

NICS Guaranteed Interview Scheme Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is the NICS introducing a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS)?

- In order to provide high quality public services, the NICS needs to recruit, develop and retain the best available people at all levels to increase diversity across the organisation so that our workforce becomes more representative of the people we serve.
- The NICS values and welcomes diversity and 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.
- The NICS is committed to building an inclusive workplace culture where diversity is truly valued at all levels, and to the employment and career development of disabled people.

2. Is it legal for the NICS to operate positive action measures to benefit disabled people?

- Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, employers are required to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people to ensure they are not disadvantaged and to consider positive action to promote equality of opportunity.
- The DDA also allows employers to treat disabled people more favourably than non-disabled people in order to increase the diversity of their workforce and promote equality of opportunity.

3. How will you ensure the Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) is still required in future?

- The operation of a GIS in the NICS will be kept under review to ensure there remains a sound evidence base for the scheme as a continued positive action measure. Reviews should be conducted annually, by NICS HR, at the end of each calendar year and should include consideration of information to indicate whether or not disabled people continue to be underrepresented in the workforce.

4. What is a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS)?

- A Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) does not guarantee a job. A GIS is a positive action measure which enhances access to interview for disabled applicants who apply under the GIS AND who meet the minimum essential eligibility criteria (e.g. skills, experience, technical qualifications etc.).
- Where possible, all GIS applicants who meet the minimum eligibility requirements for that competition will be invited to interview without the need for additional sifting or shortlisting. Where it is not feasible to guarantee an

interview to all GIS applicants who meet the minimum eligibility requirements, a guaranteed proportion of GIS applicants will be invited to interview.

- Applicants continue to be assessed and marked solely on merit.

5. How are the minimum essential criteria decided?

- The competition lead in conjunction with the recruiting business area will discuss and decide on the minimum essential criteria required for each competition. This will be based on a job analysis which outlines the skills and experience required for the role.
- Recruiting business areas must continue to ensure that all criteria are genuinely required for effective performance of the duties of the job and do not inadvertently discourage or preclude a disabled person from applying.

6. How will the GIS be implemented in the NICS?

- It is proposed that GIS will be used for all NICS external competitions.
- The competition design and volume will determine how the GIS will operate in that particular recruitment campaign.
- Recruiting Managers must continue to ensure that all criteria must be genuinely related to the ability to effectively perform the duties of the job and do not discourage or preclude a disabled person from applying.
- An interview will only be offered where applicants demonstrate that they meet the essential eligibility criteria for the post(s).
- As per the Civil Service Commissioners for NI Recruitment Code, appointments will continue to be based on merit, on the basis of fair and open competition, subject to the application of GIS measures.

7. How will applicants apply under the GIS?

- Applicants will simply declare on their application form that they wish to avail of the GIS.

8. Who can apply under the GIS?

- GIS applicants must have a disability that meets the legal definition of disability under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 that is, it is a physical or mental impairment which has, or is likely to have, a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Further information on the definition can be found in Annex 1 of the GIS policy document, available on the NICS Recruitment website and in the NICS Recruitment Manual.

9. Will disabled applicants have to provide evidence of their disability if applying under the GIS?

- When completing the application form applicants will confirm as part of their declaration that the responses detailed are true and accurate to the best of their knowledge and belief. If applicants are found to have suppressed any material fact or given false answers they will be liable to disqualification or, if appointed, disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.
- The NICS reserves the right to request relevant information from the applicant to confirm they are eligible.
- If an applicant wishes to request reasonable adjustments during the selection process, they will need to provide relevant information to support consideration of the reasonable adjustment. Further information regarding this is contained in NICS Policy “Recruiting and Appointing People with Disabilities”.

10. How does GIS impact on requests for other reasonable adjustments?

- The GIS will not have any impact on an applicant’s ability to request other reasonable adjustments during the recruitment and selection process.
- The NICS wants to ensure that all applicants have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. In all cases of recruitment and selection in the NICS, disabled applicants’ requests for reasonable adjustments during the selection process will be dealt with under the existing NICS “Recruiting and Appointing People with Disabilities Policy”. The latest version of this policy can be found under the ‘Useful Information’ section of the NICS Recruitment website <https://irecruit-ext.hrconnect.nigov.net/>