

# Introduction



## A MODERN, DIVERSE, CHALLENGING AND REWARDING ENVIRONMENT

The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) comprises all twelve Northern Ireland Government Departments which have responsibility for the implementation of legislation and policies agreed by our elected MLA's in the Northern Ireland Assembly. Almost all aspects of our lives are impacted on by the work of the NICS making it a large, modern, diverse, challenging and rewarding environment.

Each year the NICS appoints new entrants to posts at administrative, supervisory, fast stream and management level. In addition, appointments are made to scientific, technical, professional, legal, medical, information communications technology and other grades as and when required. The NICS, currently offers a Salary Sacrifice Childcare Voucher Scheme to employees. Staff participating in the scheme can swap part of their salary each month or each week to contribute towards their childcare costs. The benefit of this scheme is that you do not pay tax or National Insurance Contributions on this amount.

New appointees have the choice of an occupational pension scheme or a partnership pension account, with a wide variety of terms and conditions including a generous leave entitlement, flexible working hours in most locations and opportunities for advancement. The terms and conditions which most civil servants enjoy are very family oriented. The NICS recognises that the skills of its people are our greatest asset and it will continually seek to train and develop them in order to attain its business goals.

The information in this booklet provides a brief synopsis on the Departments and Agencies, which make up the Civil Service, guidance on how to apply for any position you may be interested in and brief summaries of the more common vacancies, which occur from time to time.

The vast majority of NICS positions are open to UK Nationals, Commonwealth citizens and to applicants from the EEA and European Community. The NICS is committed to equality of opportunity and adheres to the recruitment principles set out in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code.

The information regarding the eligibility criteria, including qualification required as outlined in the following pages are for general guidance only and any new competition advertised will always include a candidate information booklet outlining the specific requirements for the post at the time of advertising.

A short description of the more common NICS positions which may become available are outlined overleaf. If you require any further information please contact Appointments and Marketing Branch at the following address:

**APPOINTMENTS AND MARKETING BRANCH  
ORCHARD HOUSE  
40 FOYLE STREET  
LONDONDERRY  
BT48 6AT**

**Telephone: 028 7131 9900  
E-mail: [resourcingchr@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:resourcingchr@dfpni.gov.uk)**

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The administration of recruitment competitions to the NICS is carried out by HRConnect in accordance with NICS policies and procedures.

**All permanent NICS vacancies are advertised on the websites:**

**[www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk),  
[www.jobcentreonline.com](http://www.jobcentreonline.com)**

**and are currently advertised in the following newspapers:**

**Belfast Telegraph** - Tuesday Edition  
**Irish News & Newsletter** - Thursday Edition

Temporary NICS vacancies are advertised in local job centres and on Job Centre Online.

HRConnect will also accept requests for application packs in writing, by letter/email or by telephoning 0800 1300 330 .

The application pack will contain the following:

**Application Form:** This form will ask for information such as Name, Address, Qualifications and Employment History together with more job related questions relating to the type of job for which you are applying. Please note that CVs are not acceptable in place of completed application forms.

**Candidate Information Booklet:** This will contain information relating to the Job, location, salary, job description, personal specification, etc. It will also state the eligibility criteria and shortlisting requirements (if applicable). In addition, the booklet will contain information regarding the recruitment process, nationality requirements and the NICS equal opportunities policy.

**Before forwarding a completed application form to HRConnect, candidates should satisfy themselves (by referring to The Candidate Information Booklet) that they are eligible to apply.**

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is the policy of the Northern Ireland Civil Service that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work.

We select those suitable for appointment solely on the basis of merit. Monitoring is carried out to ensure that our equal opportunity policy is effectively implemented.

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

Staff have a right to a good and harmonious working environment and to training and development in line with NICS Equal Opportunities booklet. This right is protected in many instances by legislation. A copy of the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement is available on request.



## Administrative Assistant (AA) Permanent and Temporary / Administrative Officer (AO)

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Administrative staff perform a wide variety of functions in busy public offices as well as behind the scenes ensuring that the work programmes of the Northern Ireland Government are carried out. The work frequently involves data input, dealing with the public enquiries face to face and the management and dealing with telephone enquiries. You will work as a member of a team in an environment designed to develop your skills and encourage you to achieve your full potential.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

For the post of Administrative Assistant, applicants must possess by the closing date for applications GCSE/GCE 'O' level grades A to C in English and Maths.

For the post of Administrative Officer, applicants must possess by the closing date for applications GCSE/GCE 'O' level grades A to C in English and Maths and three other separate subjects. The NICS will accept equivalent or higher qualifications to those listed as meeting the above requirements. As eligibility requirements may change from time to time, you should always check the specific qualifications required by reading the candidate information booklets which are provided with each competition.

### C TESTING AND INTERVIEW

Applicants to both AA and AO positions will be required to undertake selection tests and further progress in the competitions will be dependent upon performance in these tests.

### D CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

It is NICS policy that all candidates who indicate a need for a 'reasonable adjustment' in the recruitment and selection process have this need carefully considered and applied where appropriate. This may include modifications to application, testing or interview arrangements.

Further information on the NICS policy in respect of reasonable adjustment in the recruitment and selection process can be obtained by accessing [www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk)

### E POST TEST

Currently applicants for AA positions are appointed in Test Score order with those achieving the highest test scores being appointed first. For AO positions those applicants who achieve the highest test scores are invited to interview and subsequently appointed in interview score order with the highest interview scores being appointed first. Where NICS business areas require it, an interview for AA position may also be required.

## Executive Officer 2

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Executive Officers are the first tier of management and almost invariably with responsibility for the supervision and management of staff. There are three broad functional areas of work as follows:

**Operational** work involves the development of practical arrangements to give effect to policy decisions or legislation. It may also involve the management of services.

