



Northern Ireland  
Civil Service

# Graduate Management Programme

## IRC275310

Completed application forms must be returned to HRConnect no later than 12 noon (UK time) on 16 September 2022.

Please retain a copy of this booklet for your reference throughout the selection process.

**Candidate Information Booklet**



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General Information

## Welcome

The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Graduate Management Programme is a 4 year accelerated development programme aimed at capable, ambitious individuals who have the ability and potential to become senior leaders.

Are you passionate about working with others to make a positive difference to the lives of our citizens and deliver high quality public services? Do you want to work in a forward-thinking, diverse and inclusive organisation with flexible working environments?

If the answer is yes, then we will invest in your learning and development, giving you experience across a range of departments, enabling you to tackle some of the key issues and challenges facing society.

You will be given real responsibility, however, we will ensure you have the training and support you need to realise your full potential and succeed.

If you are up for the challenge and want to make a positive difference, then this could be the opportunity for you.

More information about the Graduate Management Programme can be found at [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk/careers](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk/careers).

Before completing your application form, please read this booklet carefully as it outlines the application and assessment process.

This recruitment exercise will be used to fill approximately 30 vacancies across a number of NICS Departments. It may also be used to fill further vacancies over the lifetime of this recruitment exercise.

All appointments to the NICS are made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. Civil servants are expected to carry out their role with dedication and a commitment to the NICS core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

As one of the largest employers here we have a range of opportunities to help you further your career and we are committed to being inclusive and representative of the people we serve.

We welcome applications from people regardless of their religious belief, race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation.

For more information on diversity and inclusion in the NICS, [see page 15](#).

## Welcome

**We want to ensure all applicants have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability and would refer you to the section on Disability and Reasonable Adjustments ([see page 16](#)) for details on how we can support you.**

If you have any questions, or require any documentation in an alternative format e.g. braille, easy read, large print, audio etc. you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net)

### **Communication between HRConnect and you**

The majority of our communications with you in this recruitment exercise will be by email. Please ensure you provide a valid email address and regularly check your email account and junk folder to make sure you don't miss any important communication from us.

**The closing date for applications is noon on 16 September 2022.**

**Late applications will not be accepted.**

We wish you every success in your application.



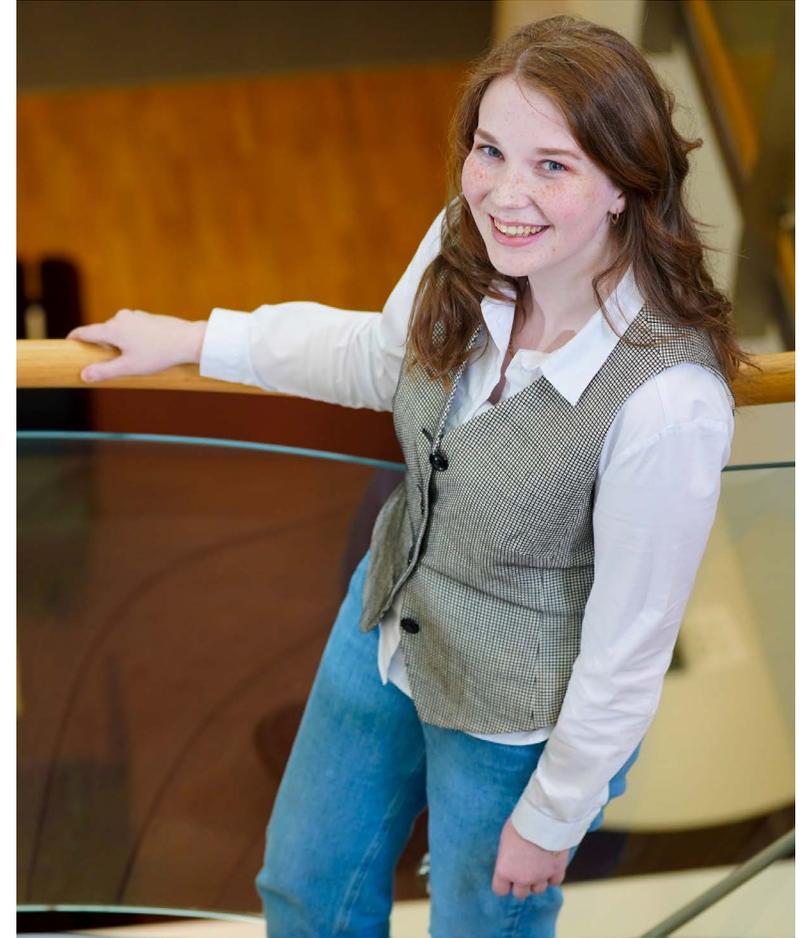
## About the NICS

The NICS is embarking on an exciting period of renewal to ensure we deliver government policies, legislation and the public services needed to make life better for people here.

