



*Environmental Services
Environmental Protection Division
Trading Standards & Licensing Group*

Trading Standards Professionals

Information Pack For Applicants

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications supplied separately

www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/oldham

Last Updated March 2006

Welcome

Thank you for expressing an interest in joining our team at Oldham delivering *Trading Standards* services to the local community. We hope that you will find all of the information you need to be successful in your application in this pack, but if not, please feel free to call on 0161 911 4471 or visit our website at www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/oldham for more information.



Help keep
standards
high

This information pack sets out our new broadband competency based structure and is one of the first in the UK to implement the qualifications criteria of the *Trading Standards Institute*.

What does Oldham Trading Standards Service actually do?



Protect the
vulnerable
from
exploitation

Oldham is an innovator and leader in the *Trading Standards* service. Our philosophy is not to simply respond to complaints or try to forestall problems through inspections, but to change the conditions giving rise to recurring problems – a truly intelligence-led approach. We do this through strong partnership and careful deployment of our resources to meet our Local Area Agreements – see <http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/oldham/images/LAA%20Leaflet.pdf> for more information.

We have eight strategic objectives that govern which areas of work we get involved in. These are:

To take **action** in **Oldham** now to:

1. Prevent people being the victims of commercial crime in their own home;
2. Disrupt traders operating in the informal economy;
3. Prevent harm to children and nuisance caused by young people from access to restricted goods;
4. Promote a safe, diverse night time economy;
5. Reduce crime and disorder in licensed premises and vehicles;
6. Ensure fair competition through goods and services being accurately measured, correctly described and priced;
7. Prevent unsafe goods from entering the market place; and
8. Ensure quality food standards for healthy consumers.

Every three months, we set out what activities we are going to get involved in to assist with meeting these objectives. This strategic assessment is available on our website at <http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/oldham/link2.htm>.

Then, every two weeks, we produce a tactical assessment to review how our tactics are working in practice and who or what specific activities we ought to be targeting that are having an adverse affect on our objectives. This is a restricted document, so it is not, therefore, published.

Who do you employ?

Our officers are all called *Trading Standards Officers*. We have become one of the first authorities in the country to abolish the old terms of Fair Trading or Enforcement or Consumer Protection Officers. We have just one title.

All our officers are trained professionals and we offer full support with that training and continuing professional development. We have a strong relationship with Manchester Metropolitan University for qualifications provision and all of our officers are enrolled on the *Trading Standards Institute's* Competency Framework.



Stop kids
drinking
alcohol

We offer employment for *Trading Standards Professionals* at four levels:

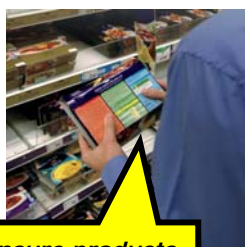
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| Entry | Our freshly qualified officers enjoy an already attractive salary starting at £20,895 whilst they gather their practical competencies to gain full qualification as a <i>Trading Standards Officer</i> . |
| Competent | A qualified officer that has all of the skills, knowledge and practical competencies can enjoy a market leading salary starting at £23,175 and rising to £26,928. However, we also offer the opportunity for career switching into this category for certain other professionals (see below). |
| Senior | Once into the job, officers can take additional skills, knowledge and practical competencies to reach a high level and enjoy salaries from £27,492 to £29,859. |
| Advanced | We are also one of the only authorities in the country to recognize the additional effort and benefits that officers with national policy experience can bring to our service. TSI Lead Officers, LACORS Policy Officers and certain others can enjoy an enhanced salary package from £30,843 to £33,315. |

Not yet qualified? – We will accept applications from anyone who is due to undertake a qualifying examination within the next six months – however, if appointed, they will be appointed to the lower scale or student scales until passing those examinations, with one resit allowed.

Switching careers? – We are keen to attract people from similar careers who might consider a change, for certain careers, such as the Police Service, Environmental Health or other Regulators we will give you credit for your law enforcement experience and offer you a position at an appropriate level on the scale frozen until you have completed conversion training for *Trading Standards* skills and knowledge.