**Finance** work can involve forecasting public expenditure requirements, implementing payment and funding arrangements, developing and auditing accounting practices and standards, producing finance reports and audits.

**Policy** work can involve assisting in the development or review of key departmental business responsibilities. This may involve research, analysis and evaluation of information, drafting reports and assisting with the preparation of legislation or other aspects of the Parliamentary process.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for the post of Executive Officer 2 can satisfy the eligibility criteria by either GCE 'A' level passes in 2 separate subjects and GCSE/GCE 'O' level grades A to C in English and Maths or having a period of supervisory/management experience which will be defined in recruitment literature at the time the recruitment is taking place.

### C TESTING AND INTERVIEW

The recruitment and selection process for the post of Executive Officer 2 may involve a combination of online and formally supervised tests. The most suitable candidates will be invited to interview and those who are deemed the most suitable at interview will be considered for appointment based on their merit position at interview. Interviews will be structured around the core competences for the grade. These competences can be accessed at [www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk)







## Civil Service Fast Stream

### **B** QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for the Fast Stream must possess at least a Degree at 2:2 level.

### **A** BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The Civil Service Fast Stream is an accelerated training and development programme for graduates with the potential to become future leaders of the Civil Service. It is consistently ranked among the top ten of The Times "Top 100 Graduate Employers". Whilst the Fast Stream programme is administered and managed as a Home Civil Service (HCS) programme, the Northern Ireland Civil Service works in partnership with the HCS enabling applicants from this programme to specifically apply to be appointed to the NICS.

The Fast Stream isn't the only graduate development programme to offer variety of work and early responsibility, but one thing that does set it apart, and a reason for its enormous popularity, is that it enables graduates to use their brains and their skills in developing innovative solutions to some of the biggest issues facing society today

### **C** ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Selection begins in late September and the closing date for applications is normally the end of November. Verbal and numerical reasoning tests and the Fast Stream competency questionnaire are completed online. Practice tests are available on the website [www.civilservice.gov.uk/faststream](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/faststream)

Those candidates deemed suitable to proceed further in the competition are then invited to undertake invigilated e-Tray exercise lasting approximately half a day. These candidates will also be invited to re-sit online tests at this stage. The third part of the selection process involves participating in a Fast Stream Assessment Centre and the top candidates from this will be further processed with a view to appointment to the NICS.



## Degree Holder/Staff Officer

### **A** BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Your work might typically include:

- Assisting in developing new policies and strategies on a wide range of issues;
- Analysing complex information to support and influence decision making;
- Developing effective working relationships with a range of stakeholders;
- Managing the delivery of services to the public;
- Supporting Ministers in government business and in the management of Departments;
- Contributing to the planning and implementation of change;
- Planning, allocating, monitoring and evaluating the work of teams; and
- Managing and developing staff.

### **B** QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants will require an honours degree at a level to be defined at the time of advertising.

### **B** ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Selection to this level of post has normally involved a combination of aptitude testing and Assessment centre exercises. These will be made clear in candidate information booklet at the time of advertising.

# Scientific Work

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# Engineering Positions



## BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Scientific posts within the Northern Ireland Civil Service are normally of a specialised nature e.g. Scientific Officer – Biometrics; Higher Scientific Officer – Marine Biology; Senior Scientific Officer – Forensic Science etc. In these instances the qualification requirements are degree specific and can range from a second class honours degree to a degree plus Masters / PhD or degree plus relevant experience. Full details of the requirements for any advertised post will be provided in a Candidate Information Booklet setting out the selection requirements for the post.

There are, however, some lower grade scientific posts for which a degree is not a requirement

## Assistant Scientific Officer

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The receipt and recording of samples of various types and their preparation for examination and analysis. Assisting in routine and experimental work in the laboratory, glasshouse trials, field investigations etc. Recording results and experimental data, preparing reagents, setting up and maintaining equipment and apparatus.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

4 GCSE / GCE 'O' level grades A to C. These must include English, Maths and a Science subject.



## Laboratory Attendant

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Washing and sterilisation of glassware, routine cleaning of laboratory equipment and worktops, general assistance in various types of laboratory work.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The qualifications for this post may include GCSE/GCE 'O' level Maths, English and a science subject (which includes laboratory work) all at grades A to C. A period of relevant experience may be accepted as equivalent to the possession of the GCSE/GCE science subject. As the number of applicants who invariably apply for this position tends to be very large, shortlisting the most suitable applicants may include increasing the qualifications required and/or introducing an appropriate aptitude test.

## Trainee Engineering Assistant

There are two trainee entry levels within the Civil or Electrical Engineering disciplines. Vacancies occur mainly in DRD Roads Service and DARD Rivers Agency.

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

A structured programme of education and training is operated to enable trainees to obtain an engineering qualification and to gain wide experience of the work. Trainees work as part of a team of civil/electrical engineers and technicians and the work is varied and interesting.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