Our remit covers all aspects of public life here, including key areas such as:

- health;
- public finances;
- justice;
- education;
- the environment;
- communities;
- the economy; and
- infrastructure.

You can find more information on the government arrangements here, including the [functions of the Departments](#) on the Northern Ireland Executive website. *(Clicking on this link will open a new window/tab).*



# The NICS Graduate Management Programme



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## The NICS Graduate Management Programme

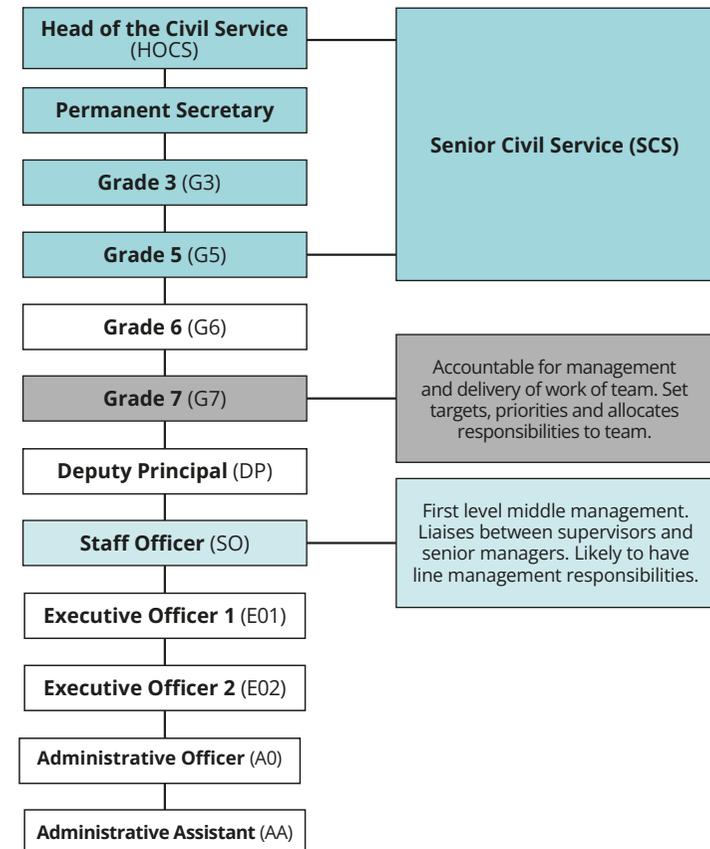
### How does it work?

You will enter the Programme at Staff Officer level (salary band £32,328 - £33,459) and undertake a structured programme of 6 month and 12 month placements over a 4 year period which will give you a breadth of experience and skills across a range of diverse and challenging roles to develop your leadership potential. This is coupled with learning and development to build your capability and accelerate your development.

You will then be able to apply for a promotion opportunity to Grade 7 during year 4 of the Programme. If successful, your name will be placed on a merit list for future positions as they arise across the NICS at Grade 7 level (salary band £52,026 - £55,685).

If you are not successful for promotion to Grade 7 you will remain as a Staff Officer as a permanent civil servant at this grade.

### NICS organisation chart



## The NICS Graduate Management Programme

### Key responsibilities

The working environment can be fast-paced and there are often competing priorities with urgent tasks requiring completion within challenging timescales. You will be expected to take on some responsibility from the very start.

As you will be undertaking a range of placements as part of the Graduate Management Programme, there is no typical job description.

Your placements may include roles in Corporate Services, Operational Delivery, Policy, Private Office and / or Project and Programme Management giving you a breadth of skills, knowledge and experience across the following areas:

#### 1. Commercial skills:

- Understanding the marketplace we operate in.
- Contract management and ensuring value for money.
- Procurement of goods and services.

#### 2. Communications:

- Being able to communicate effectively, using various styles and media.
- Using communications to promote departmental / business area messages and / or raise awareness of public services.

#### 3. Data and digital technology:

- Using raw data to find trends, support policy and decision making.
- Presenting data in a way that is useful and easily understood by others.
- Playing an active role in the digital transformation of the NICS.
- Developing accessible online services to meet the needs of customers.

#### 4. Financial management and governance:

- Operating within the public expenditure process and framework.
- Fraud awareness.
- Supporting the Head of Branch to ensure that appropriate governance arrangements are in place and implemented.

#### 5. Leadership / people management:

- Providing support to ensure staff are motivated, supported and developed. This often involves quality assuring the work of your staff, providing feedback and coaching when required.

## The NICS Graduate Management Programme

### 6. Operational delivery:

- Managing delivery of significant citizen-centred public services or processes.
- Developing, overseeing and supporting teams as they deal with public services and enquiries.
- Ensuring grants or benefits are paid.
- Ensuring that your teams meet agreed standards and targets for timely and high-quality outcomes.

