

**Candidate Information Booklet**

**IRC232155**

**Custody Prison Officer (CPO)  
(Full time)**

**&**

**Night Custody Officer (NCO)  
(Full time)**

**Northern Ireland Prison Service  
(NIPS)**

**Completed Application Forms must be returned to  
HRConnect no later than 12 noon (UK time) on**

***Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2018***

## **Communication between HRConnect and you**

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account 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 joining the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS).

The Prison Service is an Executive Agency of the Department of Justice (DoJ) with a staffing complement totalling 1450 operational and general service grades. The Agency operates under the direction and control of the Justice Minister, within a statutory framework based on the Prison Act (NI) 1953 and the Prison and Young Offenders' Centres Rules (NI) 1995.

Custody Prison Officers and Night Custody Officers play an important role in helping the Department of Justice to build a safer community in Northern Ireland. Through these different roles, you will provide a safe, decent and secure environment for staff, prisoners and visitors as well as supporting and challenging people in our care to change their offending behaviour and to rehabilitate.

Prisons are complex and the people in our care can be vulnerable and sometimes challenging. You will join a professional and dedicated organisation focused on reducing the risk of reoffending and you will be trained how to support prisoners through their time in custody.

If you have the skills and interest in our work, I would encourage you to apply for one of the positions.



Ronnie Armour

**Ronnie Armour**  
**Director General,**  
**Northern Ireland Prison Service**

## BACKGROUND

### About the Northern Ireland Prison Service

The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is part of the Department of Justice and plays a vital role in helping to build a safer community in Northern Ireland. Their core purpose is to keep people safe and secure while they are in prison and to work with them so they can address their offending behaviour and play a positive role when they are released.

### **NIPS Statement of Purpose and Strategic Priorities**

NIPS core Statement of Purpose is: *Building a safer community by challenging and supporting people to change.*

### **Organisational Structure and Staffing**

NIPS is an executive agency of the Department of Justice (DOJ) which is a part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS). It is responsible for the operation and delivery of services within the Northern Ireland prison system. The Prison Service operates under the direction and control of the Department of Justice, within a statutory framework based on the Prison Act (Northern Ireland) 1953 and the Prison and Young Offenders' Centre Rules (Northern Ireland) 1995.

NIPS comprises of the three main prison establishments and the Prisoner Escorting Courts and Custody Services (PECCS)

**Maghaberry Prison** – a high security prison, housing adult male long-term sentenced and remand prisoners in separated and integrated conditions.

**Magilligan Prison** – a medium security prison, housing shorter-term sentenced adult male prisoners. This establishment also has low security accommodation for selected prisoners nearing the end of their sentence.

**Hydebank Wood College and Female Prison** – a medium to low security establishment accommodating remand and sentenced young men between the ages of 18 and 21 and all female prisoners.

**Prisoner Escorting Courts and Custody Services (PECCS)** – PECCS staff have responsibility for the safe operation of the cell holding areas in each Courthouse throughout Northern Ireland and for producing prisoners in court rooms when required. Additionally PECCS are a prisoner transport and escorting service for adult males, adult females, young people and children within the Criminal Justice System. Driver/Escort staff use cellular vehicles which hold and deploy, mainly, from Maghaberry Prison.

The main administrative centre for NIPS, **Prison Service Headquarters**, is located on the Stormont Estate, Belfast, **NIPS Training College** is currently located at Prison Service College (PSC) at Hydebank Wood.

Further details on the Northern Ireland Prison Service are available at [www.justice-ni.gov.uk/topics/prisons](http://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/topics/prisons)

## **JOB SPECIFICATION**

There are currently a number of permanent vacancies available across the grades of CPO and NCO. Please note that you will be asked when submitting your application to indicate which position(s) you wish to be considered for.

**Please ensure that you only indicate position(s) you will be willing to take if offered. If successful you will be offered a post in order of merit for a position in the grade being filled. This will be dictated by business needs and may be either CPO or NCO depending whether or not you have stated you wish to be considered for both. If you have indicated a position as a preference and you then turn down the offer for this position you will be removed from the merit order list and no further post will be offered.**

### **Further Appointments**

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

### **Location**

CPOs and NCOs are required to serve in any Prison Establishment in Northern Ireland throughout their career in the NIPS. Currently these are:

- Maghaberry Prison – near Moira
- Magilligan Prison – near Limavady
- Hydebank Wood College and Female Prison – near Belfast

### **Salary and Allowances (at time of advertising)**

#### **Custody Prison Officer**

£20,000 - £26,005 per annum

#### **Night Custody Officer**

£22,299 per annum

(No Scale)

Both positions attract a supplementary risk allowance which is currently £2,700 per annum and a boot allowance of £92.80 per annum.

Starting salary will be at the minimum of the scale. Pay progression will be as per current NIPS pay policy.

## **Working Pattern**

### **CPO**

The shift pattern for a CPO is based on a **39 hour week**. The actual hours worked per week will vary as they will be calculated across your assigned shift cycle, which will include evenings, weekends and public/privilege holidays and may, on occasions include nights. A shift will start when you are on post and will end when you leave your post. Time spent travelling to and from your post is not included as part of your shift. No additional payments or premiums will be paid for working weekends or public and privilege holidays. Shift patterns will change from time to time.