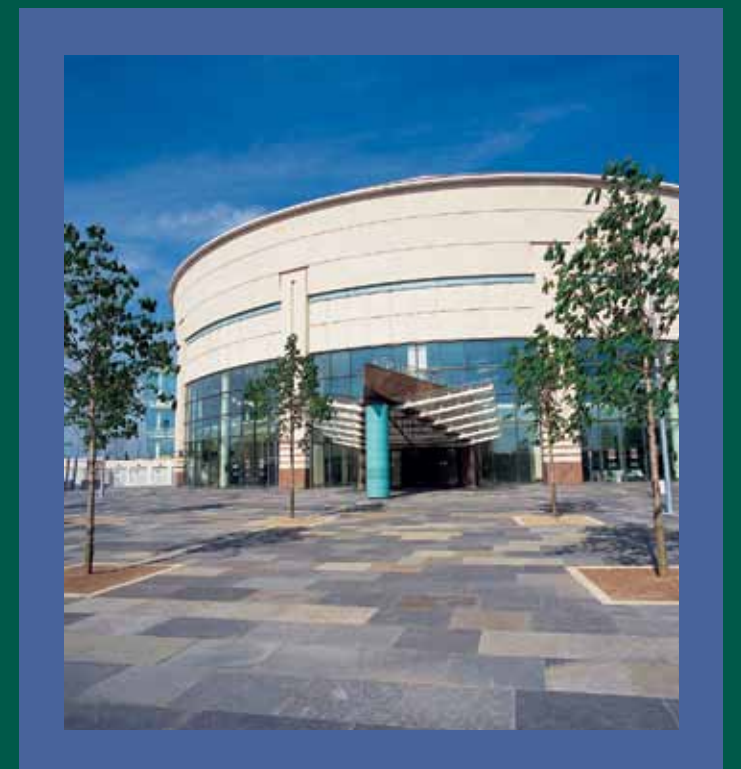
4 GCSE's ('O' level) grades A to C. These must include English, Mathematics and suitable science subject.

### C FURTHER STUDY

A trainee will be required to follow an approved course of study, leading to the BTEC National Certificate in Civil/Electrical Engineering. This course will require attendance at a College of Further Education for one day or up to two evenings per week.

### D PROMOTION

Trainees who have gained the required qualification and have successfully completed three years' training and experience will normally progress to the Professional and Technology grade.







## Graduate Trainee Engineer

Vacancies occur mainly in DRD Roads Service, DFP Central Procurement Directorate and DARD Rivers Agency. All Civil Engineering Trainees are enrolled in a formal Training Agreement with the Institution of Civil Engineers, (ICE).

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Graduates will be involved in interesting and challenging work, which will include strategic planning, information management and all aspects of the project life cycle to include feasibility studies, detailed design and site supervision. Graduate performance and development will be continually appraised by a supervising/delegated civil engineer



### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

At least a 2nd class honours degree in Civil Engineering, which satisfies the academic requirements for chartered membership of the Institution of Civil Engineers, (ICE).

### C PROMOTION

Graduates will normally spend two years on the Graduate Trainee scale and subject to satisfactory service will then progress to the Higher Professional and Technical Officer (HPTO) grade.

There are prospects of promotion under normal promotion arrangements to Senior Professional and Technology Officer (SPTO) and Principal Professional and Technology Officer (PPTO).



## Professional and Technology Officer (PTO)

There are a variety of PTO positions available within the Northern Ireland Civil Service. These positions include Electrical/Electronic Engineering Assistant, Mechanical Engineering Assistant, Planning Assistant, Architectural Assistants. Vacancies can occur in DARD Rivers Agency, DRD Roads Service and DFP.

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Broad Description of Duties – Delete current narrative and insert the following: 'Project design, preparation and updating of civil engineering drawings and documents, operation and maintenance of infrastructure/assets, undertake site visits, participate in site meetings, write up reports, assist senior officers, supervision of staff and contractors.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

At least a BTEC National Certificate / Diploma in an appropriate discipline and one year's post-qualification experience.

# Agricultural Work

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The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) has, in addition to its administrative positions, vacancies of a specialist nature e.g. Forestry Work, Veterinary Officer, Inspector Group 1, Fisheries Officers, Lecturers, Instructors and Industrial Grades, Plant Fitter, Mechanic, etc.

## Forest Officer III

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Forest Officers will, as part of a team, have responsibility for the management of specific activities with the establishment and maintenance of forests, harvesting, recreation, environment and specialist functions. Posts vary in nature and Forest Officers will be required to perform duties associated with the specific post. These may include:

- Planning and controlling operations in the Forest Service estate including the day to day management of staff and contract work;
- Protection and enhancement of the forest environment;
- Providing technical oversight, control and administration within areas of responsibility;
- Developing and maintaining good relations with Forest Service customers and stakeholders with an interest in forestry and countryside matters.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicants must possess at least a BTEC or SCOTVEC Higher National Diploma in Forestry; and
2. Have at least one year's practical experience in the forestry industry gained within the last five years in at least one of the following areas:
  - a. Timber harvesting operations;
  - b. Forest establishment and maintenance operations (this experience may have been gained alongside studies for the qualification at eligibility criterion 1); or
  - c. Forestry planning.

## Inspector Grade III/IV

There are a variety of Inspector Grade III/IV positions available within DARD across a range of disciplines which include Agriculture, Agricultural Engineering, Food Technology, Horticulture and Equine Science.

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The duties of the posts include the following:

1. Development and delivery of Further and Higher Education, training and short course programmes;
2. Advisory and business development programmes across the Agri-food industry;
3. Inspection and surveillance duties relating to the implementation of NI and EU agri-food legislation.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

At least a pass Degree in an appropriate discipline.

# Agricultural Work

## Veterinary Officer

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Veterinary Officers are employed by the Department of Agriculture to help protect the consumer, the public and animals through the application and enforcement of public health, animal health and welfare legislation.

They can expect to be involved in a wide variety of duties on farms, in markets, in abattoirs and in other premises involved in the agri-food industry. Tasks will include inspection of animals, collection of samples, disease diagnosis, ante and post mortem duties in abattoirs plus a wide range of other professional duties. This work is associated with controlling enzootic diseases such as bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis, undertaking surveillance for other diseases and/or stamping out epizootic diseases such as Foot and Mouth Disease or Bluetongue. Vets will also be involved in training technical staff and in delivering talks to farmers and other groups within the industry.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must be members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons before they can be appointed.