### 7. Policy:

- Gather and analyse information from a wide range of sources.
- Identify issues and possible solutions.
- Secure stakeholder cooperation in relation to policy issues affecting the Department.

### 8. Project and programme management:

- Planning, implementing and evaluating projects.
- Undertaking risk assessments.
- Communicating lessons learnt.

### 9. Working with Ministers / machinery of government:

- Drafting input for briefings, submissions, Assembly Questions and other documents for Ministers and senior officials. This often requires a broad understanding of the workings across the Department or NICS and will involve you requesting input from others with tight deadlines.
- Engaging with internal and external stakeholders.
- Ensuring there is an effective flow of information and communication between NICS and other organisations.
- Dealing with issues raised during engagement and consultation exercises and collaborative working with senior colleagues.
- Participating as a team member in collaborative policy project work.

**This is not the full list but instead aims to give you an indication of the duties you are likely to undertake as part of this Programme.**

# Eligibility



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## Eligibility

### **You must:**

Hold a 2.2 degree or above, in any subject, achieved at any time before 31 July 2022.

### **Relevant or equivalent qualifications**

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications deemed by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated. Applicants must demonstrate on their application form how the qualifications they have provided are equivalent, in level, to those qualifications listed above.

### **Guaranteed Interview Scheme**

As part of our commitment to the employment of disabled people, we operate a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS). The GIS does not guarantee a job, however, its objective is to ensure a guaranteed number of disabled applicants, who meet the minimum essential eligibility criteria for the role they have applied for, are offered an interview. **Further information on the GIS can be found on the NICS Recruitment website – [Information for Disabled Applicants](#).**

In addition to the qualification requirement, all applicants must also undertake online tests as part of the essential eligibility criteria. All applicants must achieve the required minimum score in order to be invited to the assessment centre.

Should a large number of candidates achieve the required score, we may limit the overall numbers invited to assessment centres and only those applicants who demonstrate they best meet the minimum essential eligibility criteria for the job (i.e. the highest scoring) will be invited. In this scenario, we will take positive action to ensure that the number of GIS applicants invited to the assessment centre will be in proportion to those who pass the online tests.

# Terms & Conditions



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## Terms & Conditions

### Appointment

Successful candidates should expect to take up their post from January 2023.

### Salary

The starting salary for these posts will be £32,328 (under review).

Within 4 years you will have the opportunity to be considered for promotion to Grade 7. Starting salary for Grade 7 is currently £52,026 (under review).

### Holidays

In addition to public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, the annual leave allowance is 25 days, increasing to 30 days after 5 years.

### Pensions

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. Further details can be found on the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme (Northern Ireland) website at [www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni](http://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni) (clicking on this link will open a new window/tab).

### Working hours

The full time working week in the NICS is 37 hours, excluding meal breaks. The majority of the NICS operates a flexi-time scheme, usually between the hours of 8am and 6pm, allowing you to have an element of flexibility over your working hours, subject to the needs of the business.

Flexi-time involves flexible start and finish times around 'core working hours' (when attendance is required) and within the limitations of the 'bandwidth' (the earliest and latest times between which hours can be worked) and allows you more choice over your working hours, subject to the operational requirements of the business area.

### Location

The NICS has offices across Northern Ireland and by applying for this competition you are agreeing to be posted in any of these locations. It is important to understand that your location will change with each new placement over the course of the 4 years of the Graduate Management Programme.

While the NICS operates a hybrid working policy, offering a mix of working from the office and other agreed locations, some roles in the NICS are not suitable for hybrid working and you may be required to come into the workplace on a full time basis for some of your placements.

## Terms & Conditions

### Security clearance

An appointment will be dependent on you meeting the security vetting requirements for the post. A Criminal Record Check on all successful applicants will be carried out by AccessNI or relevant body, depending on the level of security assigned to the post.

While the majority of posts in the NICS require basic vetting, some posts may require a higher level of vetting and you will be required to provide additional personal information. Higher levels of vetting may be required before you can undertake particular placements.

You should not be put off applying for a post because you have a conviction.

More information on vetting and information you need to provide for this process can be found on [page 34](#).

### Probation

Confirmation of appointment will be dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of one year. If performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory the appointment may be terminated.

### Career development

The NICS offers attractive career prospects across a wide variety of roles and professions. Civil servants have access to a wide range of job opportunities and training and are encouraged and supported in proactively managing their career.

**Participants on the NICS Graduate Management Programme should note that if you apply for a recruitment opportunity or post outside of the scope of this Programme, which you accept, then you will no longer be eligible to continue on the Graduate Management Programme.**

# Diversity & Inclusion



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## Diversity & Inclusion

### **The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.**

We value and welcome diversity and we are committed to creating a truly inclusive workplace.

Our vision for the NICS is:

- One where everyone plays an active part in improving the lives of people in NI;
- A well-led, high-performing and outcomes-focused NICS;
- A great place to work, where everyone can reach their full potential; and
- An inclusive workplace in which diversity is truly valued.