### **NCO**

The shift pattern for a NCO is based on an **average 44 hour week**. The actual hours worked per week will vary as they will be calculated across your assigned shift cycle and will include weekends and public/privilege holidays. Some shifts may be designated as standby periods where you must attend for work or training if required. Although the majority of your working hours will be covering night time periods, training will be ongoing and will require some day time attendance. A shift will start when you are on post and will end when you leave your post. Time spent travelling to and from your post is not included as part of your shift. No additional payments or premiums will be paid for working weekends or public and privilege holidays. Shift patterns will change from time to time.

Please note that your rostered hours will on occasions include weekends and public / privilege holidays for which you will receive your normal rate of pay.

## **Annual Leave**

The annual leave year starts on 1 February and ends on 31 January of the following year. For staff joining NIPS after the leave year has started, entitlement for the remainder of the year will be calculated on a pro-rata basis.

Annual leave entitlement for CPOs is calculated in hours (hrs). The successful candidate will be entitled to the equivalent of 288.6 hrs rising to 327.6 hrs (25 days annual leave rising to 30 days after 5 years satisfactory service and 12 days public/privilege holidays allocated in hours). This includes 12 days Public and Privilege holidays.

Annual leave entitlement for NCOs is calculated in hours (hrs). The successful candidate will be entitled to the equivalent of 325.6 hrs rising to 369.6 hrs (25 days annual leave rising to 30 days after 5 years satisfactory service and 12 days public/privilege holidays allocated in hours). This includes 12 days Public and Privilege holidays.

## **Travel**

CPO's are classified as a mobile grade and can be required to transfer to a location anywhere within Northern Ireland, both on a permanent basis or for a period of time on detached duty in order to meet operational needs.

NCO's are currently classified as a non-mobile grade. You may however, be asked to transfer from one prison establishment to another to accommodate business needs and terms and conditions provide for transfer of such non-mobile grades.

It is your responsibility to bear the cost of daily travel between home and your permanent work place. When you travel to a temporary work place mileage is payable for travel in excess of your normal home to permanent work place commute.

## **Training**

All candidates are required to possess the appropriate knowledge and skills to enable them to effectively and efficiently perform the duties of a CPO/NCO prior to being deployed within their located Prison.

All candidates successful in this competition will be required to complete initial training at the Prison Service College at Hydebank Wood and undertake any other training as required to perform the duties of the post they have been assigned to. Starting time on the 1<sup>st</sup> day will be 09.00; thereafter start/finish times will be 08.00 – 16.45 but there will be occasions during job-shadowing when these will be subject to change.

You will be required to attend an extensive training programme on appointment this will include training in Use of Force and Control and Restraint Techniques. At the end of this initial training an assessment of your capability to fulfill your role in the NIPS will be carried out. If the assessment confirms that you have not achieved the acceptable standard your appointment may be terminated.

Those who are appointed to CPO positions will be required to obtain a Certificate of Competence designed to reflect the high level of professionalism expected from these roles. This programme combines formal study with practical assessments, job simulation and written work including examinations, work-based assignment and reflective statements. Candidates will be required to undertake home study in order to meet the required professional standards. Attainment of the qualification is mandatory to ensure continued employment and as a means of pay progression. It is expected that the certificate will be achieved within 12 months. You will be required to make sufficient progress towards the qualification before the end of your probationary period. You will also be expected to maintain the level of competence once qualified and will be assessed on a regular basis. If the certificate is not obtained this may result in dismissal.

## **Pensions**

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. Further details can be found on page 28 of this booklet.

## **Vetting Requirements**

Those successful at interview will require clearance to Counter Terrorist Check (CTC), and an Enhanced AccessNI check which includes checked against the barred list.

You will be required to complete these questionnaires within two weeks of receiving them (or you risk your application being discontinued).

## **Medical**

Those successful at interview for the role of a CPO or NCO in NIPS should be aware that the role is both physically and psychologically challenging, requiring a level of physical fitness that ensures duties are carried out effectively and safely, without undue stress or risk of injury. Successful candidates may be required to undergo and pass extensive medical checks including Night Worker Assessment if you are appointed to the role of NCO, details of which can be found at Annex A - before being offered a position.

## **Outside employment in the Reserve Forces & Voluntary Work**

While employed by NIPS you must seek permission from NIPS to undertake Secondary Employment or to join the Emergency or Voluntary Rescue Services.

## **Tattoos**

**The NIPS recognises that having a tattoo does not necessarily prevent you from serving in or joining the NIPS. However, certain tattoos and their visibility may not be acceptable.**

All CPO's / NCO's are required to adhere with the Corporate Uniform Standard. Therefore, careful consideration will be given by the organisation to any tattoos on the head, face, neck and hands or tattoos which cannot be covered by uniform. This includes the size, nature and prominence of the tattoos in question.

- Tattoos will be unacceptable if they are contrary to any of the equality areas identified in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 or are in contravention of the NICS Standards of Conduct.
- Whether visible or not, tattoos will be unacceptable where they could reasonably be interpreted as offensive to members of the public, those in our care or colleagues due to their content or alignment with a particular group.
- The NIPS regularly engages with some of the most vulnerable members of society. Therefore, tattoos which conceal the identity of a



CPO / NCO to the extent where it would potentially inhibit their ability as a CPO / NCO to undertake their duties or which may make a member of the public feel uncomfortable, intimidated or threatened will be unacceptable.

