine Souter has worked in administrative roles for many years but new to the team. She came to you this morning in tears to say she had inadvertently sent out email addresses of those receiving help through Victim Support to all those associated with the project. She said that she found Gary, the IT person on the team to be intimidating and unable to explain things clearly.
- Gary Southwell is the IT expert. In response to your question about the security breach he said he found it difficult to understand how Elaine could be so “clueless” about IT; he didn’t see why he should have to make up for her shortcomings. He told you confidentially that he had had some recent health problems which had meant he was less patient than usual.

Public opinion

A 2026 survey of public opinion in Bircaster produced the following results:

Question	Yes	No
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¹ KPIs are reviewed on a “traffic light” scheme – Green (on track) Amber (partially on track) Red (problem).



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Do you feel safer in Bircaster than five years ago?	20%	60%
Do you think that the stop and search policy works well?	40%	20%
Have you personally suffered from a violent crime?	10%	90%

Issues that have emerged include:

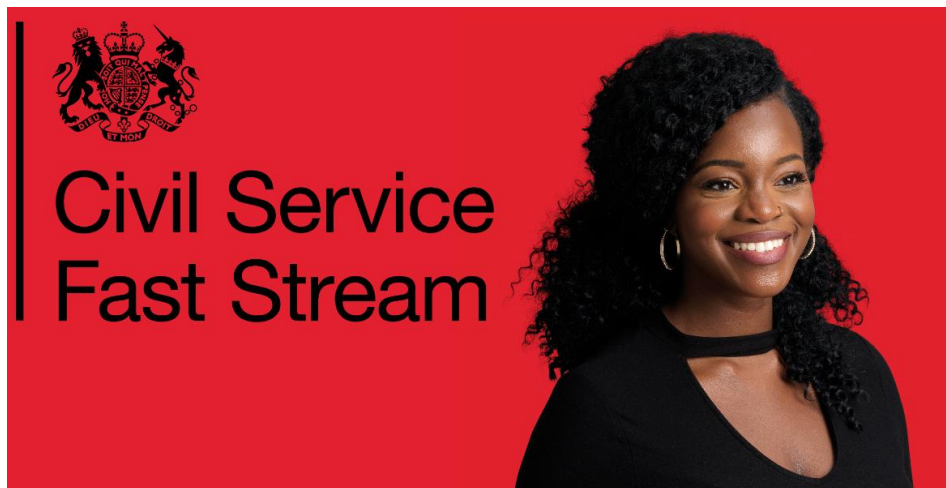
- It has become evidently clear that tackling violent crime needs community support in order to involve potential criminals in positive activities.
- Stop and Search (S&S) figures show some racial groups are questioned far more than others.
- S&S is unpopular and has led to claims of racial profiling; the Deputy Mayor pledged to reduce its use but it has increased this year.
- The police insist they are following the guidelines and have thwarted a number of drug related crimes.
- Violent crime has shifted towards younger victims and perpetrators, mostly male on male, often in gangs. Drugs are an important driver, particularly the increasing use of crack cocaine.

Assessor questions

Chris Higson (played by the assessor) will want to ask you a range of questions including; *whether you think the initiative is working or not, and why; what you anticipate will be the concerns of the Deputy Mayor and what you might say to reassure her; how you might address some of the potentially negative media impacts associated with the initiative (e.g., the data leak); what you can do to build stronger relationships within and between the community and the police; how you can better lead your team; the actions you need to take to get the project back on track and your ideas for adapting the project focus to make it even more effective in the future. You may also be asked how you might deal with a particularly difficult emerging issue that requires you to think on your feet. At the end of the exercise you will be asked to show some self-awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of your performance and say how you could develop yourself further.*

Top tip

“Make the most of your preparation time to ensure that you feel comfortable talking about your ideas. Also, use this time to think of potential questions that the assessor might ask you.



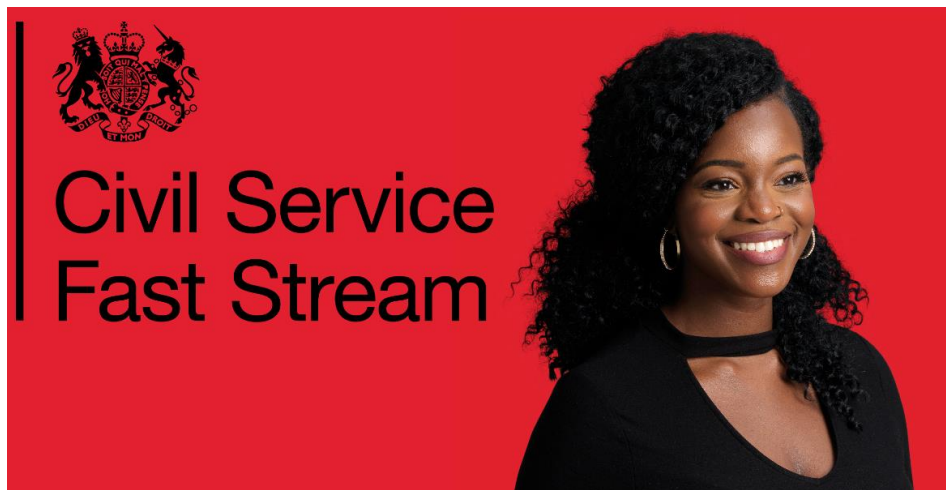
If the assessor asks you something that you have not prepared, don't be afraid to take the time to consider the answer fully. Try to be positive and open to assessor questions, as the questions they ask may help you better develop your ideas, or give you the opportunity to present an angle that you missed.

