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Lead Software Engineer

Office for National Statistics

Apply before 11:55 pm on Tuesday 10th February 2026

Reference number

435796

Salary

£60,007 - £66,701

Plus a skills allowance of up to £7,500 (non-pensionable and non-contractual) may be payable. Starting salary and level of skills allowance will depend on a technical skills assessment at interview.

A Civil Service Pension with an employer contribution of 28.97%

Job grade

Grade 7

Contract type

Permanent

Business area

ONS - Digital and Technology - Digital Services

Type of role

Digital
Information Technology

Working pattern

Flexible working, Full-time, Job share, Part-time, Compressed hours

Number of jobs available

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Location

The ONS operates a flexible hybrid working model across the UK, with colleagues linked to one of our contractual locations working between office and remote throughout the week.

The locations for this role are Newport and Titchfield (Fareham)

All colleagues are required to work from their contractually allocated site for at least 40% of their working time.

The induction process for the role will be conducted in person.

About the job

Job summary

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is looking for a Lead Software Engineer working in the cloud (AWS) to join our active community of technical professionals, within our Digital Service (DS) directorate.

Digital Services (DS) delivers critical digital and technology capabilities for the whole organisation. Our purpose is to enable innovation at speed and scale to keep the ONS at the forefront of providing high quality data and analysis to inform the UK, improve lives and build the future. As a trusted partner, we work collaboratively to identify leading-edge technologies and ways of working to deliver technical and digital solutions that meet the needs of the ONS and wider government.

You will be providing technical expertise and leadership for one of the key cloud platforms at the ONS - the Statistical Preparation Platform (SPP), and as part of the SPP team, you will play a lead role in the successful delivery of

the ONS Survey Improvement and Enhancement Plan for Economic Statistics, and the reduction of ONS's reliance on legacy technology.

The Platform is a strategic product that underpins our Economic statistics outputs that are widely used across government and beyond. It consists of a collection of services and technical capabilities and business processes that enable the production of our statistical outputs – everything from the ingestion and validation of survey response data through to the application of statistical methods to generate our outputs.

Working within a Digital Delivery Division you will thrive using agile methods and enjoy working openly and collaboratively with multi-disciplinary teams.

Job description

This a key leadership role in our multidisciplinary agile delivery team who are supporting, managing and evolving ONS's key Statistical processing cloud platform. You will play a pivotal role in the design and implementation of secure, innovative solutions and work alongside a delivery manager, product manager and a small team of business analysts and software engineers.

You will be providing advice, guidance, technical leadership, coaching, and support the team in delivery implementation and problem solving.

You will play a pivotal and leading role in setting modern engineering standards, supporting the growth of emerging software engineers, streamlining technology and delivering cloud technical solutions that support key ONS programmes of work:

The ONS Survey Improvement and Enhancement Plan for Economic Statistics

The ONS Business Survey Strategy

The removal of legacy technology

Responsibilities:

Provide technical leadership, coaching, and mentoring the team, promoting knowledge sharing and adoption of good practice

Proficient in a wide range of technical systems and involved in identifying appropriate security, technology and approaches, deciding when software should be written

Design and building secure software to serve a variety of user needs and enhance existing software products to meet evolving user needs whilst coaching and developing junior engineers

Sharing knowledge of tools and techniques; identifying and sharing good practices and collaborating to ensure knowledge sharing across the team and wider community

Lead on identifying and implementing opportunities to optimise processes, and coaches team to deliver service improvements and enhanced capability

Embedding Digital Applications and Software Engineering agreed key principles.

Can break down complex technical tasks into sub-tasks and collaborates with the team and Delivery Managers to create an environment where the team can work effectively

Contributes to the community

Communicates with stakeholders on behalf of technical teams

Person specification

Essential Criteria:

Programming and build - Advises on the right way to apply standards and methods, ensuring compliance. Maintains technical responsibility for all the stages and iterations of a software development project. Provides technical advice to stakeholders and sets the team-based standards for programming tools and techniques. Leads code reviewing sessions and gives constructive feedback to others.

Test Engineering - Able to design, implement and execute a wide range of functional and non-functional testing techniques and to standardise their application across team. Able to make decisions on running types of, and environments for testing. Able to raise defects with the business and help prioritise them based on defect severity. Develops, extends and maintains reusable test frameworks and tooling; maintains and adapts CI/CD pipelines to ensure effective test integration and quality gates. Guides and coaches others to create and maintain comprehensive standards and

create and maintain automated tests compliant with these standards, while researching future tools, methodologies and techniques.

Service Support - Identifies, locates, and competently fixes faults. Able to investigate undocumented issues and develop fixes. Can triage issues and build stories for more involved issues, document processes and support colleagues. Demonstrates a breadth of understanding of service support and advise others on different methodologies and types of service support.