**All tattoos must be described giving size, location and nature. A verifiable translation must accompany any tattoos containing non-English words, characters or representations. Applicants to the NIPS may be required to supply photographs of tattoos as a condition of the recruitment process.**

### **Probationary**

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

### **Uniform**

A uniform is provided for all new staff which you must wear at all times whilst on duty and when required to do so. Staff uniforms are not currently worn at Hydebank Wood College.

### **Further Information / Contact**

If you have any questions about the competition process, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net).

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### CPO

#### **Job Purpose**

The primary role of the CPO is to help build a safer Northern Ireland by providing a prison environment which is safe, decent and secure which has rehabilitation at its core. CPO staff are responsible for supporting prisoners to address their offending behaviour as well as performing operational and custodial duties and to maintain aspects of order and discipline.

#### **Main duties and responsibilities**

##### ***1. Providing a safe and secure environment***

- Support offenders to reduce their risk of re-offending through the implementation of prisoners sentence planning and risk management arrangements. Contribute to this work by liaising and sharing appropriate information with other staff and organisations operating in the prison.
- Initiating prisoner induction by committing prisoners through reception.
- Support the principles of dynamic security by building positive relationships with prisoners to create and sustain the flow of security information from prisoners to staff.
- Conduct headcounts, locking/unlocking routines, fabric checks, alarms, and ensure recording and reporting of same.
- Adhere to and implement safer custody policies and procedures.
- Maintain order and discipline by monitoring/supervising prisoners and taking appropriate action to address any issues which may arise.
- Conduct searches of prisoners, visitors, staff, accommodation and areas in compliance with Governors Orders and Security manual.
- Control and manage the movement of prisoners, visitors, staff and goods, including transporting, in accordance with operating policy and procedures.
- Maintain the safe use and custody of security and IT equipment used in performing duties.
- Ensure that all incidents occurring during the course of duty are reported and are dealt with in an effective and timely manner.
- Contribute to briefings and handovers.
- Offer support and assistance to offenders on issues which may be causing them concern.
- Conduct regular equipment checks and maintenance of vehicles and report requirements for maintenance or repair as appropriate.
- Respond to emergencies in accordance with local Contingency Plans.

## **2. Promoting decent custody**

- Promotes the aims and values of the NIPS.
- Treat prisoners humanely and take care of their property, taking account of their human rights and dignity within the framework of Human Rights and Equality legislation.
- Process non staff related prisoners' complaints, applications and grievances in accordance with the required timescales and procedures.
- Maintain systems and structures to promote confidentiality and the rights, responsibilities and diversity of people.
- Maintain required standard of cleanliness of residential areas and ensure prisoners maintain a high standard of personal hygiene.
- Contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the prison regime on a daily basis through effective records.

## **3. Prisoner engagement**

- Actively encouraging prisoner participation in regime activities and offender management activities.
- Effectively manage and supervise prisoner activities and movements ensuring prisoners attend activities on time.
- Sharing information as appropriate on prisoner behaviour/progress by directly reporting into sentence planning and risk management arrangements.
- Model pro-social behaviour and use every opportunity to discourage and challenge negative behaviour.

## **4. General**

- Complete all administration in support of duties including:
  - Maintenance of journals/logs.
  - Completing prisoner reports.
  - Recording prisoner requests/non staff related complaints.
  - Completing accidents/incident reports.
- Ensure all work is carried out to the highest professional standards.
- Continually manage and develop self-performance and personal resources in the role, including actively participating in the process of supervision and appraisal.
- Management of information and records in accordance with policy.
- Shift work including working nightshift will be a requirement.

**The above list is not exhaustive but gives a good indication of the main duties of the post. The emphasis on particular duties will vary over time according to business needs.**

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### NCO

#### **Job Purpose**

To be accountable for the security and safe custody of all prisoners during night duty periods.

#### **Main duties and responsibilities**

##### ***1. Providing a safe & secure environment***

- Ensuring that all areas at location, both within the accommodation and around the perimeter, are patrolled at frequent but irregular intervals throughout time of duty.
- Ensuring that any requests from prisoners are forwarded to the Night Manager immediately for appropriate action.
- Regularly reviewing prisoners who are subject to a "Prisoner at Risk" (SPAR) form and following any instruction contained therein and to record observations as necessary.
- Identify prisoners showing signs of distress or under the influence of illicit substances and take appropriate action in the situation including unlocking prisoners in the event of an emergency.
- Participating in cell relocation, using Control & Restraint (C&R) techniques if necessary.
- Applying fire, evacuation and night sanitation procedures, including the proper use of cell keys as required.
- Adherence to Governor's Orders and Special Instructions as they apply to area of operation (including the maintenance of the Night Guard Journal).

##### ***2. Promoting decent custody***

- Promotes the aims and values of the NIPS.
- Treat prisoners humanely, taking account of their human rights and dignity within the framework of Human Rights and Equality legislation.
- Ensuring that all prisoners are observed at frequent regular intervals during time of duty.

##### ***3. Prisoner engagement***

- Supporting prisoners as required and ensuring that any irregularities or unusual occurrences are reported immediately to the Night Manager.
- Escorting prisoners outside the establishments as required during night duty.
- Completion of Progressive Regimes Earned Privileges reports on adverse prisoner behaviour and attitude during night duty.
- Undertake full Emergency Control Room duties as required.