## Inspector Group 1

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Successful applicants will be involved in enforcing Animal Health and welfare and Public Health Legislation. Duties may include inspection at various locations including farms, markets, ports and meat plants.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

GCSE ('O' level) passes in grades A to C in four subjects, which must include English and one Science subject, and at least a College Diploma in Agriculture.

## Animal Health and Welfare Inspector Group 1

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

These staff are involved in enforcing animal health and welfare legislation in a wide variety of locations but especially on farms. The main purpose is to support the veterinary team by collecting samples, including blood samples from animals, carrying out inspections and documentary checks. They work closely with local private veterinary practitioners and Department Veterinary Officers in arranging combined tests on farms.

Duties include mapping of infected premises and checking imported consignments of animals and animal products.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

GCSE ('O' level) passes in grades A to C in four subjects, which must include English and one science subject, and at least a College Diploma in Agriculture.



## Principal Legal Officer – Departmental Solicitor's Office

There is a wide variety of legal work in the Northern Ireland Civil Service through the Departmental Solicitor's Office (Advocacy, Conveyancing etc.) and the Public Prosecution Service (Criminal Law etc.). Departmental Solicitors are the key legal advisors to the devolved government of Northern Ireland. They advise on a huge variety of work including making policy or legislation, judicial review, commercial projects and EU law.

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The Departmental Solicitor's Office provides opportunities to work at the centre of the government of Northern Ireland, advising on the key functions of Departments, helping them exercise their powers, often working at the leading edge of policy, administrative and case law legal issues of the day.

Work includes drafting and advising on legislation, advising on a wide range of litigation, including at EU level, as well as on industrial relations, planning, environmental, agricultural, social policy, economic and commercial issues at the heart of government.

Departmental Solicitor's office sits within the Government Legal Services for Northern Ireland which includes other government legal offices and gives maximum flexibility for career development.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must be a solicitor or barrister entitled to practise in Northern Ireland, and have one year's relevant post-qualification experience gained within the last four years.

Certain types of work will also require additional relevant experience.

## Public Prosecutor - Public Prosecution Service

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) is headed by the Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland. Public Prosecutors assist the Director in considering facts and information reported by investigators, principally the PSNI, and making independent decisions as to whether the available evidence is sufficient to prosecute and prosecution is required in the public interest. Where it is decided to prosecute, prosecutors have conduct of court proceedings.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must be a solicitor or barrister entitled to practise in Northern Ireland.





## Office of Legislative Counsel

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The Office of the Legislative Counsel is a small office specialising in legislative drafting. It prepares all Executive Bills for introduction to the Northern Ireland Assembly. The work ranges across the responsibilities of all the devolved Departments.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must hold a professional legal qualification.

## ICT PROFESSIONALS (ICT LEVEL 3)

Information Communication Technology (ICT) Professionals with the right skills are very much in demand in today's world and the Northern Ireland Civil Service is no exception. Whether it be helping to reinvent business processes or developing new or complicated software, what we need is people with strong ICT technical knowledge and skills, who are committed to proactively seeking opportunities for improvement in work processes and service delivery. Working as part of a team, taking the initiative, problem solving, dealing tactfully and positively with a wide range of customers are just some of the skills we need to ensure the NICS takes full advantage of emerging technologies to transform and modernise processes and interactions. By exploiting new technology whenever possible, ICT Professionals aim to help reduce costs and ensure that maximum value for money is extracted from any expenditure on ICT itself. As such the type of work is varied and challenging so having the desire, skills, experience, drive and determination is a must to work within that NICS ICT Profession.

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The NICS utilises IT Professional standards and as such is committed to the adoption of the UK IT industry standard – Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA). This provides a clear model for describing IT practitioner skills.

Whilst the skills required of ICT Professionals engaged in service delivery across the NICS can vary, they are predominately within the following career streams:

#### 1. Solutions development, implementation, security and support

ICT Professionals working in this area are employed by various Departments and are responsible for the development, delivery, maintenance and support of secure IT systems and services. These can be corporate, in-house and third party, many of which are business critical. Other services include but are not limited to the provision of web-based applications and websites, and providing ICT technical advice and contract management.

#### 2. Infrastructure Support and Service management

Service management comprises a number of complementary disciplines and processes which work together to achieve three fundamental objectives in an organisation, namely effective management of the quality and quantity of delivered ICT services, improved communications between the ICT team and customers, and provision of value for money ICT. ICT Professionals working in Infrastructure Support are responsible for the delivery of secure common ICT systems and

# ICT Professionals

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# Statisticians



services to support business objectives. ICT staff are involved in the support of key elements of the IT infrastructure, including data centres, security, networks and access devices.

### 3. Learning and Development

An exciting and challenging part of working as an ICT professional in the NICS is that you will be given the opportunity for self development in the fast moving field of ICT. ICT Professionals have the opportunity to participate in a full induction and learning and development programme and are expected to complete relevant courses, including business and technical training to extend their knowledge and expertise in line with business needs.

modification from supplied specifications using recognised industry standards and tools. This also covers the area of web design and development which includes the user interface design, coding and writing mark-up.

Providing or supporting information and communications technology systems in an Infrastructure and Service Management environment. "Infrastructure and Service management environment" in this context includes working in first line / second line support including resolution of incidents, responding to service requests and providing information to enable problem resolution. This area also covers the maintenance and support of communication networks hardware and facilities including routers, switches, firewalls and other similar hardware; the installation and maintenance of system software such as operating systems, data management products, office automation products and other utility software.

### A QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must have:

- a. At least a Higher National Certificate (HNC) in computing, or other discipline relevant to Information Systems / Information Technology (only those courses with a computing content of 50% or more will be considered relevant.) **AND** have one year's relevant experience;

**OR**

- b. Have three years' relevant experience\*.

