HR CONNECT

Human Resources for the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Northern Ireland Office

Candidate Information Booklet

IRC253205

Valuation – 51 Week Student Placement

Land & Property Services (LPS)

Department of Finance (DoF)

Completed Application Forms must be submitted to HRConnect no later than 12 noon (UK time) on
Friday 21st February 2020

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

Land & Property Services (LPS)

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account, including junk mail folder, to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

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FOREWORD

Thank you for your interest in this competition for Placement Student with Land & Property Services (LPS). We are pleased to provide you with this information pack.

LPS is a diverse organisation that undertakes a range of functions on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive in support of its commitment to economic and social development in Northern Ireland. Our vision is to deliver excellence and innovation in the provision of all our services. Placement Student posts sit within the Valuation Services Directorate. This business area is responsible for maintaining the Valuation Lists, which provide the basis for domestic and non-domestic rating assessments, and for providing a comprehensive valuation and estate management service to the public sector in Northern Ireland.

Please read the information provided in the candidate information booklet carefully and if you are interested in this opportunity, and you have the skills and qualifications for the post, the next step is to complete and submit the application form.

You can find more information about LPS and our work at https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/land-property-services-lps

BACKGROUND

Land & Property Services

LPS is a division within the Department of Finance (DoF) and is responsible for delivering a broad range of land and property services and products. It plays an important role in supporting economic development in Northern Ireland. It collects well over £1.2billion in rates revenue which helps fund vital public services and delivers a significant stream of income to the 11 councils. The services we provide underpin the ownership of land throughout Northern Ireland – an important foundation for a progressive economy. Our vision is that together we will deliver 'excellence and innovation in the provision of Land & Property Services upon which our customers can rely'.

LPS has a total annual budget of £60m and approximately 1075 staff who are based in six locations across the province. It is structured into six Directorates namely Valuation Services, Ordnance Survey, Land Registry, Revenues and Benefits, Digital Services and Transformation and Organisational Development.

We have around one million interactions with citizens, customers, and a wide range of stakeholders each year. To deliver our vision we have a strategic plan which seeks to improve the services we deliver across all areas of our work. We deliver the following range of land and property services in Northern Ireland: maintenance of the domestic and non-domestic rating assessment systems; delivery of property valuations, estate management and property data services to the public sector; collection of rates on behalf of central Government and Councils; recording of legal interests in land and provision of land registration and mapping services; provision of a land information service for conveyancing purposes; and collection, management and publication of spatial data for use by the public and private sectors.

These posts sit within Valuation Services. We currently deliver our valuation business from five regional valuation offices throughout Northern Ireland, namely: Ballymena, Belfast, Craigavon, Londonderry and Omagh. Our headquarters is located in Lanyon Plaza, Lanyon Place, Belfast.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The main duties and responsibilities of each post holder will include:

- referencing property measurements, characteristics and ownership details for domestic properties for rating purposes and straight-forward non-domestic properties and preparing valuations using available comparisons and valuation models;

- maintaining file records and computer databases to a required standard. This includes writing reports and keeping records, drawing electronic sketches and surveys, uploading photographs and documents, verifying the completeness of information held, maintaining data quality;

- identifying and verifying property sales information and updating sales and sales inspection databases;

- liaising with Council Building Controls, the NIHE, Housing Associations and other public bodies, solicitors, estate agents and other areas of LPS to ensure valuation listings are up to date and properties are correctly identified and addressed;

- carrying out, under the supervision of a valuer, the inspection, measurement and valuation of property for a range of valuation purposes, and undertaking negotiations and preparing valuation reports for approval by a valuer;

- research and investigation into sales and lettings comparisons for domestic and non-domestic land and property, planning history, previous uses, environmental considerations, land ownership and the availability of alternative properties; and

- the preparation of maps and photographs and other documents that will be incorporated in Expert Witness Statements and used in evidence by valuers in Tribunals and Court proceedings.

The key responsibilities listed are not meant to be comprehensive but to give a good indication of the main duties of each post. The emphasis on particular duties will vary over time according to business needs.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

There are currently 6 full time temporary positions for students who have not yet graduated but are working towards a relevant qualification.

Further appointments may be made from this competition should NICS positions become vacant which require the same eligibility criteria and have similar duties and responsibilities.

Location

The posts are based as follows:

- 2 in Lanyon Plaza, Lanyon Place, Belfast; .
- Boaz House, Scarffe's Entry, Omagh;
- Waterside House, Duke Street, Londonderry;
- Academy House, Broughshane Street, Ballymena; and
- Marlborough House, Central Way Craigavon

Applicants should indicate in their application the location(s) in which they would be prepared to work. Should a candidate wish to be considered for more than one location an order of preference will be required. Any location not selected on the application form will mean a candidate will not be considered for that location.

Salary

Salary payable will be the band minimum for the Administrative Assistant scale which is currently £18,513 per annum (under review).