#### **4. General**

- Receiving and signing for night guard equipment and where necessary for keys including Home Office keys, pegging key, fire key(s), Hoffman knife and radio transmitter at the commencement of each shift and returning same at end of shift.
- Carrying out all necessary head counts, identifying each prisoner on commencing duty, prior to terminating duty and at any other times as laid down in Governors Orders or on the instruction of the Night Manager.
- Ensuring that the recording clock system is pegged at his/her location on commencing duty, at the end of duty and at intervals of not more than 60 minutes throughout the night.
- Maintaining constant radio contact with Emergency Control Room throughout time of duty.
- Operation of official computer equipment for work purposes.
- Remaining on duty until properly relieved and a handover is complete before going off post.
- Implementing the prison disciplinary process as appropriate including attendance at adjudications during daytime hours.
- Giving evidence at court and at other hearings.

**The above list is not exhaustive but gives a good indication of the main duties of the post. The emphasis on particular duties will vary over time according to business needs.**

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications have:

1. Have 5 GCSE's including English and Mathematics at Grade C or above (or equivalent\*)

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

**Relevant or equivalent qualifications:** for relevant or equivalent qualifications to be considered applicants must provide details of 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.

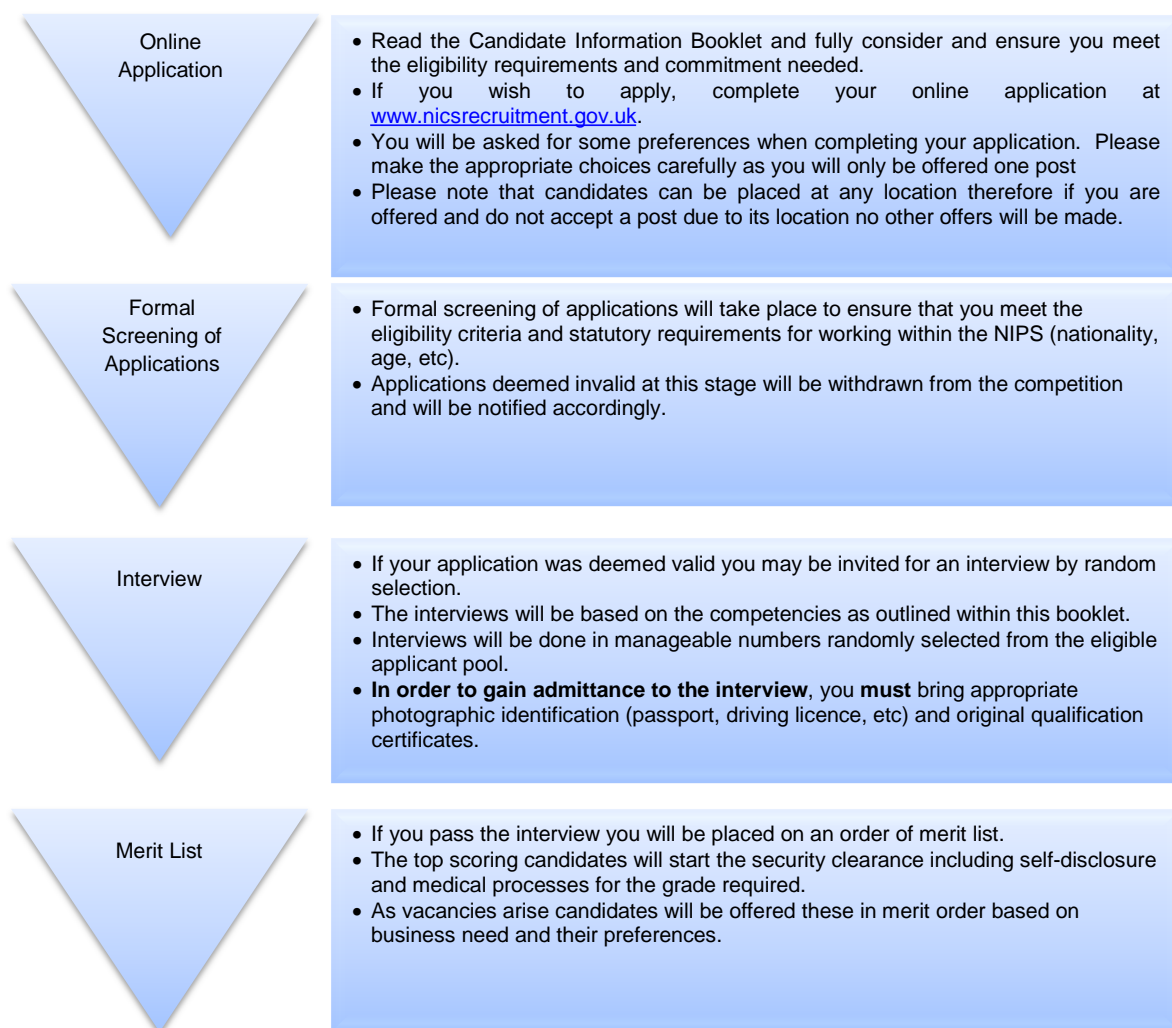
**\*Applicants must demonstrate on their application form how the qualifications they have provided are equivalent, in level, to those qualifications requested above. Applicants must also show how the qualifications they have provided contain an equivalent English and Mathematics content to at least GCSE Level. Should applicants fail to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate equivalency their application will be rejected.**

### **The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exception) Order (NI) 1979**

The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exception) Order (NI) 1979 applies to the Northern Ireland Prison Service. You will be asked on your application form to provide information about previous conviction, caution or fixed penalty ticket on the grounds that it is for other purposes spent under the Order. You should therefore declare **ALL** previous convictions, whether spent or otherwise. Please note that a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position.

## ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The assessment for this competition will comprise several stages as outlined below.



### STAGE 1 – FORMAL SCREENING OF APPLICANTS

HRConnect will complete a formal screening of all applications which will ensure that your application is valid. These checks will ensure that applicants meet the age and nationality requirements for the role, and that the qualification stated meets the eligibility requirements. **Only detail included in the application form will be considered. Further clarification will not be sought.** Applications deemed invalid at this stage will be withdrawn from the competition and applicants will be issued with correspondence.

### STAGE 2 – INTERVIEW

A random selection of manageable numbers of valid candidates from those who meet the eligibility criteria will be invited to a competency based interview on the core competences for CPO and NCO.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the eligibility criteria. In addition, they will also be required to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) competency framework at Level 1 for the purposes of personal and professional development.

### **What is the NICS competency framework?**

The 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.

### **How does the NICS framework look?**

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competency framework can be accessed through [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk)

**It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competency framework as this forms the basis of the assessment / interview criteria as outlined below.**



## INTERVIEW

Applicants who are randomly selected will be invited to Interview. This will consist of a competency based interview on the core competences for CPO and NCO. The number of applicants that proceed to interview will be based on the anticipated number of posts available. **Further interviews may be conducted later should additional vacancies arise during the lifetime of this competition. You should therefore check your e-mails on a regular basis in the event that you are notified of an interview.**

The NIPS has a Core Competence Framework, which is grade specific and describes what people need to do in order to be effective at work. It is not enough to just have the knowledge and skills to do our jobs. Competence is about what people actually do, it is about how you apply or demonstrate the knowledge and skills whilst carrying out your tasks. Demonstrated competence is observable and measurable.

The core competences requirements for CPO and NCO grades are categorised under:

1. Seeing the Big Picture;
2. Making Effective Decisions;
3. Leading and Communicating; and
4. Collaborating and Partnering.

Interview questions will be designed to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in the above areas and award marks accordingly. The evidence you use may relate to your achievements and/or experiences in any kind of setting, for example, work, education or leisure and must, of course be factual.

**Further guidance on preparing for the interview can be found on page 22. It is important that candidates being invited for interview read the guidance and prepare appropriately for attending interview.**

**Applicants must bring the following original documents/certificates and photocopies to their interview:**

- **Original Qualification Certificates**
- **Photographic ID** (e.g. valid Passport or valid Driving Licence)
- **Proof of Address** (e.g. recent utility bill or bank statement)
- **Proof of Nationality** (Passport or Birth Certificate accompanied with proof of National Insurance Number – NI number card or payslip)
- **Documents to satisfy AccessNI check** (see page 29)

**Please note:** You may use the same document to satisfy more than one check e.g. you may use your passport as a document from group 1, photographic ID and proof of nationality.

## **INTERVIEW CRITERIA**

### **Pre-Interview Preparation**

You will be provided with a question when you receive your invitation to interview letter which you will be required to prepare a response to in advance of attending your interview. You will deliver your response during the interview and the panel may elect to ask questions on the response provided. The question will be used to assess the Seeing the Big Picture competence.

In addition to satisfying the above eligibility criteria applicants will also be expected to display the following qualities and skills at interview:

#### **1. 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. It is about focusing your contribution on the activities which will meet NIPS and Programme for Government goals and deliver the greatest value.

#### **Effective Behaviours**

- Gather information from a range of relevant sources inside and outside their Department to inform own work.
- Understand what is required of them in their role, and how this contributes to team and departmental priorities.
- Consider how their own job links with, and impacts on, colleagues and others in partner organisations.

**Marks available: 20**

**Minimum standard 10**

#### **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. It means showing clarity of thought, setting priorities, analysing and using evidence to evaluate options before arriving at well-reasoned, justifiable decisions.

#### **Effective Behaviours**

- Make and record effective decisions following the appropriate decision making criteria, framework or guidance.
- Ask questions when unsure what to do.
- Undertake appropriate analysis to support decisions or recommendations.
- Investigate and respond to gaps, errors and irregularities in information.
- Speak up to clarify decisions and query those constructively.
- Think through the implications of own decisions before confirming how to approach a problem/issue.

**Marks available: 20**

### **3. Leading and Communicating**

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.

#### **Effective Behaviours**

- Put forward their own views in a clear and constructive manner, choosing an appropriate communication method e.g. email / telephone / face to face.
- Act in a fair and respectful way in dealing with others.
- Write clearly in plain, simple language and check work for spelling and grammar, learning from previous inaccuracies.
- Ask open questions to appreciate the point of view of others.