Is there a Job Description for the post?

Each level within the scheme has its own job description. You do not need to indicate in your application which level you are applying for, we will assess this as part of the recruitment process and, if you are selected for interview, discuss this with you at interview.



**Ensure products
are properly
described**

The job descriptions for each level of appointment are included in a separate document, which can be downloaded from our website and should be enclosed with this pack if you have requested a paper copy.

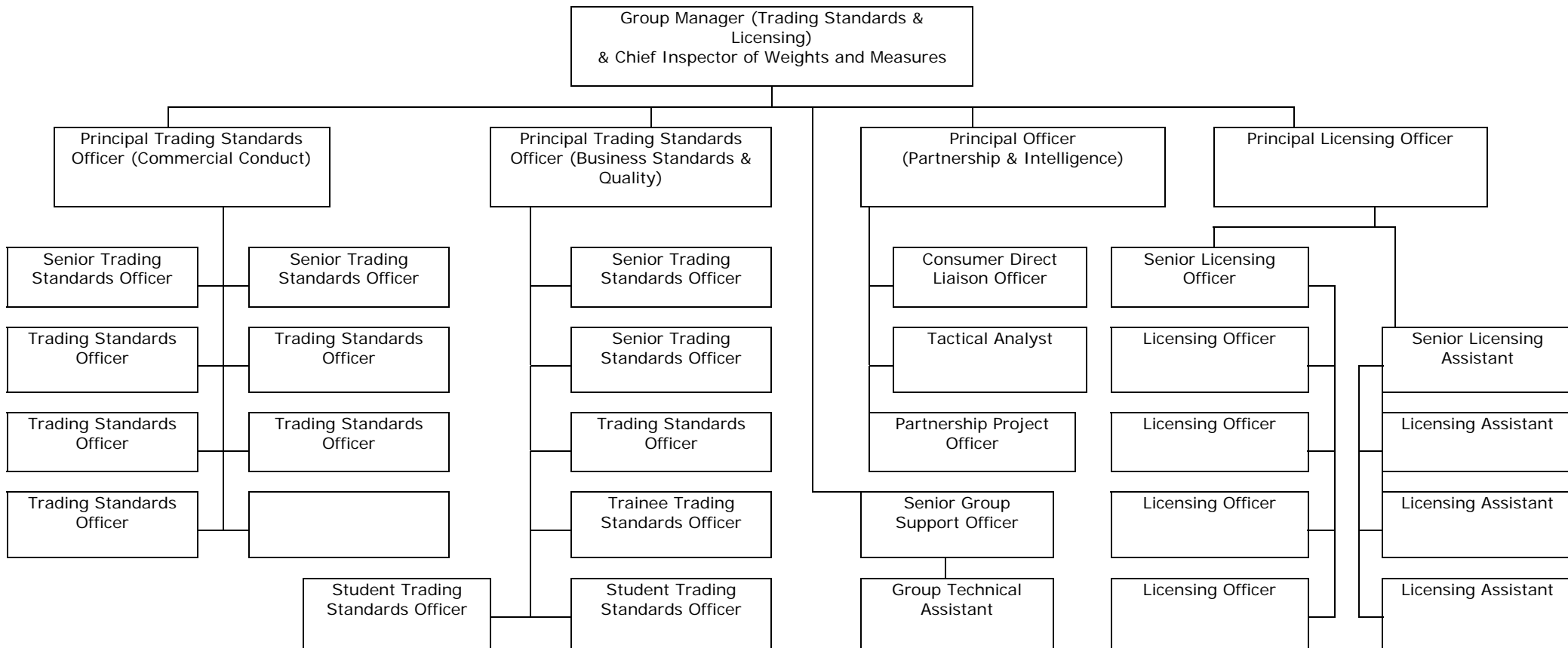
Is there a specific type of person that you are looking for?

Each level within the scheme has its own person specification. You should look at these carefully and set out your application to demonstrate how you meet as many of the essential and desirable criteria as possible at each level. Person specifications are set out as education and qualifications requirements, experience, skills and abilities, knowledge and work circumstances.