Travel

Access to a form of transport will be required in order to fulfil the responsibilities of this post. Travel and subsidies will be provided.

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

Holidays

In addition to public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, the annual leave allowance will be 25 days.

Hours of Work

The normal conditioned hours of work are full-time: 37 hours per week Monday to Friday. Most offices work flexi-time.

Vetting

The successful candidates will be required to be cleared to Basic Level.

Appointment

The successful candidates should be prepared to take up post during early summer 2020. Appointment will be for a duration of no more than 51 weeks from the date of commencing employment. A mid-year review will take place to determine progress after six months in post.

Further Information

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may telephone Angela McGrath on angela.mcgrath@finance-ni.gov.uk or email 028 90336175

If you have any questions about the competition process, or require any documentation in an alternative format, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

1. Be students currently studying for an RICS accredited BA/BSc Honours Degree in a real estate or other property related discipline where Valuation, Investment Appraisal, Asset Management, and Property Development form major components* of the course.

* 'Major components' is defined as: At least 50% of the course.

AND

2. Have completed the second year of their degree by end of the 2019/2020 academic year**.

** The Panel is unable to accept applications from students who will complete their degree on or before 2020 .

Placements will be offered on a conditional basis until evidence of successful completion of second year examinations is provided. Exam failure may result in the termination of the placement.

AND

3. Have the opportunity to undertake a 51 week work placement for the 2020/2021 academic year.

Applicants are asked to provide the following details on their application form:

- Name of Tutor/Professor or other responsible person from whom a report may be sought.
- Contact telephones number and/or e-mail address for Tutor/Professor.
- University address, including Department.

This information will be used to confirm applicants' eligibility to undertake a one-year placement for the 2020/2021 academic year. Candidates will only be appointed if confirmation is obtained from the College/University that they will be permitted to return and complete their course.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

Relevant or **equivalent** qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc. so that a well-informed decision can be made.

Please note:

- **You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.**
- **It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.**
- **The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.**
- **If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.**
- **The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be explored at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your unique role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.**
- **Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.**
- **ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post. Please do not include your name in the employment history or eligibility criteria sections.**
- **The NICS Competency framework can be accessed via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk**

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The selection process will include a competence based interview

1. Collaborating & Partnering

People skilled in this area create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people to help to achieve business objectives and goals. At all levels, it requires working collaboratively, sharing information and building supportive, responsive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, whilst having the confidence to challenge assumptions.

Marks available: 20

2. Making Effective Decisions

Effectiveness in this area is about being objective, using sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice. For all staff, it means showing clarity of thought, setting priorities, analysing and using evidence to evaluate options before arriving at well-reasoned, justifiable decisions.

Marks available: 20

3. Delivering at Pace

Effectiveness in this area means focusing on delivering timely performance with energy and taking responsibility and accountability for quality outcomes. For all staff, it is about working to agreed goals and activities and dealing with challenges in a responsive and constructive way.

Marks available: 20

Total Marks Available: 60

Overall Pass Mark: 30

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the above areas and award marks accordingly.

No notes or personal documentation may be brought into the interview room.

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Lanyon Plaza, Belfast from week commencing 23rd March 2020.

NICS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at level 1.

The NICS competency framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service 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.

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. 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 Northern Ireland Civil Service competency framework can be accessed via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competency framework as this forms the basis of selection process. Should you require assistance in accessing the competency framework please contact HRConnect.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

APPLICATION FORM

Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before making your application and retain a copy for your reference. The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria. **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

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.
- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- 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.
- All applications must be received by the advertised closing date and time.
- 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, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- 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.

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: https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/jobs-benefits-offices-jobcentres-and-social-security-offices

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, email info@niuse.org.uk, tel. 0044 (0)28 71 377709, text phone 0044 (0) 28 71 372077

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

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

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

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

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

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

For professional and technical posts, questions may be framed in the context of professional elements of the post.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Merit Principle

In accordance with the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, 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 Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.nicscommissioners.org.

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 via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

Offers of Employment

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

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.

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.

Merit List

HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. It is presently intended that the merit list for this competition should remain extant 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 you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment 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.

Documentation

Identification documents to satisfy the Nationality and Security requirements of the post will be required. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You will be required to bring documentary evidence of your qualifications to assessment.

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. Applicants must be either:

(i) A UK national; or
(ii) A Commonwealth citizen; or
(iii) A British Protected Person; or
(iv) An EEA national; or
(v) A Swiss National; or
(vi) A person who is not an EEA or Swiss national, but is a family member of an EEA national who has moved to the UK from another EEA Member State for an approved purpose.

Further guidance on Nationality requirements is available via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk.

Security

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For these post in the NICS the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. For this check 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.

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants to be carried out by AccessNI. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is;

Basic Disclosure Certificate

You should not 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.

Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, 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.

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.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

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

Feedback

The Northern Ireland Civil Service 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 interview. 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.

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT