

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

**GRADUATE SPECIALISTS -
Inspector Grade III**

IRC266092 - Agriculture

IRC265696 - Agricultural Engineering

IRC267441 - Food Technology

IRC266332 - Horticulture

IRC267020 - Equine

**College of Agriculture, Food and Rural
Enterprise (CAFRE)**

**Department of Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs (DAERA)**

**Completed Application Forms
must be submitted to
HRConnect no later than 12
noon (UK time) on
*Friday 24th September 2021***

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

**Department of Agriculture,
Environment and Rural Affairs
(DAERA)**

**Sustainability at the heart of a living,
working, active landscape valued by
everyone**

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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BACKGROUND

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has responsibility for food, farming, environmental, fisheries, forestry and sustainability policy and the development of the rural sector in Northern Ireland. The Department assists the sustainable development of the agri-food, environmental, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the needs of the consumers, the protection of human, animal and plant health, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

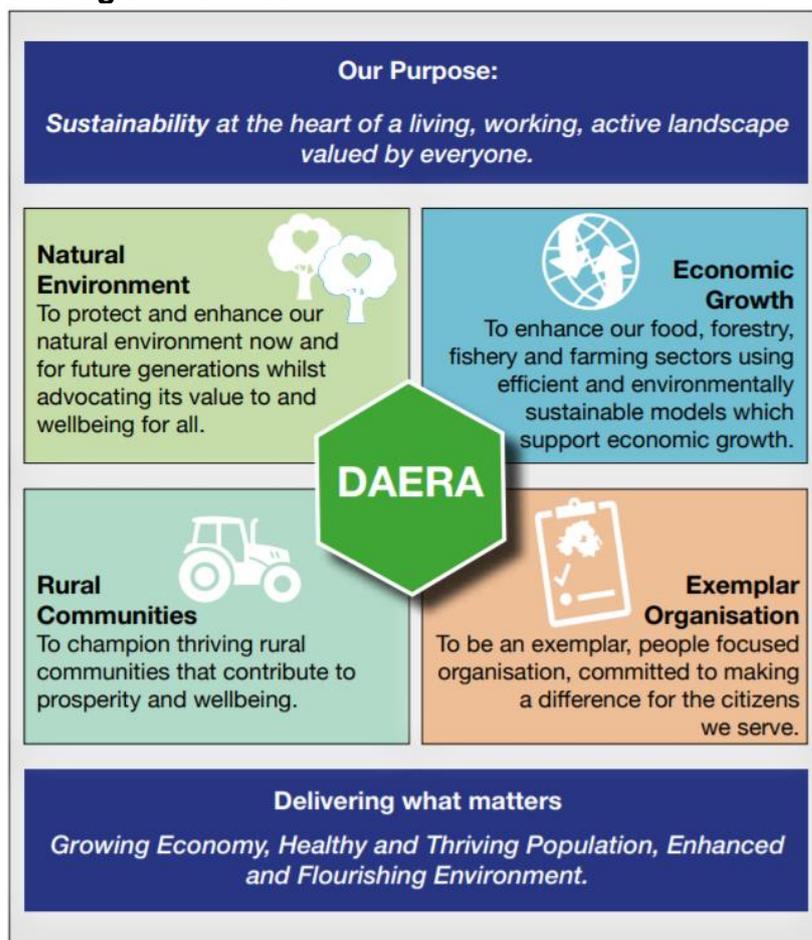
DAERA provides a business development service for farmers and growers and a veterinary service for administration of animal health and welfare. The Department's College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) delivers training and further and higher education courses in the agri-food sector. DAERA is responsible to the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in Great Britain for the administration of schemes affecting the whole of the United Kingdom.

DAERA has responsibility for environment, the Green Growth agenda and climate change, food, farming, fisheries, marine, forestry, rural development and sustainability policy. The Department supports the development of thriving rural communities; the conservation and enhancement of the environment; the sustainable development of a £5 billion agri-food industry, having regard for the needs of the consumers, the protection of human, animal and plant health and the welfare of animals; the development of the fisheries sector; and the development of our forested land. Given the importance of the EU exit agenda to these sectors and activities, DAERA is at the centre of the transition arrangements.