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What is your Group Structure like?

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES Trading Standards & Licensing Group



What are the requirements for Qualifications?

All of our professional officers are appointed on the basis of competency and qualification requirements laid down by the *Trading Standards* Institute. These take some explanation, but sound much more complex than they actually are.

We will accept applications from anyone with *Trading Standards* related qualifications. We will also accept applications from certain other law enforcement professions and we will accept applications from anyone due to sit a *Trading Standards* qualification within the next six months.

The following is provided as guidance only and there may be other qualifications not covered by this table that would be equally acceptable to us. Please do not be put off from applying for a post because your qualification does not fit. Further information about the Student posts is available in a separate Information for Applicants Pack.

Grade	Qualifications Guidance
Student (Undergraduate) SCP 11-13 £13,854 - £14,523	<p>We support students to undertake a TSI approved <i>Trading Standards</i> qualification course – our main course provider is Manchester Metropolitan University. The course lasts for 3 years and we pay undergraduates on the course the equivalent of 0.35 times a full time salary – based upon working in vacations.</p> <p>We also offer further support to students, which is set out in our Information for Applicants Pack for Trainee Trading Standards Officers.</p>
Student (Final Year) SCP 14-17 £14,787 - £15,825	<p>We pay a higher grade for Students that have successfully completed two years of a TSI approved <i>Trading Standards</i> qualification course. This will be paid at full time, if the student is undertaking a sandwich year, or 0.35 times a full time salary if at University.</p> <p>We also offer further support to students, which is set out in our Information for Applicants Pack for Trainee Trading Standards Officers.</p>

<p>Trainee (Postgraduate) SCP 18-21 £16,137 - £17,985</p>	<p>We will pay for Students that have successfully graduated from any degree that is approved by TSI as being eligible for credit for conversion to a TSI approved <i>Trading Standards</i> qualification course. This includes most degree level qualifications. This will be paid at full time, if the student is undertaking part-time study in the conversion course or 0.35 times a full time salary, if the student undertakes a full time course.</p> <p>We also offer further support to students, which is set out in our Information for Applicants Pack for Trainee Trading Standards Officers.</p>
<p>Professional Officer (Entry) SCP 26-28 £20,895 - £22,293</p>	<p>Any person that holds a Foundation Certificate in Consumer Affairs and Trading Standards will be appointed at the Entry Level.</p> <p>We also appoint people with equivalent qualifications, which include a person holding Part 1 of the Diploma in Consumer Affairs, a person holding a BA (Hons) Consumer Protection (Consumer Law route) degree, a person holding a 3rd class BA (Hons) Consumer Protection (Enforcement route) degree or a person holding a similar level qualification for another law enforcement profession (subject to undertaking an agreed conversion programme).</p>
<p>Professional Officer (Competent) SCP 29-34 £23,175 - £26,928</p>	<p>Any person that holds a Diploma in Consumer Affairs and Trading Standards (DCATS) will be appointed at the Competent Level.</p> <p>We also appoint people with equivalent qualifications, which include a person holding the Diploma in Consumer Affairs <u>and</u> able to demonstrate the skills elements of DCATS, a person holding a 1st or 2nd class BA (Hons) Consumer Protection (Enforcement Route) <u>and</u> able to demonstrate the skills elements of DCATS or a person who holds the Diploma in Trading Standards or Board of Trade Certificate or equivalent.</p> <p>We would also appoint a person who holds the full qualification and rank of police constable or a person holding a similar level qualification for another law enforcement profession (subject to undertaking an agreed conversion programme).</p>