We aim to ensure that every individual is valued and accepted for who they truly are and to develop colleagues to enable them to make a full contribution to meeting the Civil Service objectives, and to fulfil their own potential on merit.

Find out more about [Diversity and Inclusion](#) in the NICS on the NICS recruitment website. *(Clicking on this link will open a new window/tab).*

We welcome applications from people regardless of their religious belief, race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. **Applications from Protestants, young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are particularly welcome for this post.**

**All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.**

### **Disability requirements and reasonable adjustment requests**

The NICS is committed to the employment and career development of disabled people. We wish to ensure all applicants have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. If you have a disability you may request a reasonable adjustment to ensure you are given as much support as possible throughout the recruitment process.

If you require any form of reasonable adjustment, please note this in the box provided on your application form. You should include details of your disability and the specific adjustment you need.

## Diversity & Inclusion

Details of any disability are used only for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

**It is essential that you make us aware of your request for a reasonable adjustment as early in the recruitment process as possible, preferably on the online application form.** Arrangements concerning any adjustment requests must be made in advance of starting the live test as retrospective arrangements cannot be made after you have started the live test.

You will need to provide relevant supporting information for your request, for example, an occupational psychologist report or a GP medical statement.

Your supporting information should be sent to HRConnect at [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net) **as soon as possible** following submission of your application. Please mark your correspondence with the competition reference number **IRC275310** and title it 'Supporting evidence for reasonable adjustment request'.

You may be contacted directly to discuss your requirements.

If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further or if you have any questions, or require any documentation in an alternative format e.g. braille, easy read, large print, audio etc, please contact [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net)

Further information for disabled candidates can be found on the [Information for disabled applicants](#) section of the NICS recruitment website. *(Clicking on this link will open a new window/tab).*

# Selection & Assessment Process



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## Selection Process

### Stage 1

#### Overview of the selection process

The assessment for this recruitment competition will involve:

1. online application;
2. online proctored aptitude tests;
3. eligibility check;
4. assessment centre; and
5. merit list.

#### STAGE 1 - COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

Please read this Candidate Information Booklet (CIB) carefully before completing your application form. You are advised to keep a copy of the CIB for your reference. The application form is designed to help you provide the necessary information to show how you meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

**Please ensure that you supply a valid email address when completing your application form.** You need to complete all parts of the application form as if you don't we will not be able to progress your application.

Once you click 'submit' on your application form, no further changes can be made.

#### **Please note:**

- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, hard copy application packs are available on request. All applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms, unless it is specifically requested in the application form and candidate information booklet.

## Selection Process

### Stage 1

- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline.
- Do not use acronyms or complex technical detail. State for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- **Your application must be received by the advertised closing date and time.**
- When completing the online application your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.
- The session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- You must click SUBMIT once you have finished your online application. You will receive an acknowledgement email. Please contact HRConnect if you do not receive an acknowledgment email within 24 hrs.

- If you have asked for a reasonable adjustment, you must send your supporting evidence as soon as possible to [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net), quoting IRC275310, to enable sufficient time for the adjustment to be put in place in advance of you beginning the online tests and / or attending the assessment centre.

### Help with making your application

You can get advice or assistance with making an application from your local Jobs and Benefits Office - contact details are available on NIDirect: [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

You can also get advice or assistance from local disability employment organisations. To find out more about local disability employment organisations contact Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE), an umbrella group for individuals and organisations promoting opportunities for people with disabilities to access and maintain employment,

**E:** [info@niuse.org.uk](mailto:info@niuse.org.uk)

**T:** 0044 (0)28 71 377709,

**Text:** 0044 (0) 28 71 372077

## Selection Process

### Stage 2

#### STAGE 2 - ONLINE PROCTORED APTITUDE TESTS

If you applied for the 2022 Staff Officer competition (IRC275969) and achieved the minimum required standard to pass the online tests, your score will be carried forward to this competition and you will not retake the online tests. Further information regarding our tests and test score banking can be found in the Test score banking section of the [NICS recruitment website](#). *(Clicking on this link will open a new window/tab).*

For those required to undertake the online test, you should receive an email (sent to the email address you provided) with a link to the online test by **5pm on 30th September 2022**. If you do not receive an email by 6pm on 30th September 2022, please email [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net) inserting 'IRC275310 Graduate Management programme test link not received' in the subject line.'

You will have until 5pm on 9th October 2022 to complete the tests. The link will take you to a website where you will have to complete a series of tests. The online tests can be done in your own time and at a place that suits you. **However, please note that there are a number of tasks you must perform on the test site before you can take the live tests – and these tasks are explained on pages 22 - 24.**

There are 3 tests, each lasting 40 minutes:

- 1. Critical thinking:** You will be presented with passages of text and you will be asked to answer questions relating to these passages. You will also be presented with lists of six words and your task will be to identify whether any of the six words have a similar meaning to each other and, if they do, to choose the TWO words that are the closest in meaning in each question.
- 2. Analysing information:** You will be presented with numerical data in various formats and your task will be to answer questions relating to this data.
- 3. Management decisions:** You will be presented with a number of scenarios representing the types of situation that a Staff Officer in the NICS might encounter. Your task will be to rate the appropriateness of various responses to these scenarios.