**Marks available: 20**

### **4. Collaborating and Partnering**

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

#### **Effective Behaviour**

- Proactively contribute to the work of the whole team.
- Get to know fellow team members/colleagues and understand their viewpoints and preferences.
- Seek help when needed in order to complete own work effectively.
- Be open to taking on different roles.
- Try to see issues from others' perspectives and check understanding.
- Listen to the views of others and show sensitivity towards others.

**Marks available: 20**

**As well as achieving the minimum standard for Seeing the Big Picture, candidates will be required to achieve an overall score of 40/80 in order to pass the interview.**

### **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.

## **INTERVIEWS DATES & AVAILABILITY**

It is intended that the first phase of interviews for this post will take place in Belfast from week commencing 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

**Please note that further interviews may be conducted at a later date. If you are therefore not called for interview during the first phase you may be called during subsequent phases and should therefore check your e-mails on a regular basis in the event that you are notified of an interview.**

Reschedule requests will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances.

If having received your invitation, you decide to withdraw from the competition, please inform HRConnect as soon as possible, ideally within 48 hours of receiving your invitation. This time frame will assist us in the timely rescheduling of panels.

## **Before you apply, ask yourself ... Can you commit?**

### **Working Hours / Location**

- NIPS operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year therefore you may be required to work overtime/additional hours at short notice.
- The operational requirements also mean that you will be needed to work during seasonal holiday periods and bank holidays.

### **Uniform Requirements**

- You will be expected to wear a uniform at all times whilst on duty, with the exception of Hydebank Wood College and Female Prison.

### **Training and Skills**

- You must successfully complete a challenging training programme with regular and ongoing assessment.

### **Professional Standards**

- You will be required to deal with individuals who are volatile and often unpredictable.
- You will be required to work in challenging environments and deal with complex and difficult situations.
- You will be required to display a high degree of motivation, be conscientious, resilient and act with a high degree of integrity.
- You will be responsible and accountable for your own actions or omissions.
- NIPS expect all staff to act professionally both on and off duty at all times. It is expected that you maintain the highest standards of integrity at all times and throughout your service.
- NIPS expect all staff to treat colleagues, and those in their custody with respect recognising the need for fairness, impartiality and confidentiality.
- NIPS expects all staff to respect plurality and diversity and not to discriminate against any prisoner on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, age, race, religion, political or other opinion, disability or, in the case of a prisoner, the type of offence alleged or committed by that prisoner.
- NIPS require all staff to respect human rights of those in your care and ensure compliance with Human Rights legislation.
- NIPS require all staff to manage resources efficiently and effectively at all times.

**Employment within the NIPS is probationary for a period of one year.**

## **INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

**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 in relation to each of the competences. 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.

## SELECTION PROCESS

### 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](http://www.nicscommissioners.org).

HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed dependent on their contract preference.

If you have applied for more than one of the advertised posts in this competition and you are offered a post you will be removed from the merit list for any other post being filled from this competition. Candidates will only receive one offer of appointment from this competition. If you refuse an offer of employment for any reason, you will be withdrawn from the competition.

### Making your application

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.

### Guidance for Applicants

- 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.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- 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.

### Application Form Submission

- Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before completing an application.
- **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.
- All applications must be received by the advertised closing date. Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted.
- Only online applications will be accepted.

- 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.
- Please note - 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.
- Please do not attempt to reformat application forms as this will result in disqualification.

### **Changes in personal circumstances**

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

### **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 and spam) 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.

### **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.

### **Further appointments from this competition**

Where a further position in the NICS is identified which is considered broadly similar to that outlined in this candidate information booklet, consideration will be given to filling the position from this competition. The merit list resulting from this competition will be valid for a period of up to two years.

### **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.



## **Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form**

**Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.**

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to Annex B.

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

**As Roman Catholics and women are currently known to be under-represented at this grade across the NICS, applications from Roman Catholics and women would be particularly welcome.**

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

### **Assessment Information**

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

### **Nationality Requirements**

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The CPO and NCO posts are classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. 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.

For further guidance on Nationality requirements please see Annex C.

Advice on Nationality for (i), (ii) and (iii) above may be obtained from the Home Office website, [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).

## **Vetting Procedures**

### **1. Counter Terrorism Check (CTC)**

For CPO and NCO posts in NICS, the level of vetting is CTC. To facilitate this 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) Other acceptable documents are listed on [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk);
- d) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

We will carry out a Criminal Record Check on all candidates through AccessNI.

**The category of AccessNI check required for these posts is an Enhanced Disclosure.**

For more information, the address of the AccessNI website is: [http://www.accessni.gov.uk/](http://www.accessni.gov.uk). Those candidates who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview and, will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. This can be downloaded from the AccessNI website. Guidance notes of the completion of the form are also included on the website. 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 above form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

The AccessNI code of practice can be found at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni). Criminal Record information is subject to the provision of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

**The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exception) Order (NI) 1979 applies to the Northern Ireland Prison Service. You should therefore not withhold information about previous conviction, caution or fixed penalty ticket on the grounds that it is for other purposes spent under the Order. You should therefore declare ALL previous convictions, whether spent or otherwise. Please note that a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position.**

## **Order of Merit**

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. The order of merit is valid for one year.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Pensions:**

The NICS offers all new employees an attractive pension package. Further details can be found on the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme (Northern Ireland) website at:

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civilservice/new-members>

or

if you are unable to access the website please contact Civil Service Pensions as follows:

Civil Service Pensions

Waterside House

75 Duke Street

Londonderry

BT47 6FP

Tel: 02871 319000

Email: [cspensions.cpg@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:cspensions.cpg@finance-ni.gov.uk)

### **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

**FITNESS CRITERIA**

The role of a CPO or NCO in NIPS is both physically and psychologically challenging, requiring a level of physical fitness that ensures duties are carried out effectively and safely, without undue stress or risk of injury.