Professional Officer (Senior) SCP 35-38 £27,492 - £29,859	<p>Any person that holds a Higher Diploma in Consumer Affairs and Trading Standards (HDCATS) will be appointed at the Senior Level.</p> <p>We also appoint a person holding the Diploma in Trading Standards or Board of Trade Certificate or equivalent <u>and</u> able to demonstrate the skills elements of HDCATS.</p> <p>We would also appoint a person who holds the full qualification and rank of police sergeant or a person holding a similar level qualification for another law enforcement profession (subject to undertaking an agreed conversion programme).</p>
Professional Officer (Advanced) SCP 39-42 £30,843 - £33,315	<p>A person must be already working in a <i>Trading Standards</i> service and hold a Higher Diploma in Consumer Affairs and Trading Standards (HDCATS) or a Diploma in Trading Standards or Board of Trade Certificate or equivalent <u>and</u> be able to demonstrate the skills elements of the HDCATS and must be engaged at a national or international level in trading standards policy formulation, service leadership or development.</p>

How do you assess the skills and knowledge elements?

The Trading Standards Institute lays down all assessment criteria for the skills and knowledge elements of our officers. More information can be found at www.tscareers.org.uk. In addition, we also have some local skills and knowledge that we look for in candidates. These are within the person specifications.



Make markets work well for Consumers

What are the Conditions of Service like at Oldham?

All successful applicants will be appointed on the usual terms and conditions of employment in local government. For further information about these, please visit our website www.oldham.gov.uk.

Do I get any extra pay for overtime or working evenings and weekends?



All professional officers in Oldham *Trading Standards* are appointed with a flexibility allowance. This is **7.5% in addition to the salary stated above**. The flexibility allowance covers the additional demands that we recognize are placed on officers by virtue of living in a 24 hour 7 day a week enterprise society. Not all of the duties and responsibilities of *Trading Standards* Officers can be discharged 9-5 Monday to Friday; so

typically, you can expect to be working outside these hours.

The flexibility allowance is a method of compensating you for these unsociable hours and requires you to work at least 16 hours per four week period outside of the hours 07:30 to 18:30 Monday to Friday. We have included details of the flexibility allowance in an appendix to this pack.

Will I get my Trading Standards Institute (TSI) Membership paid?

Oldham Council will not pay for TSI membership, but does subscribe to the TSI Competency Assessment Service, which provides many of the benefits of TSI membership except for membership of your local branch and the ability to stand for and/or vote in national or branch elections. The Council does, however, encourage its staff to be members of their professional body.

Where will I be appointed within the competency band?

If you are a successful applicant, you would normally be appointed at the bottom of the relevant band for your level of skills and competence. However, if you are transferring from another similar post, we would normally match this salary to the nearest available salary within the band, if possible.

Appendix – Flexibility Allowance

1. The Trading Standards and Licensing Group operate a variation on the standard Council flexi time scheme to support operational activity.
2. Under these arrangements, a flexibility allowance of 7.5% of basic salary is payable monthly. In return, officers would be expected to:
 - a) work 146 hours and 40 minutes during any 4 week accounting period;
 - b) of which, at least 16 hours in any 4 week accounting period would be outside the hours of 0730hrs and 1830hrs Monday to Friday, depending upon operational plans and as reasonably required by Managers, which is likely to include weekend work;
 - c) subject to pre-arranged annual leave, spend at least three days per week working during normal office hours;
 - d) attend team briefings, staff meetings, other office requirements as reasonably required by Managers;
 - e) take a minimum break of 20 minutes (unpaid) (30 minutes if under 18) within every complete 5 hours worked, this break may not be taken at the beginning or end of the period of work, but must be taken during the period of work;
 - f) take a minimum break of eleven consecutive hours between shifts and a minimum of 24 consecutive hours break during each seven days.
3. OMBC is keen to promote a healthy work-life balance and have flexible working arrangements for staff. These need to be based around customer and business needs balanced against personal preference and requirements.
4. The scheme is available to professional officers on scales between SCP 26 and SCP 42.
5. Overtime will not be payable unless by prior agreement and only where the work required would take the total time beyond 156 hours and 40 minutes per 4 week accounting period (this allows for a maximum carry over of ± 10 hours). In any event overtime would not be payable for normal working hours.
6. In all other respects, the flexitime arrangement (including arrangements for sick leave, holidays, time recording, etc) is as set out in the Council's Flexible Working arrangements policy.