Candidates will have to achieve a minimum score in each test and then the top performing candidates will progress to Stage 3.

## Selection Process Stage 2

You do not need to complete all three tests at the same time or even on the same day. Individual tests do however need to be taken in a single sitting therefore you should ensure that when completing each test that you have sufficient time for the test itself plus additional time for reading and understanding the relevant instructions for each test.

These tests will be proctored. Proctoring means that your identity will be verified before starting the assessment and that you will be monitored via your webcam during the assessment.

### **Important information about accessing the test site**

You will need to use an up to date **Chrome or Microsoft Edge** browser on your PC. If you are using a Mac you **MUST** use **Chrome**.

### **Do not use a tablet, phone or Chromebook.**

Once you have accessed the test site **you MUST do the following before you can take the live tests** – and you need to do these things well in advance of taking the live tests.

1. Check your webcam
2. Verify your identity
3. Study the Familiarisation material

### **1. Check your webcam**

**NOTE** – you will need a working webcam to enable the proctoring to take place.

**The onus is on candidates to ensure they have access to a webcam, regrettably no alternatives are available.**

Click the 'Webcam test' button. This will check if your webcam is working within the program. Also make sure that you are clearly visible and front on in the image and be aware that you need to remain clearly visible throughout the live tests. Check your webcam well in advance of taking the live tests and also do it immediately before taking the live tests in case something has changed.

### **2. Verify your ID**

Before starting the ID Verification process, you should click the link at the top of the main menu page ('ID Verification and Proctoring – instructions, common issues and resolutions.pdf') and read the document. If you encounter a problem with your ID verification or starting a live test, please consult it before emailing support.

**NOTE** – you cannot start the live tests unless your ID has been verified.

## Selection Process Stage 2

For this you will need to have a valid photo ID (passports, driving licenses and electoral cards are acceptable photo IDs). The process is straightforward and is explained at the time. Using the webcam, you will need to take a webcam image of yourself and an image of your photo ID (e.g. passport).

We will check your ID and you will receive an email informing you of the outcome (**but do check your junk/spam folder and do log on to check your ID verification status if you feel you are waiting too long**). You may be asked to re-take the photos and this is not uncommon, so please start the verification process early to ensure you have enough time to complete the process.

You can check your ID Verification Status by logging in. If you have not been notified within 24 hours of submitting images AND your online verification status is still 'Submitted waiting approval', email **support@assessmentintelligence.com** including your Competition Reference Number (IRC275310) AND your Candidate Reference Number in the subject line.

**We advise you to submit your webcam images as soon as possible. You should have submitted your images for identity verification by noon on 7th October 2022, otherwise we cannot guarantee that the identity verification process will be completed in time for you to take the live tests before the final deadline.**

**NOTE – if the name on your photo ID will differ significantly from your name on your application, you MUST inform HRConnect by emailing [Recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:Recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net) including your Competition Reference Number (IRC275310) and your Candidate Reference Number. Your email should explain the reason and include any supporting document (e.g. marriage certificate).**

Under no circumstances send any images to the 'support' email.

**NOTE – you MUST complete the identity verification process online.**

**Please note, it is your responsibility to ensure that you submit your images online in good time.**

### 3. Study the familiarisation material

It is **ESSENTIAL** that you use the online familiarisation material to check that your browser and the internet connection that you intend to take the live test on are compatible with the online tests. Note that some network firewalls may block access to the test site or prevent images from showing. If you can complete the Verification of ID process, your webcam check is successful and the familiarisation material works well on your IT equipment, this is a good indication that the live tests will work also.

## Selection Process

### Stage 2

It is **ESSENTIAL** that you access the familiarisation materials using the computer and internet connection that you intend to take the live test on well in advance of the tests.

The familiarisation material will give you a detailed description of the tests, include full instructions for completing the tests and provide example/practice questions. It also explains how you can record your answers and navigate your way around the test. You should be fully familiar with these things before taking the live tests in order to perform at your best.

#### **Taking the live tests**

For best results we recommend completing the online assessments in a test-like environment. Any possible distractions should be turned off, for example mobile phones, TV and music. Concentration is needed throughout the assessments, so when completing each test, ensure other people are aware that they should not disturb you until you are finished. No responsibility can be accepted for any issues arising from where you choose to sit the tests. Before starting a live test you should close all other browsers and browser tabs. You should not take the test on a computer that is remotely connected to a work network as the link may be unstable.