Vision

“Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone”

Strategic Priorities



DAERA Top Management Group comprises:-

- Rural Affairs, Forest Service and Estate Transformation Group
- Central Services and Contingency Planning Group
- Veterinary Service Animal Health Group
- Environment Marine and Fisheries Group; and
- Food and Farming Group

DAERA has two Executive Agencies:

- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Forest Service

The Department also sponsors a number of Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB), including the Agri-food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI).

The interim Permanent Secretary of DAERA is Anthony Harbinson.

FOOD AND FARMING GROUP

Food and Farming Group (FFG) is responsible for the following DAERA programmes and initiatives:

- Development of DAERA policy and programmes to support growth in the agri-food sector;
- Implementation of policy through inspection, enforcement, licensing, certification, advice and guidance relating to agriculture, horticulture, food and countryside management;
- Delivery of schemes and measures to support the agri-food sector;
- Development and implementation of DAERA policy on the skills and competence development of people wishing to enter or already working in the Northern Ireland agri-food industry and rural community; and
- Commissioning and management of the DAERA's science programme and sponsorship of the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute.

College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise

CAFRE is a Division within the Food and Farming Group within DAERA and has three campuses at Enniskillen, Greenmount (Antrim) and Loughry (Cookstown).

The College contributes to DAERA's aims and goals through the provision of education, knowledge transfer and innovation programmes to the Northern Ireland agri-food industry. This is achieved through the delivery of:

- Further and Higher Education programmes;
- Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Schemes;
- Knowledge and Technology Transfer;
- Benchmarking; and
- Industry training.

CAFRE has an annual budget of £25m (excluding capital) and has 420 staff located at its three campuses and in DAERA offices across Northern Ireland.

A further key role for CAFRE is the provision of technical support to DAERA policy branches and other Government Departments. Details of each aspect of work are set out below:

Further and Higher Education programmes

The current portfolio of full-time and part-time courses offered by CAFRE includes:

- Level 2 through to Honours Degree in Agriculture.
- Level 2 through to Honours Degree in Equine Studies.
- Level 2 through to Honours Degrees in Food Technology, Food Innovation & Nutrition and Food Business Management.

- Level 2 through to Honours Degree in Horticulture.
- Level 3 in Land-based Engineering.
- Levels 2 and 3 in Veterinary Nursing.
- Postgraduate courses in Business for Agri-Food and Rural Enterprise.

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Schemes

CAFRE has responsibility for the development and delivery of the Knowledge Transfer elements of the Farm Business Improvement Scheme, which is funded under the RDP. Four knowledge transfer programmes are being delivered, namely Business Development Groups, Farm Family Key Skills, Farm Innovation Visits and Technology Demonstration Farms.

Knowledge and Technology Transfer

Knowledge and innovation equips those working in the agri-food industry with the knowledge, skills and experience to adopt appropriate technologies and systems within their businesses from which economic, environmental, health and safety and animal welfare benefits will accrue.

Benchmarking

CAFRE has developed a range of benchmarking tools for farmers and growers. These provide participants with a standard way of analysing performance data using online databases thus enabling them to compare their performance with similar businesses. Based on this information and supported by CAFRE Advisers, they can set realistic targets and monitor the progress of their business.

Industry training

CAFRE industry training programmes are delivered to those already working in the agri-food industry and are offered in a wide range of subject areas including agriculture, horticulture, equine, food and environmental protection.

Area-Based Schemes Division

Area-based Schemes Division's (ASD) role is to ensure the efficient and effective processing of subsidy and grant payments and meet regulatory, scheme and timing requirements. The Division has 300 staff and is comprised of three Units; Countryside Management Unit, Area-based Schemes Delivery Unit and Area-based Schemes Future Implementation Unit.

Countryside Management Unit (CMU) carries out controls for DAERA's Area-based payment schemes and delivers DAERA's agri-environment scheme. The key aims of CMU include: ensuring compliance and control of area based schemes; maintaining a Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS); delivering agri-environment schemes to mitigate climate change, improve our water quality, protect our heritage, enhance our landscape and reverse the decline in

farmland biodiversity; reviewing cross compliance, land eligibility and inspection processes; advancing the use of new technologies.