Activities that place a high demand on physical fitness are generally infrequent but when required they are often critical to success. The failure of a CPO or NCO to perform a given duty because of a lack of physical fitness could have serious, even fatal consequences for the officer, his or her colleagues, prisoners and the public. Certain conditions may be incompatible with work within NIPS for example those causing sudden and unexpected loss of consciousness or dizziness or significant restriction of physical fitness or mobility. However, each case will be considered on its own merits in compliance with relevant disability legislation.

All candidates must be physically and psychologically capable of under taking the work of a CPO or NCO. Fitness testing may be carried out on a periodic/regular and ongoing basis in the future.

The following health standards must be met by all candidates in order for them to be deemed fit to work as a CPO or NCO:

Candidates should be of a good physique and be reasonably fit.

Candidates should have a body mass index (BMI) within the range of 19-30. A BMI outside the 19-30 range may not in itself be a bar to employment unless, functional ability is impaired.

Blood pressure must be within acceptable limits.

Where a candidate indicates on their health declaration that they suffer from an ongoing medical condition they are required to include with their health declaration a medical report from their GP/Consultant indicating the nature of the condition and any likely impact on functional ability to work as a CPO or NCO.

Insulin dependent diabetics may be accepted if their GP/Specialist confirms that they can demonstrate long-term stability of their diabetic control without significant hypoglycaemic episodes. An individual with a history of significant hypoglycaemic episodes may be rejected. An individual with a history of impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia may be rejected. Candidates will have to get their GP/Specialist to complete a diabetic form and return this with their health declaration.

Tuberculosis (TB) immunity will be established at pre-employment assessment, candidates must submit a completed TB immunity letter with their health declaration, candidates must also comply with any additional tests required to establish TB immunity.

## **Eyesight requirements:-**

**a. (i) No corrective lenses required; uncorrected minimum 6/12 - 6/12**

**(ii) Corrective spectacles worn; uncorrected minimum 6/24 - 6/24  
corrected minimum 6/12 - 6/12**

**(iii) Contact lenses worn; corrected minimum 6/12 - 6/12**

If contact lenses are needed to meet the visual acuity standard, a certificate from the applicant's Optometrist / Ophthalmic medical practitioner will be required. The certificate should indicate that the lenses are appropriate, well tolerated, without adverse effect and can be worn for at least 14 hours continuously per day.

The uncorrected visual acuity (i.e. without contact lenses) must also be stated.

They should also have alternative corrective lenses in the form of glasses, in the event of inability for any reason to wear contact lenses at work

**b Candidates must have full fields of vision including colour vision.**

**c If you have any doubt that your eyesight does not meet the relevant standard, you are advised to consult a qualified optician before completing the application form**

The candidate is responsible for any costs incurred obtaining the reports mentioned above. Failure to enclose the necessary reports will result in applications being returned.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

**Policy Statement**

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy statement to which NIPS adheres is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) has a strong and clear commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. It is our policy 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. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere where they are treated with dignity and respect. We aim to provide opportunities for all sections of the community and continue to strive to create an inclusive working environment in which difference is recognised and valued. Bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and giving each person the opportunity to contribute their skills and experience will help us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve”.

We all want to work in an harmonious workplace where we feel valued, respected and included, irrespective of gender, including gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race/ethnic origin, religious belief or political opinion, disability, having or not having dependants, sexual orientation and age.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to attract, recruit, develop and retain the very best people at all levels. Our approach is based on three key principles:-

**Equality** – we promote equality of opportunity by seeking to remove barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups of people.

**Diversity** – we accept each person as an individual. Our success is built on our ability to embrace diversity – and we believe that everyone should feel valued for their contributions. By working together we will deliver the best possible service for our staff, customers and stakeholders.

**Inclusion** – we create a working culture where differences are not merely accepted, but valued; where everyone has the opportunity to develop in a way that is consistent with, and adheres to NICS values of impartiality, honesty, integrity and objectivity. Our aim is to be an organisation where people feel involved, respected and connected to our success.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.

## **Equal Opportunities Monitoring**

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Monitoring equality and diversity in the workforce enables the NICS to examine how our employment policies and processes are working and to identify areas where these appear to be impacting disproportionately on certain groups of staff.

### **Legislative Context**

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

#### **Gender**

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also provided in the annual statutory monitoring the, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

#### **Age**

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different ages and age groups.

#### **Community Background**

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The Order also requires the NICS to submit an annual monitoring return to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. This takes the form of a statistical return, providing information on the gender and community background composition of all people working in the NICS at the 1st January each year.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality



Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

### **Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

**Physical Impairment:** this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

**Mental Impairment:** this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability, and social functioning.

**Substantial:** put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carryout normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

**Long-term adverse effect:** the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

**A normal day to day activity:** this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

### ***What sort of effect must there be?***

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; ability to take part in normal social interaction and form social relationships; or perception of risk of physical danger.