Communicating between technical and non-technical - Able to mediate and mend relationships, communicating with stakeholders at all levels, adopting the appropriate communication method. Able to manage stakeholder expectations and moderately difficult discussions about high risk and complex topics, even within constrained timescales. Able to speak on behalf of and represent the community to large audiences inside and/or outside of the organisation. Can break down complex technical tasks into sub-tasks and collaborates with the team and Delivery Managers to create an environment where the team can work effectively.

Technical Criteria:

SPP is a fully cloud-based platform, using Amazon Web Services, and is built, tested and deployed using CI/CD pipelines managed by Concourse.

Lambdas (Python)

Web UIs (Python with Flask, using the ONS's own Design System templating library)

Elastic Container Service (including Fargate)

Database technologies - Aurora RDS (PostgreSQL), DynamoDB and S3

SQS and SNS, Glue, EventBridge and Step Functions

Terraform to specify all Infrastructure As Code

All code hosted on Github

We expect that you will have experience of using these technologies and be keen to learn others. Please ensure that your CV fully reflects those that you have used before. For any others, your desire to learn and develop in a collaborative software environment will be what we are looking for.

Behaviours

We'll assess you against these behaviours during the selection process:

Working Together

Leadership

Making Effective Decisions

Technical skills

We'll assess you against these technical skills during the selection process:

Programming and Build

Functional and Non Functional Testing

Service Support

Communication between Technical and Non Technical

Benefits

Alongside your salary of £60,007, Office for National Statistics contributes £17,384 towards you being a member of the Civil Service Defined Benefit Pension scheme. [Find out what benefits a Civil Service Pension provides.](#)

The [Office for National Statistics](#) is part of the Civil Service, and as such we share a number of key benefits with other departments, whilst also having our own unique offerings to support our valued colleagues across the organisation.

Whether you are hearing about us for the first time or already know a bit about our organisation, we hope that our [careers site](#) will give you a great insight into the benefits and facilities available to our colleagues, and our fantastic working culture.



Inclusion & Accessibility

At ONS we are always looking to attract the very best people from the widest possible talent pool, and we are proud to be an inclusive, equal opportunities employer. As a Disability Confident Leader we're committed to ensuring that all candidates are treated fairly throughout the recruitment process.

As part of our application process, you will be prompted to provide details of any reasonable adjustments to our recruitment process that you need. If you would like to discuss any reasonable adjustments before applying, please contact the recruitment team in the first instance.

Things you need to know

Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence can be a useful tool to support your application, however, all examples and statements provided must be truthful, factually accurate and taken directly from your own experience. Where plagiarism has been identified (presenting the ideas and experiences of others, or generated by artificial intelligence, as your own) applications may be withdrawn and internal candidates may be subject to disciplinary action. Please see our [candidate guidance \(opens in a new window\)](#) for more information on appropriate and inappropriate use.

Selection process details

This vacancy is using [Success Profiles \(opens in a new window\)](#), and will assess your Behaviours, Experience and Technical skills.

For ONS the requirement for SC clearance is to have been present in the UK for 3 consecutive years immediately prior to applying and the department will consider eligibility by exception on a case-by-case basis. You will be asked to provide information regarding your UK residency during your application, and failure to provide this will result in your application being rejected.

If you are unsure that you meet the eligibility above, please read the information available on Gov.uk on this link, or contact the recruitment email on the advert before applying to discuss, as failure to meet the residency requirements will result in your security clearance application being rejected and any offer of employment being withdrawn.

At the point of SC application, you will need to provide or give access to the following evidence:

Departmental or company records (personnel files, staff reports, sick leave reports and security records)

UK criminal records covering both spent and unspent criminal records

Your credit and financial history with a credit reference agency

Security Services records

Artificial intelligence (AI) software such as ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot and Gemini are powerful tools that can create and review text in ways that mimic what people can do. These tools can help you enhance your application and prepare for the process, but it is essential you use them appropriately.

They must also not be used to provide misleading or false information at any stage of the application journey.

It is also important to understand that while AI can help you prepare for an interview, you must not use it to produce responses during an interview.

For full guidance in relation to the use of AI through the recruitment process, please click [here](#).

Please note that all campaigns may be subject to withdrawal at any stage if the internal resource position changes.

Application Process

Number of Stages: 2 stage process

Stage 1: Application

Stage 2: Interview

Stage 1 Application

The assessment process at the application stage will be based on your work history, skills, experience, CV, and personal statement. It is important that your application is tailored to highlight the skills, knowledge, and experience relevant to the role.

If a personal statement is required at application stage, it will state the maximum wordcount allowed, which should not be exceeded. Where it is a requirement to make a personal statement, you should provide evidence for each essential skill criterion listed in the person specification. As these criteria are scored, it is advisable to give clear examples for each one, including the impact of your actions, ideally utilising the STAR technique (Situation, Task, Action, Result).