Once you log into the test platform and complete the honesty and privacy statements you will see a menu showing (i) Webcam Check, (ii) the Identity Verification and (iii) the Familiarisation material. The links to the live assessments will appear on the menu once your identity has been verified.

Immediately before you click the start button to begin a live assessment, there will be an image of you at the bottom of the page. This should be a front-on view of you as you take the assessment. You need to make sure that you are clearly seen in this image before starting the assessment and that you will remain visible in the image during the assessment. Another photo of you will be taken by the webcam for a last automated check before starting each assessment.

During the assessment, you will see a small video stream from your webcam in the top left corner. Images from this stream will be monitored.

We take great care with your webcam images and retain them for as short a time as possible. The image of your photo ID is deleted as soon as your identity has been verified.

## Selection Process

### Stage 2&3

#### Technical issues

If you lose internet connection while in the live test, **you should immediately close your browser.**

You will be able to continue the test without losing time and your previous answers will have been saved (except possibly on the last page you were on before losing connection).

If you experience any other issue while taking the live test, **you should immediately close your browser** and email **support@assessmentintelligence.com** including your Competition Reference Number (IRC275310) and your Candidate Reference Number in the subject line.

If you do need to close your browser or your computer crashes and restarts you must start up a fresh browser and paste in the test link again. **If your browser starts up and reloads the test again automatically, you must close it down immediately and start from a fresh browser. If your browser starts up and asks if you want to restore sessions or pages, you MUST decline.**

#### Final deadline

**IMPORTANT** – you must complete all the live tests **by 5pm on 9th October 2022** and we strongly advise that you complete them well in advance of the deadline. If you leave it towards the end of the assessment window and find you have a problem (e.g. with your computer or internet) you may not have time to resolve your problem and complete the tests before the deadline.

You must have submitted your images for ID Verification by noon on **7th October 2022** and preferably well before then otherwise we cannot guarantee that the identity verification process will be completed in time for you to take the live tests before the final deadline.

#### STAGE 3 – ELIGIBILITY CHECK

Top performers will progress to this stage where an assessment of the evidence provided against the relevant eligibility criteria will take place with those who meet the eligibility criteria progressing to Stage 4.

## Selection Process

### Stage 4

#### STAGE 4 – ASSESSMENT CENTRE

The assessment centre will consist of 4 parts: a presentation, a written exercise, a group exercise, and a competence based interview. Further details on each assessment and the competencies to be assessed can be found below.

##### Indicative dates

It is intended that assessment centres will take place between **21st – 29th November 2022** in Belfast and all Covid-19 measures in place at that time will be adhered to. Further information regarding the assessment centre process will be included in your invite letter. Any reasonable adjustment requests should be conveyed to HRConnect at [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net).

**Please ensure you are available on the dates above as requests to reschedule assessment centres will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances.** If, having received your invitation you decide to withdraw please inform HRConnect within 48 hours of receiving your invitation. This will help us manage the competition more effectively.

In the event additional vacancies arise in the future, we may schedule further assessment centres.

##### Assessment centre documentation

You will be required to bring valid photo ID (Passports, driving licenses and electoral cards are acceptable) to the assessment centre. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with the invitation to assessment centre.

##### Preparing for the assessment centre

- Familiarise yourself with the selection criteria and the competencies for the role. Information on the competencies to be assessed in each exercise are detailed below.
- Practise reading and analysing a large amount of information in a short time.

##### On the day

- Ensure you have read the instructions properly. The Administrator will provide you with an opportunity to ask questions before the exercise begins. Once the exercise has started, you cannot ask the Administrator any further questions relating to the content of the exercise.
- Manage your time effectively.
- Remember what is being measured, and ensure you provide the assessors with all the evidence they require.

## Selection Process

### Stage 4

**1. Presentation:** You will be given some papers and 30 minutes in which to analyse the content and prepare a summary and recommendations on a way forward. You will then present your findings to the interview panel (5 minutes for presentation and 5 minutes of Question and Answer).

The presentation will assess the following competencies:

- Collaborating and Partnering
- Leading and Communicating
- Making Effective Decisions
- Changing and Improving

**2. Competence based interview:** Interview questions have been designed to test your knowledge and skills in a number of competencies and to award marks accordingly. The assessors will conduct an interview in which they will ask you to give examples of when you have demonstrated the competencies being assessed. Advice on how to prepare for the interview can be found on page 29, but you should note that it is more important that you respond to the questions the assessors are asking you than simply repeating a pre-prepared answer.

The competencies candidates will be assessed against in the interview are:

- Making Effective Decisions
- Changing & Improving
- Collaborating & Partnering
- Leading & Communicating
- Delivering Value for Money
- Managing a Quality Service

**3. Group exercise:** You will participate in a group discussion involving up to six candidates. The group will be provided with materials at the assessment centre relating to an issue and will have the opportunity to discuss the content and agree a way forward.