Area-based Schemes Future Implementation Unit is a new unit, currently under development, and will be responsible for developing and implementing CAP replacement schemes as a result of DAERA's new Agri-Policy Framework.

Area-based Schemes Delivery Unit (ASDU) is responsible for the management and oversight of the reformed CAP Schemes introduced on 1 January 2015 and continued beyond EU exit. The Unit is responsible for the administration and payment of claims worth over £300m to over 24,000 farm businesses in Northern Ireland.

VETERINARY SERVICE ANIMAL HEALTH GROUP

The vision of the Veterinary Service Animal Health Group (VSAHG) is to support the agri-food industry through promoting/developing world class animal health and welfare and assuring food safety. VSAHG is a policy and delivery group committed to protecting public health, animal health and welfare and promoting trade, working innovatively and collaboratively to the highest standards.

This vision is delivered through the following aims:

- to prevent the entry of, and maintain preparedness to stamp out, important exotic diseases;
- to control and eradicate key diseases, in accordance with legislation and in partnership with industry; to implement public health official controls;
- to develop and maintain animal health and welfare policies;
- to commission and monitor related research;
- to enforce animal welfare legislation for farmed animals;
- to achieve compliance with EU and International standards;
- to support current and future trade; and
- to implement agri-food legislation relating to food and feed safety, classification, price reporting and marketing standards.

RURAL AFFAIRS, FOREST SERVICE AND ESTATES TRANSFORMATION GROUP

Forest Service

Forests are an important part of the NI landscape and have a distinct role in attracting almost 9 million visits each year for recreation and tourism products. The Agency supplies 0.4 million tonnes of sustainably grown timber for industrial use, takes a commercial approach to forest development for timber and recreation, earns £10 million annually, and has an ambition to increase this by developing sites for renewable energy. The Agency's role is to develop and implement forest policy and enhance plant, tree and bee health in support of the DAERA vision and strategic outcomes.

The Agency's specific contribution includes the production and supply of timber and other forest products; the maintenance of adequate reserves of growing trees; and the management and development of forests so as to contribute to the protection of the environment, biodiversity and the mitigation of, or adaptation to, climate change.

Plant Health Division

The Plant Health Division within Forest Service has responsibility for the implementation of a range of legislation relating to plant health, wood and bark, product certification, marketing standards and industry support. The Branch also provides technical support, information and analysis to Plant Health Policy and Legislation Branch.

Plant Health Division has two inspectorates; Plant Health and Horticulture Inspectorate and Plant Health and Crop Certification Inspectorate.

Further information on the Department can be accessed on the DAERA website www.daera-ni.gov.uk

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary role of the Graduate Specialists (Grade III) are to interpret, analyse and present technical information to students, farmers and growers and industry personnel in a form that meets their needs. The Grade III Graduate Specialists will normally work within a specific discipline in CAFRE i.e. Agriculture, Agricultural Engineering, Food Technology, Horticulture or Equine. However post holders may be assigned to other posts in DAERA which require the post holder to have a degree. The main duties and responsibilities of the post holders include:

- The development and delivery of education and industry training programmes provided by CAFRE, to ensure the sustainability of the agri-food industry through the implementation of DAERA policy.
- The development and delivery of Knowledge Transfer and Innovation programmes linked to research findings, to ensure the competitiveness of the agri-food industry through the adoption of technology/systems and best practice methods of sustainable production and business management.
- The provision of inspection duties and technical support on a range of issues including plant health regulations, agri-food legislation, agri-environment schemes and agri-policy formulation.
- Other duties in line with the needs of DAERA, including:
 - Driving a departmental vehicle - (for teaching posts based in CAFRE campuses the successful candidate(s) may be required to drive a Department minibus).

The above list is not exhaustive but provides an indication of the main duties of the posts. The emphasis on particular duties will vary over time according to business needs.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This competition will be used to fill a number of Graduate Specialist posts (Grade III) within CAFRE and across DAERA.

This competition may be used to fill further vacancies that may arise within one year, should NICS positions become vacant which have the same eligibility criteria and similar duties and responsibilities.

Location

The majority of posts will be based at Greenmount, Loughry and Enniskillen campuses with some posts based at DAERA locations across Northern Ireland, including Ballykelly House.