Please note that Success Profiles Behaviour examples are not required at this stage of the application process.

In instances where a high number of applications are received, the sift pass mark may be adjusted, and candidates will be invited to interview based on merit order, i.e., those with the highest scores.

Stage 2 Interview

If invited to interview, you will be assessed using techniques aligned with the Civil Service Success Profiles framework, covering all behaviours listed in the job advert and any required technical skills.

A presentation may be required at interview.

Interviews may be in person or via Microsoft Teams.

A reserve list may be held for a period up to 12 months from which further appointments may be made.

The Sift will be conducted from 19/02/2026

Interviews will be conducted from 11/03/2026

For the full terms and conditions of the post, please see attachment.

Near Misses

We often have similar roles available at different grades. If a candidate is suitable for a similar role or a lower grade than they have applied for, we may offer the candidate that role without the need to go through a further selection process providing the role has the same behaviours and essential skills.

GDD Pay

This role is eligible for the **Government Digital and Data (GDD) Capability and Pay Framework**. If you are successful at interview, your **salary will be directly linked to your capability outcome**, as determined by your performance in the **Technical section** of the interview.

Capability Outcome: Assessed based on scores achieved during the technical interview.

Salary Determination: Your starting salary will reflect the capability level assigned.

Feedback: Full feedback on your capability outcome will be provided at the **point of offer**.

All successful candidates are required to undertake an **annual capability assessment** as part of their ongoing employment terms. The outcome of this assessment directly influences individual pay levels:

Higher Capability Outcome: Results in an **increase in pay**.

Lower Capability Outcome: Results in a **decrease in pay**.

Completion of the assessment is **mandatory**. Failure to complete the annual capability assessment will result in the individual being transitioned to **ONS pay terms and conditions**, with a corresponding **adjustment to their pay**.

If you're already in a GDD Group 1 role and receiving GDD pay, and you make a lateral move (i.e. same grade, different role):

Initial Capability Assessment:

Development Plan:

Reassessment at 6 Months:

Starting salary for roles within the **Government Digital and Data (GDD) Capability and Pay Framework** is determined **solely by the capability outcome** achieved during the recruitment process.

Please note:

Existing allowances (scarce skills) will **not be taken into account** when calculating starting salary.

This policy applies to **all candidates**, including **existing Civil Servants** and **ONS colleagues** transitioning to the GDD Capability and Pay Framework.

Curious about Government Digital and Data? Dive into the [Candidate Pack](#) to learn more

Feedback will only be provided if you attend an interview or assessment.

Security

Successful candidates must undergo a criminal record check.

Successful candidates must meet the security requirements before they can be appointed. The level of security needed is [security check \(opens in a new window\)](#).

[See our vetting charter \(opens in a new window\)](#).

People working with government assets must complete [baseline personnel security standard](#) ([opens in new window](#)) checks.

Nationality requirements

This job is broadly open to the following groups:

UK nationals

nationals of the Republic of Ireland

nationals of Commonwealth countries who have the right to work in the UK

nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities with settled or pre-settled status under the [European Union Settlement Scheme \(EUSS\)](#) ([opens in a new window](#))

nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities who have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)

individuals with limited leave to remain or indefinite leave to remain who were eligible to apply for EUSS on or before 31 December 2020

Turkish nationals, and certain family members of Turkish nationals, who have accrued the right to work in the Civil Service

[Further information on nationality requirements](#) ([opens in a new window](#))

Working for the Civil Service

The [Civil Service Code](#) ([opens in a new window](#)) sets out the standards of behaviour expected of civil servants.

We recruit by merit on the basis of fair and open competition, as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's [recruitment principles](#) ([opens in a new window](#)).

The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equal opportunities. As such, we run a Disability Confident Scheme (DCS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria.

The Civil Service also offers a Redeployment Interview Scheme to civil servants who are at risk of redundancy, and who meet the minimum requirements for the advertised vacancy.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Civil Service is committed to attract, retain and invest in talent wherever it is found. To learn more please see the [Civil Service People Plan \(opens in a new window\)](#) and the [Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy \(opens in a new window\)](#).

Apply and further information

This vacancy is part of the [Great Place to Work for Veterans \(opens in a new window\)](#) initiative.

Once this job has closed, the job advert will no longer be available. You may want to save a copy for your records.

Contact point for applicants

Job contact :

Name : government-digital-and-data-

Email : recruitment@ons.gov.uk

Recruitment team government-digital-and-data-
recruitment@ons.gov.uk

Email : Government-Digital-and-Data-
Recruitment@ons.gov.uk

Further information

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Recruitment Principles and you wish to make a complaint, in the first instance, you should contact recruitment.complaints@ons.gov.uk. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the Department, you can contact the [Civil Service Commission](#)