The group exercise will assess the following competencies:

- Collaborating and Partnering
- Leading and Communicating
- Managing a Quality Service
- Changing and Improving

## Selection Process

### Stage 4

**4. Written exercise:** You will be given some documents and asked to produce a brief written response to them. Computers will be provided at the centre for you to type your response. This exercise will include an assessment of your ability to produce clear, written English. The written exercise will assess the following competencies:

- Leading and Communicating
- Delivering Value for Money
- Managing a Quality Service

#### Preparing for the interview

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, please bear in mind it requires you to:

- Focus exclusively on your ability to fulfil the competences required for effective performance in the role.
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

A competence-based interview does not, however, require you to:

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish.
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience.
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, using the **STAR** approach:

- **Situation:** Briefly outline the situation.
- **Task:** What was your objective, what were you trying to achieve?
- **Action:** What did you actually do, what was your unique contribution?
- **Result:** What happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn?

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience to demonstrate the range of behaviours associated with the competences being assessed. During their discussion with you they may wish to focus on specific aspects of the experience you are describing or ask you to talk about other examples.

You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples that best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work/life experiences.

**Please note you are not allowed to bring notes or other personal documentation into the interview room.**

## Selection Process Stage 4&5

### Competencies

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. You should familiarise yourself with the **NICS Competency Framework** as this forms the basis of the interview selection process.

The Framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the NICS values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results.

The Framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competency at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at level 3.



### STAGE 5 – MERIT LIST

Candidates who successfully pass all stages of the assessment centre will be deemed suitable for appointment and placed on a list in order of merit with the highest scoring candidate ranked first.

# General Information



Northern Ireland  
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## General Information

### Offers of employment

Candidates will only receive one offer of appointment which, if not accepted, will generally result in withdrawal from the competition.

### The merit principle

In accordance with the Office of the NICS Commissioners' Recruitment appointments to the NICS are made under the 'merit principle', where the best person for any given post is selected in fair and open competition.

Further information on the NICS Commissioners can be found at [www.nicscommissioners.org](http://www.nicscommissioners.org)

We will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed.

It is intended that the merit list for this competition should remain live for a period of one year. However you should be aware that circumstances may arise in the future where it will be necessary to extend the currency of the merit list for a further period. The merit list will only be extended where cogent practical reasons for doing so arise.

### Disability requirements

We will ask on the application form if due to a disability you require any reasonable adjustments to enable you to participate in any part of the recruitment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further please contact HRConnect.

### Transgender requirements

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration, in confidence, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact HRConnect. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

### Changes in personal circumstances and contact details

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances. It is important that HRConnect have up to date contact details.

## General Information

**All applicants (including existing NICS staff) must inform the Recruitment Team at HRConnect of any changes to your email address.**

### Documentation

Identification documents to satisfy the Nationality, Right to Work and Security requirements of the post will be required. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued to candidates with the invitation to interview and, if successful, interview results.

- Photographic ID (e.g. valid Passport or valid Driving License);
- Proof of Address (e.g. recent utility bill or bank statement);
- Proof of Nationality (Passport or Birth Certification accompanied with proof of National Insurance number - NI number card or payslip); and
- Documents to satisfy AccessNI check (see [page 34](#)).

You should ensure that the required documents are readily available.

### Right to Work and Nationality requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom and satisfy the Nationality requirements for appointment to the NICS. Please note ALL applicants for external recruitment will be subject to a Nationality validation check.

Applicants must be either:

- (i) UK national; or
- (ii) National of a Commonwealth country; or
- (iii) National of the Republic of Ireland; or
- (iv) EEA nationals with settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme; or
- (v) Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service; or
- (vi) Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service; or
- (vii) Certain family members of the relevant EEA & Turkish nationals

ALL candidates are required to state their nationality in the Right to Work and Nationality requirements response box in Part 1 of your application form. For candidates applying under categories iv – vii you are required to provide the following information in the Right to Work and Nationality Requirements response box in Part 1 of your application form.

## General Information

Failure to provide the requested information **WILL** result in your application being rejected.

**Category iv** – Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your **‘share code’** here.

**Category v** - Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your **‘share code’** here. You are also required to provide your payroll number in the nationality response box to demonstrate that you are working in the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

**Category vi** - Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your **‘share code’** here. Alternatively please provide confirmation in the nationality response box that you hold indefinite or limited leave to remain in the UK and that this was granted prior to 31st December 2020.

**Category vii** - Please provide your ‘Share code’ in the ‘Share code’ field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your **‘share code’** here.

In addition, please provide evidence in the nationality response box to support your application for applying as a family member of a relevant EEA and Turkish nation. Further documentary evidence may be requested from HRConnect to support this;

‘Family member of the relevant EEA or Turkish nationals’ means:

- (i) That national’s spouse\*; or
- (ii) A direct descendant (child, grandchild etc.) of that national or his/her spouse who is under 21 years of age or is their dependent; or
- (iii) A dependent relative in the ascending line (parent, grandparent etc.) of the EEA national or his/her spouse.