Salary

Salary will be within the range £34,927 - £36,992 (under review) within which pay progression will be performance related.

Starting salary will be at the minimum of the scale. If the successful applicant is an existing Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) civil servant, normal pay on promotion/regrading arrangements will apply.

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, rising to 30 days after 5 years' service.

Hours of Work

The normal conditioned hours of work are full-time: 37 hours per week (excluding meal breaks) Monday to Friday. In addition, the duties of the posts may involve some work outside normal office hours including evenings, weekends and public holidays and occasionally short periods of work outside Northern Ireland.

Travel

Successful applicants must hold a current, valid driving licence and have access to a form of transport which will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities. In addition they may be required to travel throughout Northern Ireland and on occasions within GB, ROI and further afield.

Driving Duties

Successful applicants based in CAFRE delivering education programmes, may be required to drive a Department minibus as part of their duties.

As a condition of employment, successful applicants appointed to teaching posts who do not already hold a driving licence entitling them to drive a minibus may be required to obtain a licence within 2 years of taking up this appointment (and maintain the licence thereafter). Appropriate training will be provided by CAFRE. As part of this training, successful applicants will be required to pass a Driver's Medical assessment.

Vetting

For posts based in CAFRE, successful applicants will be required to satisfy a pre-employment check undertaken by AccessNI in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007(as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012).

Probation

Confirmation of appointment will be dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of 1 year. If performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory the appointment may be terminated. All appointees will be expected to demonstrate a track record of effective service within this period.

Career Development

The NICS is committed to career development and offers attractive career prospects across a wide variety of roles and professions. Career development is an integral part of the performance management system. Personal Development Plans identify learning and development needs with a view to enhancing skills and capabilities. NI Civil Servants have access to a wide range of internal job opportunities, including secondments with external organisations and are encouraged and supported in proactively managing their career.

Successful applicants will be expected to undertake essential training as identified by the Department and proactively seek out and undertake activities associated with their continuous professional development, including availing of membership of approved professional bodies.

For CAFRE posts, successful applicants will be required to attend training in the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 and in Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults and fully implement the requirements of both in their work.

Conflict of Interest

It is a basic requirement of all civil servants that their private activities should not bring them in to conflict with their official duties.

Conflict of Interest is not limited to the individual's own private, financial or other interests, as family, friends and associates may also have dealings which affect the Department's business directly or indirectly. Therefore to avoid any conflict or potential conflict and to demonstrate impartiality to the public at all times, an officer must not, without prior approval, engage in any activity which could be considered to be in conflict with official business.

As such, to protect employees and the Department from public criticism, it will be mandatory for successful applicants to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration on appointment.

Further Information

Applicants wishing to learn more about the posts before deciding to apply may contact:

- Agriculture – Irene Downey on Tel: 028 9442 675 or Mob: 07899 863747 or Email: Irene.Downey@daera-ni.gov.uk
- Agricultural Engineering – Bernard McCloskey on Tel: 028 9442 6856 or Mob: 07826 704553 or Email: Bernard.McCloskey@daera-ni.gov.uk
- Food Technology – Nicola Kerr on Tel: 028 8676 1043 or Mob: 07749 046302 or Email: Nicola.Kerr@daera-ni.gov.uk
- Horticulture – Kieran Lavelle on Tel: 028 3752 9060 or Mob: 07990 575893 or Email: Kieran.Lavelle@daera-ni.gov.uk
- Equine – Shelley Stuart on Tel: 028 6634 4633 or Mob: 07395845192 or Email: Shelley.Stuart@daera-ni.gov.uk

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

Depending on the technical specialism which candidates are applying for, they must possess, by the closing date for applications, the qualifications and requirements as specified under the following headings:

Applicants must complete an application form for the specific specialism(s) competition they wish to apply for.

IRC266092 - Agriculture

1. At least an Honours degree (2.2 classification), or an equivalent qualification in Agriculture or Agricultural Technology or Agricultural Economics and Management, or Agri-environment or a closely related subject*;

AND

2. A minimum of 9 months, full-time equivalent, relevant post-qualification experience** working in the agricultural industry;

AND

3. A full and current driving licence enabling the licence holder to drive a car in Northern Ireland.

* **A closely related subject** is defined as a degree where at least 50% of the modules are similar in content to those in an Agriculture or Agricultural Technology degree programme.

** The panel will accept a relevant Master's degree or higher as equivalent to 9 months post-qualification experience.

IRC265696 - Agricultural Engineering

- 1a. At least an Honours degree (2.2 classification), or an equivalent qualification, in Agricultural Engineering or Agricultural Mechanisation, or a closely related subject*;

OR

- 1b. At least an Honours degree (2.2 classification), or an equivalent qualification, in Mechanical Engineering, or a related subject, **and** at least two years', full-time equivalent, relevant experience of working in or with the agriculture or horticulture industries;

AND

2. A minimum of 9 months, full-time equivalent, relevant post-qualification experience** working in the agricultural or horticultural engineering industries;

AND

3. A full and current driving licence enabling the licence holder to drive a car in Northern Ireland.

* **A closely related subject** is defined as a degree where at least 50% of the modules studied are similar in content to those in the subjects specified in the Agricultural Engineering or Agricultural Mechanisation degree programmes.

** The panel will accept a relevant Master's degree or higher as equivalent to 9 months post-qualification experience.

IRC267441 - Food Technology

1. At least an Honours degree (2.2 classification), or an equivalent qualification, in Food Technology or Food Science or Food Business or a closely related subject*;

AND

2. A minimum of 9 months, full-time equivalent, relevant post-qualification experience** working in the food industry;

AND

3. A full and current driving licence enabling the licence holder to drive a car in Northern Ireland.

***A closely related subject** is defined as one which contains any two of the following key subject areas: -

- Food Science
- Food Product Development
- Food Supply
- Food Safety and Quality Management and
- Either Food Processing Technology or Food Product Manufacture.

**The panel will accept a relevant Master's degree or higher as equivalent to 9 months post-qualification experience.

IRC266332 - Horticulture

- 1a. At least an Honours degree (2.2 classification), or an equivalent qualification, in Horticulture or a closely related subject*;

OR

- 1b. At least an Honours degree (2.2 classification), or an equivalent qualification, in a Biological Science based subject** or a Business related subject*** **and** a Higher National Diploma or Foundation Degree or a Bachelor's Pass Degree (or equivalents) in Horticulture or a closely related subject*;

AND

2. A minimum of 9 months, full-time equivalent, relevant post-qualification experience**** working in the horticulture industry;

AND

3. A full and current driving licence enabling the licence holder to drive a car in Northern Ireland.

* **A closely related subject** is defined as a degree where at least 50% of the modules studied are similar in content to those in the Horticulture degree programme and has the words Horticulture, Landscape, Sportsturf, Applied Plant Science / Production Technology, Arboriculture / Tree Management in the title.

** **A Biological Science based subject** is defined as Biological Science, Biology, Botany, Applied Plant Science, Agriculture, Agricultural Science or any other Science degree where at least 50% of the modules studied are similar to those in a Biological Science degree.

*** **A Business related subject** is defined as Business Management, Marketing or Commerce or any degree where at least 50% of the modules studied are similar to those in a Business degree.

**** The panel will accept a relevant Master's degree or higher as equivalent to 9 months post-qualification experience.

IRC267020 - Equine

- 1a. At least an Honours degree (2.2 classification), or an equivalent qualification, in Equine Studies, or Equine Management or Equine Science, or a closely related subject*;

OR

- 1b. At least an Honours degree (2.2 classification), or an equivalent qualification, in a Biological Science based subject** or Business related subject*** or Animal Nutrition, or Agriculture, or Agricultural Science **and** a post-graduate qualification in an equine-related subject;

OR

- 1c. At least an Honours degree (2.2 classification), or an equivalent qualification, in a Biological Science based subject** or Business related subject*** or Animal Nutrition, or Agriculture, or Agricultural Science **and** at least two years', full-time equivalent, relevant experience of working in the equine industry;

AND

2. A minimum of 9 months, full-time equivalent, relevant post-qualification experience**** working in the equine industry;

AND

3. A full and current driving licence enabling the licence holder to drive a car in Northern Ireland.

* **A closely related subject** is defined as a degree where at least 50% the modules studied are similar in content to those in the Equine Studies, or Equine Management or Equine Science degree programmes.