\*Relevant experience is defined as: Providing or supporting information and communications technology systems in a software development environment. "Software development environment" in this context includes the design, coding and testing of programs and program

### C SELECTION PROCESS

All applicants who meet the eligibility criterion will be required to undertake an ICT aptitude test. This gives the applicant an opportunity to demonstrate that they have the necessary abilities to effectively perform the duties associated with the ICT Professional (ICT Level 3) grade.

### D POST TEST

Only those candidates who reach the required standard in the test will be invited to interview.

## Assistant Statistician

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) provides professional services in statistics and social research to assist Northern Ireland Departments in carrying out their responsibilities over the broad range of public policy. NISRA has three main business areas:

NISRA staff provide statistics and social research services to Northern Ireland Government departments, agencies and some public bodies to assist in policy making, monitoring and evaluation.

The Agency incorporates the General Register Office (GRO) for Northern Ireland. The GRO undertakes the registration of births, marriages, adoptions and deaths in Northern Ireland and produces summary statistics relating to these events as well as annual population estimates.

NISRA is also responsible for taking the Census of Population.

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Agency staff collect data from a range of sources in order to monitor the performance of public services and track changes in Northern Ireland's society and economy. In addition, a considerable volume of statistical and research work is contracted out to academic institutions and to the private sector each year. The work is varied and may entail original research, liaising with academics, policy analysis and the preparation of reports and advice as an aid to the development, implementation and evaluation of policy.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. At least a 2nd class honours degree which has included training in statistics and/or social science research methods; **or**
2. At least a 2nd class honours degree and a Royal Statistical Society award of a least certificate level; **or**
3. A postgraduate qualification, which has included training in statistics and / or social science research methods.

### C TESTING

Only those applicants with the requisite qualifications will be invited to test.

The test will include:

- A verbal ability test;
- A numeracy test; and
- A test of basic statistical and research concepts.

### D POST TEST

Only those applicants who achieve the required standard will be invited to attend interview.





## Assistant Economist

The Economist group within the Northern Ireland Civil Service provides professional economic advice to improve policy and project analysis. There are currently around 100 economists employed within the Economist Group, working in almost all the Northern Ireland Civil Service departments, as well as the Authority for Utility Regulation. The only exception is the Department of Agriculture, which has its own specialist agricultural economists.

Economists within the Northern Ireland Civil Service will be expected to work in a number of departments throughout their career to develop knowledge and skills. They will also have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of training and development activities.

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF ECONOMIST WORK AREAS

The Economist Group provides a range of professional economic services to Northern Ireland Departments. The work of Economists is varied and includes:

- Providing economic advice on economic appraisal and evaluation of policies, programmes and projects;
- Commissioning and producing economic research on aspects of the Northern Ireland economy to improve policy formulation;
- Providing economic advice and briefing on a variety of subjects such as the local labour market; industry support; transport and environmental policy; health care and education provision; rating policy; and the allocation of public expenditure; and
- Responding to Assembly Questions and other queries related to aspects of the local economy.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

At least a second class honours degree or postgraduate qualification in Economics or in a subject where the study of economics is a major component.

### C TESTING

Suitably qualified candidates will be invited to a selection procedure, which will comprise a written test and an interview. The written test will gauge general economic skills/knowledge.

### D POST TEST

Only those applicants who achieve the required standard will be invited to attend interview.

## Staff Officer Accountant

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

While the precise duties and responsibilities of individual posts will vary, all posts may involve varying degrees of the following activities:

- Analysis of financial data;
- Production of monthly or quarterly management accounting information;
- Preparation of Departmental Resource Accounts, dealing with internal and external auditors including the Northern Ireland Audit Office;
- Development and review of financial IT systems, providing advice and guidance on the use and interpretation of financial information and accounting requirements and best practice; and
- Drafting and implementation of financial policies, procedures and controls.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

See Staff Officer Accountant Candidate Information Booklet.



## Deputy Principal Accountant

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Whilst the precise duties and responsibilities of individual posts will vary, all posts may involve varying degrees of the following activities:

- The provision of high quality, reliable, accurate and timely financial information;
- Assisting with the financial planning processes of government departments and agencies;
- The preparation of departmental resource accounts and the preparation of consolidation packs to facilitate Whole of Government Accounts, including implementation of IFRS;
- The development and implementation of financial systems to support financial management and reporting processes;
- Provision of advice, guidance and direction on the implications of resource accounting and budgeting for the management of budgets, the in-year monitoring of expenditure, and the preparation of Estimates and Resource Accounts;
- Developing management accounting and financial performance reporting, leading, managing and motivating teams of staff; and
- Review and assessment of business cases and investment appraisal, etc.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must have successfully completed the professional examinations and be a full current member of one of the Chartered Accountancy bodies. Applicants must also have at least two years' post-qualification practical experience in preparing or auditing resource and / or accrual accounts, preparing, managing and monitoring budgets and the allocation of resources or developing, auditing or implementing complex computerised financial systems.

## Executive Information Service

The Executive Information Service (EIS) provides a full range of news and communication services for Ministers and their Departments, communicating the activity of the Northern Ireland administration at home and abroad. The continual development and application of diverse communication mediums across Departments places EIS at the very heart of the NICS.

The usual entry level to the Information Officer discipline is at Information Officer grade, rising to Senior Information Officer and Principal Officer.

Information Officers operate within a communications team in a government department and are expected to work across a range of communication functions, although some posts are within a specific communication discipline. Information Officers are the core operational grade within the communication profession, providing a range of services to external and internal users.

### A BROAD DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The main duties of an Information Officer will entail a mixture of work in any of the following areas:

- Attending Ministers at site visits inside and outside Northern Ireland;
- Arranging press, radio and TV interviews;
- Responding to media enquiries;
- Briefing journalists;
- Preparing and on occasions offering advice to Ministers and senior officials on information and presentational issues;

- Writing and editing news releases, descriptive articles, reference and publicity material;
- Arranging for media coverage of important events, announcements or visits;
- Contributing to the planning and / or implementation of wide-ranging publicity campaigns, including advertising and other marketing activities;
- Internal communications;
- Utilising digital and social media;
- Management of support staff and other resources;
- Using IT in an office environment;
- Contribute to communication / business strategies and plans; and
- Lead and manage people.

### B QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS – INFORMATION OFFICER GRADE

Formal qualifications are not essential for this post.

Applicants must have at least two years' experience as a practitioner in public relations, journalism, advertising, marketing or similar communications disciplines.

### C TESTING

Only those applicants with the requisite experience will be invited to test. The test will be designed to test candidates' ability to perform effectively the key duties of the post, specifically media planning, media handling and writing skills. The top scoring candidates at test will progress to interview.



# Examples of Positions Advertised by NICS

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# About the NICS Departments



Accountant  
Animal Health and Welfare Inspector Group 1  
Staff Officer Accountant  
DP Accountant  
Grade 7 Accountant  
Administrative Assistant  
Administrative Officer  
Agricultural Economist  
Agricultural Inspector  
Assistant Scientific Officer  
Assistant Statistician  
Assistant Librarian  
Careers Adviser  
Chief Executive (various Departments and Agencies)  
Chief Medical Officer  
Chief Nursing Officer  
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer  
Chief Social Services Officer  
Clinical Psychologist  
Conservation Officers  
Countryside Management Advisors/Inspectors  
Curator  
Deputy Chief Dental Officer  
Deputy Chief Medical Officer  
Development Advisor in Agriculture, Food Technology  
Development Manager  
Director of Finance  
Divisional Planning Manager  
Driving Examiners  
Economist  
Executive Officer 2  
Field Monument Warden  
Financial Business Manager  
Forest Officer  
Graduate Trainee Civil Engineer  
Graduate Trainee Electrical Engineer  
Head of Food Service  
Head of Health & Safety

Head of Horticulture  
Head of Market Development  
Health and Safety Inspectors  
Higher Scientific Officer (Various)  
Horticulturalist  
Information Officer  
Inspector (Education)  
Investigating Officer  
Laboratory Attendant  
Lecturer  
Lecturer in Agriculture, Food Technology, Equine Science, Horticulture  
Lead Allied Health Professions Officer  
Management Accountant  
Mapping & Charting Officer  
Marine Biologist  
Medicines Enforcement Officer  
Medical Officer  
Nursing Officer  
Pharmaceutical Officer  
Public Prosecutor  
Preservation Assistant  
Principal Legal Officer  
Principal Pharmaceutical Officer  
Professional and Technology Officer (PTO)  
ICT Professionals (ICT Level 2 & 3)  
Roadworkers  
Scientific Officer  
Senior Medical Officer  
Senior Principal Pharmaceutical Officer  
Social Services Officer  
SPTO/PPTO  
Telecommunications Engineer  
Trainee Engineering Assistant (Civil, Electrical & Mechanical)  
Trading Standards Officers  
Vehicle Examiners  
Vehicle Inspectors  
Veterinarians

## Setting the Scene

As one of Northern Ireland's largest employers, the Northern Ireland Civil Service employs approximately 25,000 permanent staff across a wide range of disciplines such as administrative, specialist, technology, scientific, computing, legal, centralised services and industrial. The NICS has a crucial role to play, both in policy work in support of Department Ministers and collective decision making, and in the delivery of a wide range of public services. Details of the role and areas of responsibility for the main NICS Departments are provided in the following pages.

\* Full details of the duties, responsibilities, qualifications and experience for each position advertised will be supplied on the relevant candidate information booklet.



## Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

The vision, aim and strategic goals of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) are:

### Vision

A thriving and sustainable rural community and environment.

### Aim

We will put our customers first, build partnerships and value our staff. We will work efficiently, respond quickly to change and focus on making lasting improvements.

### Strategic Goals

For the 2011/12 business year our Goals were:

1. To improve performance in the market place;
2. To improve the lives of rural dwellers;
3. To enhance animal, fish and plant health and welfare;
4. To develop a more sustainable environment; and
5. To deliver effectively our services to customers.

Further information can be found at [www.dardni.gov.uk](http://www.dardni.gov.uk)

## Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

### Role

The Department's vision is "**A confident, creative, informed and healthy society.**" It delivers this through working with a variety of partners, to unlock the full potential of the culture, arts and leisure sectors.

DCAL's central government role for the culture, arts and leisure sectors requires strong, visible leadership and advocacy in:

- The formulation of overall strategy;
- The development and implementation of policy and programmes;
- Securing and managing the sectors' resources;
- Sponsoring and supporting arms length bodies; and
- Delivering activities directly.

### Areas of Responsibility

The Department is responsible in Northern Ireland for setting policy, bringing forward legislation and resourcing the following areas:

- Arts and creativity;
- Museums;
- Libraries;
- Sport and leisure;
- Inland waterways and inland fisheries;
- The Public Record Office (PRONI) the national archives for Northern Ireland; and regional or minority language (Irish and Ulster-Scots) policy.

Further information can be found at [www.dcalni.gov.uk](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk)





## Department of Education

### Role

The Department of Education (the Department) exists to ensure that every learner fulfils their full potential at each stage of development.

### Areas of Responsibility

The Department is responsible for the central administration of all aspects of education and related services. The Department's main areas of responsibility are 0-5 provision, primary, post primary and special education, the youth service, the promotion of community relations within and between schools; workforce development; and teacher education and salaries. Its primary statutory duty is to promote the education of the people of Northern Ireland and to ensure the effective implementation of education policy. Its key functions include:

- Advising Ministers on the determination of education policy;
- Framing legislation;
- Accounting for the efficiency and effectiveness of the education system;
- Allocating, monitoring and accounting for resources; and
- Through the Education and Training Inspectorate, evaluating and reporting on the quality of teaching and learning and teacher education.

Further information can be found at [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk)

## Department for Employment and Learning

### Aim

To promote learning and skills, to prepare people for work and to support the economy.

### Objectives

- To promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and
- To help people into employment and promote good employment practices.

### Key areas of activity

- Enhancing the provision of learning and skills, including entrepreneurship, enterprise, management and leadership;
- Increasing the level of research and development, creativity and innovation in the Northern Ireland economy;
- Helping individuals to acquire jobs, including self employment, and improving the linkages between employment programmes and skills development; and
- The development and maintenance of the framework of employment rights and responsibilities.

### Customers

The Department's two main customer groups are:

- Individuals who are seeking to improve their levels of skills and qualifications or who require support and guidance to progress towards employment, including self-employment; and
- Businesses in both the public and private sectors.

Further information can be found at [www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk)



## Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

### Role

The goal of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) is to contribute to growing a competitive and export led economy. The Department performs a range of key functions. It has a crucial role to play in formulating and delivering economic development policy in terms of Innovation, Enterprise, Social Economy, Energy, Telecoms, and Tourism in Northern Ireland. In addition, the Department has responsibility for ensuring a modern regulatory framework to support business and protect consumers.

### Areas of Responsibility

- Economic Development Policy (including innovation, social economy, business development and strategic policy, energy, telecommunications and tourism);
- Business Regulation (including Company Law, Credit Unions/Industrial Provident Societies, Insolvency Service, Consumer Affairs and Trading Standards);
- Economic and Statistical Advice and Research; and
- Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (including natural resources and geosciences information).

DETI sponsors a number of agencies, established as NON-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), which play a key role in implementing and delivering the Executive's and the Department's economic development policy:

- Invest Northern Ireland;
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board;
- The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland; and
- The General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland.

The Department also acts as co-sponsor to two organisations:-

- Inter Trade Ireland; and
- Tourism Ireland Limited.

It also works closely with the Northern Ireland Science Park (NISP) and with the Utility Regulator for regulation in the development and regulation of the electricity and gas industry.

Further information can be found at [www.detini.gov.uk](http://www.detini.gov.uk)

## Department of the Environment

### Aim

To contribute to a better and safer environment which will support a vibrant and dynamic economy and to support the delivery of a system of strong and effective local government.

### Objectives

- To protect and promote the natural environment and built heritage;
- To plan and manage development in a sustainable way which is responsive to the needs of the community;
- To reduce road deaths and serious injuries; and
- To support the delivery of a system of strong and effective local government.

### Key Areas of Responsibility

- Environmental Policy;
- Environment and Heritage;
- Planning;
- Local Government;
- Road Safety;
- Driver and Vehicle Testing;
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing; and
- Transport Licensing and Enforcement.

Further information can be found at [www.doeni.gov.uk](http://www.doeni.gov.uk)



# About the NICS Departments

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# About the NICS Departments



## Department of Finance and Personnel

### Role

The Department of Finance and Personnel and its Agencies are responsible for a wide variety of functions, many of which are carried out centrally on behalf of the Northern Ireland Civil Service as a whole.

### Areas of Responsibility

- Central Finance Group;
- Corporate Human Resources;
- Departmental Solicitor's Office;
- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency;
- Central Procurement Directorate;
- Corporate Services Group; and
- Land and Property Services.

Further information can be found at [www.dfpni.gov.uk](http://www.dfpni.gov.uk)

## Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

### Role

The Department's mission is to improve the health and social well being of the people of Northern Ireland. It endeavours to do so by supporting programmes of health promotion and education to encourage the community to adopt activities, behaviours and attitudes which will lead to better health and well-being and by ensuring the provision of appropriate health and social services, both in clinical settings, such as hospitals and GPs' surgeries, and in the community, through nursing, social work and other professional services.

### Areas of Responsibility

- Health and Social Care;
- Public Health; and
- Public Safety.

The Department's core functions include healthcare policy, social policy, public health, quality and safety, professional advice, capital investment and project management, and resources and programme management. The Department offers opportunities for professional graduates and specialist staff in a number of areas including medicine, nursing, social services, pharmacy, dentistry, mechanical/electrical engineering, quantity surveying, architectural and healthcare planning.

Further information can be found at [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)



## Department for Regional Development

### Role

The Vision of the Department is **“A region with modern, safe and sustainable roads, transport and water services which improve quality of life for all”**. We strive to deliver our vision by improving and making safer our transport infrastructure through the maintenance and development of the public road and rail network and through improvements in public transport. These improvements are aimed at delivering a modern, efficient and sustainable transportation system that facilitates economic growth and social inclusion.

We will also plan for our future road and transport needs to take account of social, environmental and sustainability requirements. We also support growth in our ports and airports through the development of policies and legislation to enable them to operate successfully.

Through working with key stakeholders, we will also provide investment and develop and maintain a policy and regulatory environment to seek improvement to our water and sewerage services.

### Areas of Responsibility

- Regional strategic planning and development policy;
- Transport strategy and sustainable transport policy;
- Provision and maintenance of all public roads;
- Public transport policy and performance;
- Certain policy and support work for air and sea ports; and
- Policy on water and sewerage services and management of the Department's shareholder interest in Northern Ireland Water.

Further information can be found at [www.drdni.gov.uk](http://www.drdni.gov.uk)

## Department for Social Development

### Role

The overall aim of the Department is to tackle disadvantage and promote individual and community well-being of the people of Northern Ireland through integrated social and economic action. The Department administers the social security, child support and pensions schemes.

It is responsible for policy and legislation in relation to social security, child support pensions and housing and has the leading role in the reform of welfare provision in Northern Ireland.

The Department is also responsible for the establishment of policy and strategy and for the implementation of programmes aimed at addressing the social, economic and physical regeneration of cities, towns and villages, as well as overall policy for the voluntary sector and community development.

### Areas of Responsibility

The Department is responsible for:

- The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE);
- ILEX Urban Regeneration; and
- The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

The Department also has oversight of the Office of the Social Fund Commissioner, which delivers an independent review of discretionary Social Fund decisions made in the Social Security Agency.

Further information can be found at [www.dsdni.gov.uk](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk)





## Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

### Role

The overall aim of the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) is to contribute to and oversee the co-ordination of Executive policies and programmes to deliver a peaceful, fair, equal and prosperous society. In pursuing this aim, the key interlinked objectives of the Department are:

**Driving investment and sustainable development:** Through regeneration of strategic former military sites; promoting effective long-term capital planning and delivery; and, promoting the Executive's policy interests internationally.

**Tackling disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity:** By driving a programme across Government to reduce poverty; promoting and protecting the interests of children, older people, people with disabilities, victims and survivors, and other socially excluded groups; addressing inequality and disadvantage; and, drive the delivery of Government responsibilities in a sustainable manner.

**The effective operation of the institutions of government in the delivery of an agreed Programme for Government:** By providing a central source of information, co-ordination and advice to departments on Executive, Assembly, and legislative procedures; co-ordinating and reviewing the Programme for Government; driving the more efficient and sustainable use of capital assets across Government; and, ensuring the structure of public administration is efficient, effective and sustainable.

### Departmental Responsibilities

The Department has a key role to play in each of the Government's key objectives of "economic growth", "a society based on partnership, equality, inclusion and mutual respect", "building equality and community cohesion" and "high quality public services".

The Department has a strong policy making remit in relation to economic policy, including the aim of ensuring an integrated approach to major infrastructure investment through its sponsorship, with the Department for Social Development, of the Ilex Urban Regeneration Company in Derry/Londonderry and in the regeneration of former military and security sites such as the Maze/Long Kesh.

The Department promotes improved policy development across the administration and provides social and economic briefing for Ministers. It supports the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) to assist in the implementation of an effective Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland, a strategy for a major capital investment programme designed to address the significant infrastructure investment deficit - and provides necessary policy guidance to Northern Ireland Departments.

The Department has significant responsibilities in the area of rights, equality and community/

good relations. These include legislative and non-legislative programmes covering anti-discrimination and equality matters, and cross-cutting policy in areas such as religious belief, age, sexual orientation, race, disability, gender, children and young people, victims of the conflict and community relations. In addition, the Department has responsibility for monitoring the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People and for overseeing implementation across Departments of Government's Anti Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy and statutory obligations arising from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Department is responsible for ensuring the effective operation of the Executive and its attendant structures, to enable the delivery of policies, initiatives and services to the people of Northern Ireland in line with commitments under the Programme for Government.

### Areas of Responsibility

- Economic Policy;
- Strategic investment and regeneration;
- Equality: anti-discrimination, human rights, targeting social need, victims, Section 75 including racial equality, community relations;
- Policy on children and young people;
- Executive Information Service (PR and media relation services to NI Departments);
- Advice on Constitutional and Procedural Issues; North/South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat (North);
- The Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland;
- Executive Services (including Executive Secretariat, Institutional Review, Machinery of Government, Assembly Questions);
- Legislation Programme;
- Office of the Legislative Counsel & Statutory Publications;
- Public Appointments Policy;
- Promotion of Civil Contingencies Planning in the Public Sector;
- International Relations and European Union Matters; and
- Management of the Executive's Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse.

Further information can be found at: [www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk](http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk)



## Department of Justice

### Role

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has a range of devolved policing and justice functions set out in the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010.

The role of the Department is to support the Minister in reshaping the justice system, with safer shared communities, lower levels of crime and a better quality of life for everyone in Northern Ireland. The Department as, as its mission statement:

**'Building a fair, just and safer community'.**

### Areas of Responsibility

The Department is responsible for:

- Justice Policy and Legislation relating to both civil and criminal justice matters;
- Resourcing, policy and legislative framework for policing and community safety;
- Access NI provides a criminal history disclosure service to organisations in Northern Ireland enabling them to make more informed recruitment decisions by providing criminal history information on applicants seeking paid or unpaid work in certain areas, such as working with children or vulnerable adults.

In addition to its statutory functions, the department provides resources and a legislative framework for its agencies and arms length bodies (which together constitute most of the justice system in Northern Ireland). Together with these organisations the Department is responsible for ensuring there is a fair and effective justice system in Northern Ireland and for increasing public confidence in that system.

### The Department's five agencies are:

- The Northern Ireland Prison Service is the biggest agency in the Department and responsible for the management of offenders in custody and the operation of prisons across Northern Ireland;
- The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service provide administrative support to the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals and to the Judiciary;
- The Youth Justice Agency aims to prevent offending by children and young people through a range of interventions;
- Forensic Science Northern Ireland is responsible for the provision of effective forensic scientific services and support to enhance the delivery of justice; and
- Compensation Agency is responsible for supporting victims of crime by ensuring that they are appropriately compensated in accordance with relevant statutory schemes.

Further information can be found at [www.dojni.gov.uk](http://www.dojni.gov.uk)



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