

# Ofwat – CASE STUDY

The graduate campaign was successfully completed in 2022

## ABOUT OFWAT

Established in 1989, Ofwat is a non-ministerial government department responsible for the regulation of the water and wastewater industry in England and Wales. With a key role in the economic regulation of the industry, Ofwat also works to ensure the long term sustainable of access for all to water and holding companies within the privatised industry to account. Headquartered in Birmingham an office in London, Ofwat has over 200 employees.

## THE OBJECTIVES:

Ofwat appointed Cohesion in February 2022 to design and manage the outreach strategy and recruitment process for their Autumn 2022 Graduate Development Programme. We were tasked with recruiting 10 graduates across 3 streams: Economist, Data Analyst and Policy Analyst. Ofwat asked us keep diversity, equity and inclusion in mind with our outreach strategy, and to focus on building a presence with students attending Welsh universities.

## THE SOLUTION

We ran a short, sharp campaign for Ofwat's Graduate Development Programme, starting in February and running for 5 weeks. During this time candidates were required to submit their application and if they met the requirements, progress through to video interview and psychometric testing.

Our outreach strategy involved working with key universities in Birmingham and London and/or universities with a strong reputation in their Economics courses. We also developed relationships with Welsh universities and ensured Ofwat had a presence on job boards.

Cohesion supported Ofwat in the facilitation and delivery of a virtual open evening for active candidates and potential applicants. There was great buy in from Ofwat, with senior staff and 2021 graduates all joining the event to share insight into what working life at Ofwat is really like. Ofwat's Graduate Development Programme page on their website had been refreshed, and we ensured the 'faces' of the page were engaged in the virtual event.

After a competitive selection process, 30 candidates across all 3 streams were invited to join a Virtual Assessment Centre at the end of March or beginning of April. Thanks to IT updates, Ofwat were able to fully utilise the virtual assessment platform that Cohesion has partnered with – Topscore – which was not possible in 2021. The fully integrated platform allows for seamless movement through virtual rooms, with the functionality to upload all material in one place and keep all feedback and scores saved securely in real time.

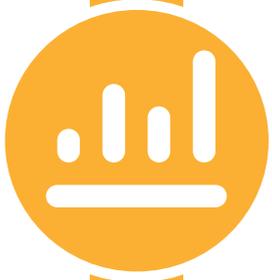
Recognising the difficulty in offer retention for the 21/22 Early Talen recruitment year, we were able to advise Ofwat on the best delivery of a keep warm strategy for their offer holders. This included informal 'welcome' chat with the Chief Executive, setting up IM streams to bring together the cohort before joining, and the inclusion of all offer holders to firmwide events over the summer.

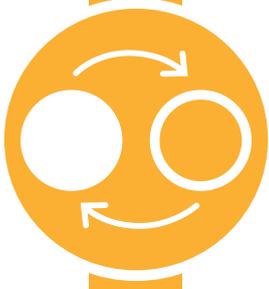
## RESULTS

Cohesion has now successfully worked with Ofwat for years and each year has delivered a programme with regular cohorts of successful candidates transitioning to the client. Cohesion continually challenges operating norms and looks to introduce new technology and innovation to keep Ofwat and their recruitment process continually ahead of the market.

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- We regularly exceed our client's brief, resulting in filling more vacancies than originally requested.
- We received 100% offer acceptance across all 3 streams. The calibre of candidates was so strong, and those who were offer exceeded the requirement by 60%.
- We were able to place additional candidates within the business
- We were able to facilitate some offer holders joining earlier than the September start date.
- We received applications from 4 Welsh universities, and 10% of offers were extended to candidates from a Welsh university. In previous intakes we have received no applications from students at Welsh universities.
- 60% of the offers were made to females, and 50% of offers were made to non-white candidates. The 2022 intake is Ofwat's most diverse yet.
- 50% of offers were made to candidates who were the first generation to go to university, and 40% from non-Russell Group universities. When Cohesion first started working with Ofwat, the graduate intake was from 100% Russell Group universities.





## NOTE FROM THE CLIENT

Thank you to the whole team for the seamless support you've provided through our Assessment Centres – we really felt like we were in safe hands! We have been particularly pleased on the diversity of the group again this year. Thanks again for all your hard work & great to have another fab set of Grads lined up to join us in September.

Head of Talent and Organisational Development, Ofwat

If you'd like to discuss how Cohesion can collaborate with you on a successful recruitment campaign, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Deborah Edmondson at [debbie.edmondson@cohesionrecruitment.com](mailto:debbie.edmondson@cohesionrecruitment.com) or on 0121 716 3977