Finally, remember to breathe! I have a problem with speaking too quickly when I am nervous. If you are similar, try to concentrate on slowing down and speaking clearly, this will help you keep to the allotted time." Alisa Harris, Fast Streamer

While at FSAC

- Stay relaxed and try to enjoy the day.
- Be yourself. There is no such thing as a typical Fast Streamer. The Civil Service is committed to increasing the diversity of the Fast Stream intake.
- Remember that assessors can only give credit for what you say and do. They are not trying to trip you up; they want you to do well and show what you are capable of.
- Remember that you are not competing with others in your group. You are all being assessed against an independent standard. All of you or none of you may be successful.
- Go into each exercise with a positive frame of mind. It is hard to do well in every exercise. In any case, you may not be the best judge of your own performance and the process is designed so that, if you do less well in one exercise, you have a chance to perform better in another.
- Read the instructions carefully and follow them to the letter. If you are unsure of something, ask before the exercise begins. Don't feel embarrassed about doing so.
- All of the exercises require you to work at speed. This is to reflect the demands of Fast Stream jobs. Make sure you keep an eye on the clock and use your time as effectively as possible.

Top tip



“The assessment process is comprehensive, and the exercises are each considered separately, with all relevant assessors involved at different times. No final decision will be made until your performance in all the exercises has been fully evaluated.

The process is designed to be challenging and it’s rare for a candidate to do well in everything. It’s quite possible that you’ll feel you haven’t performed well in a particular exercise, but no single part of the assessment will rule you in or out. So it makes sense to concentrate on doing your best at each stage and not to dwell on what’s happened earlier in the FSAC.

Also, when you do FSAC, try to imagine you are already working in the Civil Service and the assessors and other candidates are your colleagues – your mindset and behaviour are then more credible and convincing.” Phil Wilson, Chief Assessor

What happens after FSAC?

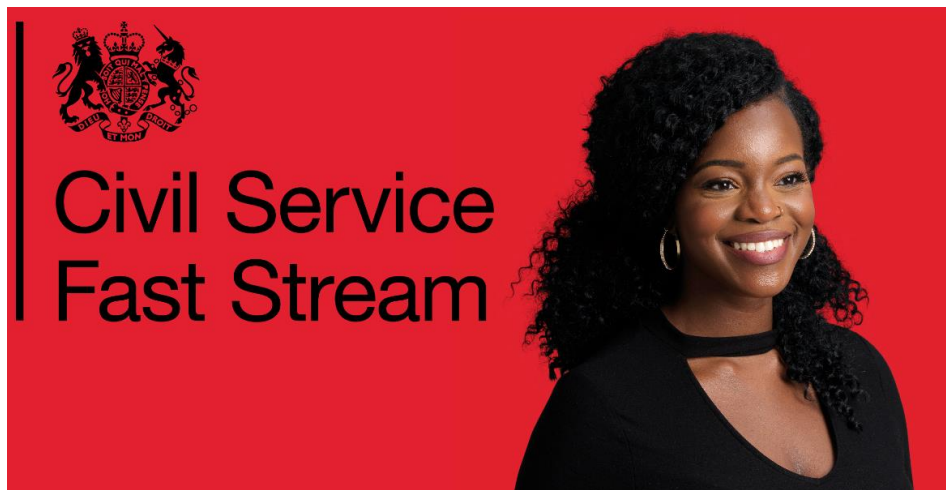
You will receive a report on your performance, regardless of whether you are successful or not. This will contain feedback on how you did in each exercise. You will be able to view your report from the Fast Stream homepage as soon as it becomes available after FSAC.

Please note: Make sure you save or screenshot your feedback report for your personal records as this information will be removed at the end of May 2020, you will not be able to request it after this date as it will no longer be available.

Final Selection Boards

Candidates for the following Fast Stream schemes who are successful at FSAC will be asked to attend a specialist assessment (or Final Selection Board). They will need to show evidence of further skills and particular strengths. Information regarding these specialist assessments will be offered in advance. The schemes are:

- **Diplomatic Service**



- **Houses of Parliament**
- **Science and Engineering**
- **Project Delivery**
- **Government Communication Services**
- **Economist**
- **Social Research**
- **Operational Research**
- **Statistics**
- **Diplomatic Service (Economist)**

Generalist, HR, Finance, Commercial and Digital, Data and Technology Fast Streams

If you applied for the Generalist, HR, Finance, Commercial or Digital, Data and Technology schemes, FSAC is the end of the selection process.

If you are successful, you will receive detailed information about what happens next. This includes a formal job offer, information about the pre-appointment check process and how you will be placed into your first post.

Good luck!

www.faststream.gov.uk