** **A Biological Science based subject** is defined as Biological Science, Biology, Botany, Environmental Science, Agriculture, Agricultural Science or any degree where at least 50% of the modules studied are similar to those in a Biological Science degree.

*** **A Business related subject** is defined as Business Management, Marketing or Commerce or any degree where at least 50% of the modules studied are similar to those in a Business degree.

**** The panel will accept a relevant Master's degree or higher as equivalent to 9 months post-qualification experience.

EQUIVALENCY

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.

You will be required to provide documentary evidence of your qualifications so please ensure that you have these readily available at interview.

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

In addition, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criterion will be used:

1. The qualification requirement will be increased to an Honours degree 2.1 classification.

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.
- State clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. State "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 presentation followed by a competence based interview.

PRESENTATION

Candidates will be required to deliver a presentation lasting no longer than 6 minutes, the subject of which will be provided to candidates in the 'Invitation to Interview' letter.

The panel will stop the applicant when 6 minutes have elapsed. The panel will ask follow-up question(s) after the presentation before moving on to the competence based interview section of the assessment.

Applicants should fully prepare their presentation in advance as no preparation time will be provided on the day of interview. Applicants may only bring prepared flip chart paper and prepared notes into the interview to deliver their presentation. Applicants are not permitted to deliver the presentation electronically, nor should they provide any hand-outs or other materials to the panel.

No notes (other than flip chart paper and/or speaking notes for the presentation) or personal documentation may be brought into the interview room.

The presentation and the follow-up questions will be used for the assessment of the 'Seeing the Big Picture' competence.

Seeing the Big Picture

Seeing the big picture is about having an in-depth understanding and knowledge of how your role fits with, and supports, organisational objectives and the wider public needs. For all staff, it is about focusing your contribution on the activities which will meet Departmental and Programme for Government goals and deliver the greatest value.

Marks available: 20

Minimum Standard: 12

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEW

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

1. Making Effective Decisions

Effectiveness in this area is about being objective, using sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice. 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

2. Managing a Quality Service

Effectiveness in this area is about being organised to deliver service objectives and striving to improve the quality of service, taking account of diverse customer needs and requirements. People who are effective plan, organise and manage their time and activities to deliver a high quality and efficient service, applying programme and project management approaches to support service delivery.

Marks available: 20

3. Collaborating and Partnering

People skilled in this area create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people. It requires the ability to work collaboratively sharing information and building supportive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.

Marks available: 20

4. Leading and Communicating

At all levels, effectiveness in this area is about leading from the front and communicating with clarity, conviction and enthusiasm. It is about supporting principles of fairness of opportunity for all and a dedication to a diverse range of citizens.

Marks available: 20

Minimum Standard: 12

5. Changing and Improving

People who are effective in this area are responsive, innovative and seek out opportunities to create effective change. It is about being open to change, suggesting ideas for improvements to the way things are done, and working in 'smarter', more focused ways.

Marks available: 20

Overall Marks Available: 120

Pass Mark: 72

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for these posts will take place at CAFRE, Greenmount Campus, Antrim from October 2021 to January 2022.

Candidates should note that due to current circumstances with COVID-19, social distancing measures will be put in place. If it is not possible, the use of video technology may be used as an alternative.

NICS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at level 3 for Inspector Grade III. Inspector Grade III is analogous to Staff Officer in the NICS.

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

You can apply online at www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk.

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:

- 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 submitted 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. State 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 should ensure that the required documents are readily available. Failure to provide the appropriate documentation when requested will result in your application being rejected.

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

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. 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 request 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

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

Security

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For Inspector Grade III post in the NICS the level of vetting is an Enhanced Check. 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;

Enhanced Disclosure Certificate

Barred List Checks

The Disclosure and Barring Service keeps two barred lists:

- people who are unsuitable for working with children
- people who are unsuitable for working with vulnerable adults

People on these lists are barred from regulated activity with children and vulnerable adults. It is a criminal offence for anyone who is included on a barred list to work or seek work, in regulated activity. Candidates should be aware that by submitting an application form for this post, they are confirming there is no reason why they cannot work in regulated activity.

Both barred lists will be checked.

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.

Applications from males, young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are particularly welcome for these posts.

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**