### ***What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?***

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

***Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?***

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

***Are any conditions not covered?***

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

***What if someone has recovered from a disability?***

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without.

**Race**

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group(s).

**Sexual Orientation**

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) Order 2003 makes it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies

information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

### **Marital Status**

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended), makes it unlawful to discriminate against married persons and civil partners in employment. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status.

### **Dependants Status**

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions in NI, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with dependants and persons without.

### **Confidentiality of Monitoring Information**

The following general principles will be applied to all individual monitoring information:-

- individual monitoring information will be afforded a high degree of confidentiality;
- misuse of monitoring information will be viewed as a disciplinary offence; and
- individual monitoring information will only be disclosed to members of staff or officials of a trade union, members of which are employed in the NICS, if it is necessary to do so for the appropriate discharge of their duties and responsibilities.

In addition to the above internal safeguards on the protection of equality monitoring information generally, the confidentiality of community background monitoring information is protected through Regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained, or is used, for the purpose of monitoring under FETO.

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.

**Nationality**

(i) 'UK National' means a person who is a British citizen (including persons from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), a British subject under Part IV of the British Nationality Act 1981 having the right of abode in the UK or a British Dependent Territories citizen acquiring his/her citizenship from connection with Gibraltar.

(ii) 'Commonwealth Citizen' means any person who has the status of a Commonwealth citizen under the British Nationality Act 1981, not covered by the 'UK Nationality' definition above. This includes British Dependent Territories citizens (other than Gibraltarians), British Overseas citizens, and from 1986 those persons in the category British National (Overseas).

(iii) 'British Protected Person' means a member of any class of persons declared to be British Protected Persons by Order in Council under the British Nationality Act 1981, or by virtue of the Solomon Islands Act 1978.

(iv) 'EEA National' means a national of one of the following countries:

Austria	Finland	Latvia	Portugal
Belgium	France	Liechtenstein	Romania
Bulgaria	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
**Croatia	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Iceland	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Norway	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Poland	

N.B. nationals from Switzerland also have the same free movement and employment rights.

'Family member of an EEA or swiss national' 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.

\*\*Croatian nationals who want to work in the UK must obtain authorisation prior to commencing employment. They require a certificate of sponsorship and must also apply for an accession worker card before they can commence employment. There are no provisions for Croatian nationals to take up low-skilled work.

Further guidance on nationality can be obtained at [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk)

AN INTRODUCTION

Ensuring appointment on merit  
And safeguarding ethics

**WHO ARE WE?**

Deirdre Toner  
Sinead Burns  
James Scholes

**LOCATION**

Our Office is in Stormont House.  
The full address is:

Stormont House  
Room 105  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast  
BT4 3SH

**OPENING HOURS**

The Office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm,  
Monday to Friday, except Public and Bank Holidays.

**How to contact us**

- write to us at the address at the top of the page
- telephone us on **028 9052 3599**
- visit us at [www.nicscommissioners.org](http://www.nicscommissioners.org)

## **CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS**

### **WHAT ARE WE HERE TO DO?**

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by the Crown to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Civil Service should be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

### **WHERE DO WE GET OUR AUTHORITY FROM?**

Commissioners derived their responsibilities from prerogative Orders made by the Secretary of State. Our authority currently derives from the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999.

### **HOW DO WE DO IT?**

We do it by:

- making General Regulations.
- publishing and maintaining a Recruitment Code setting out the essential principles and procedures on which recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service must be based. Departments and Agencies must follow this Code. A copy is available online at: [www.nicscommissioners.org](http://www.nicscommissioners.org)
- it is inevitable that occasions will arise when special circumstances lead to Departments needing to depart from the Merit Principle. The Commissioners have set out the circumstances in which they are prepared to look at requests to depart from the Merit Principle. These 'exceptions' must be notified to, and in some instances approved by, the Commissioners before an appointment can be made.
- auditing recruitment policies and practices followed by Departments and Agencies in making appointment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Each year, the Commissioners decide on a particular aspect of recruitment to examine in detail (an audit) and request management consultants to carry out independent investigations on their behalf. The results of these audits are published in the Commissioners' Annual Report.
- requiring Departments and Agencies to publish information about their recruitment activity.
- approving procedures for appointment, through open competition, to the Senior Civil Service in Northern Ireland.
- hearing and determining appeals under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics. Under the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999, we have been assigned the role of providing an independent appeals mechanism for Northern Ireland civil servants. The Code of Ethics sets out the constitutional framework within which civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. Details of the number and nature of the appeals received by the Commissioners are published each year in our Annual Report.

## **WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?**

If you have ever applied for a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, you can be assured that, whether or not you were successful, the Department or Agency was obliged to make that appointment in accordance with directions for good practice set out by the Commissioners.

We are concerned that civil servants are not fully aware of the appeals mechanism under the Code of Ethics. We would strongly encourage any civil servant who believes that he or she has been asked to act in a way which

- is illegal, improper or unethical;
- is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code;
- may involve a possible maladministration; or
- is otherwise inconsistent with the Code

to report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions Code or Departmental guidance.

Where the matter has been reported in the appropriate manner and a civil servant believes the response does not represent a reasonable response to his or her concerns, s/he may report the matter in writing to the Civil Service Commissioners.