**\*NOTE:** ‘Spouse’ does not include a party to a marriage of convenience and in the case of EEA national vocational students family members are restricted to spouses and dependent children only

## General Information

Where a candidate has a right to work status which has a time limitation, ongoing checks will be in place to ensure the right to work is maintained.

Further guidance on Nationality requirements is available via: [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk)

### Security

For the majority of posts the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. However, for some posts a higher level of security vetting (for example, Security Check, Developed Vetting and/or Counter Terrorist Check) will be required and may be necessary before you can take up certain placements. You will be required to provide the following:

- a) Your passport OR
- b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) AND your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
- c) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

Further information regarding the Baseline Personnel Security Standard, including other acceptable documents is available via [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants being considered for appointment, this will be carried out by AccessNI. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is a Basic Disclosure Certificate.

**You should not be put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made.**

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via [www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni)

Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after the assessment centre, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment.

Failure to complete the application form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

## General Information

### Equal opportunity monitoring form

**Please note the Equal Opportunities monitoring section of the application form is mandatory in order to submit an application.**

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to the DoF website [www.finance-ni.gov.uk](http://www.finance-ni.gov.uk)

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit

### Feedback

The NICS is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair and in accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioners Code. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken in determining eligibility / shortlisting as well as at the interactive assessment. Feedback in respect of eligibility /shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria.

All requests for feedback are welcome.



### NICSHR privacy notice

NICSHR are committed to protecting your privacy. HRConnect manage job applications on behalf of NICSHR, in line with the NICSHR privacy notice available [here](#) and the NICSHR privacy notice for online assessments, available [here](#).

### The Careers Service

The Careers Service provides an impartial, all-age careers information, advice and guidance service, to help young people and adults make informed choices about their future career paths. You can contact one of the Careers Service's professionally qualified Careers Advisors at [Careers Service](#).

## General Information

### Contact details:

If you have any queries regarding the competition process please contact HRConnect at the address below or by:

**E:** [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net)

**T:** 0800 1 300 330

Address:

HRConnect

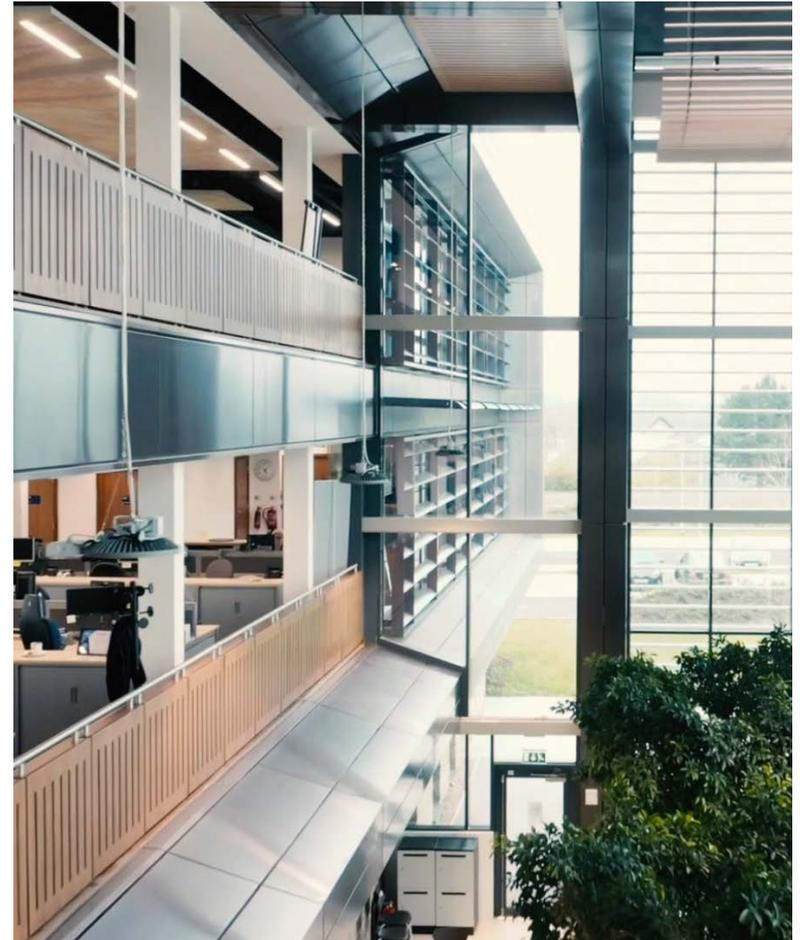
PO Box 1089

Beacon House

27 Clarendon Road

Belfast BT1 9EX

**THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM  
PART OF CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**





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