Candidate Information Booklet

IRC191657
Medical Officer (Grade 6)
Occupational Health Service
Corporate Human Resources
Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP)

Completed Application Forms must be returned to HRConnect no later than 12 noon (UK time) on Friday 27th June 2014
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.
FOREWORD

Thank you for your interest in this competition to fill the position of Medical Officer, Occupational Health Service, DFP.

This is a post within the Occupational Health Service which is a part of the Corporate HR Directorate of DFP.

This post will involve providing occupational health advice to the NICS in addition to the provision of medical advice to Civil Service Pensions, Health and Social Care Pension Service, Teachers Pensions and the Driver and Vehicle Agency.

The OHS is a Consultant led multi-disciplinary service and recognised as one of the leading SEQOHS accredited occupational health departments in the United Kingdom. We are committed to the training and development of our people and we are looking for highly motivated individuals with a can do attitude to join us. You will work with committed professional and administrative colleagues, and play a key role in delivery occupational health services. This is a challenging and exciting opportunity to pursue your career in an environment that provides opportunities for continuing personal development and participation in research.

If after reading this candidate information pack you would like to speak to someone before making an application, I would encourage you to contact Margaret McGurk on 028 9025 1804 or email margaret.mcgrurk@nicsohs.gov.uk who will endeavor to answer any questions you might have.

Professor Ken Addley
Director, Occupational Health Service
BACKGROUND

This is a post within the Occupational Health Service which is a part of the Corporate HR Directorate of DFP.

The Occupational Health Service (OHS) provides a comprehensive occupational health service to all Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Departments and their Agencies and medical advisory services to Non-Departmental Public Bodies.

OHS is a multi-disciplinary organisation led by the Grade 5 Director of OHS, supported by the Grade 7 Assistant Director of Corporate and Client Services and the Grade 7 Assistant Director of Nursing and Allied and comprising OHS Medical Officers, occupational health physicians, occupational health nurse specialists, an occupational therapist and administrative staff. The postholder will also work closely with Grade 3 and Grade 5 HR Directors across all departments, Establishment Officers, Health and Safety Officers, Welfare Officers and a range of external contacts on all these issues.

The Director of OHS reports to the Grade 3 in Corporate HR in addition to the OHS Board which is comprised of HR Directors, the Deputy Chief Medical Officer (DHSSPS) and Chief Nursing Officer (DHSSPS).

The main purpose of this post is to:

- provide advice and guidance to Government Departments, Executive Agencies including the NI Prison Service, and other public bodies on their occupational health, safety and hygiene responsibilities in the light of UK and EC legislation and in keeping with national and international developments;

- provide advice on the fitness of individuals for specific jobs, cases of sickness absence, premature medical retirement and the rehabilitation of individuals after sickness; and

- provide medical advice to the Driver and Vehicle Agency, Teachers’ Superannuation Scheme, the Health and Social Care Superannuation Scheme and Civil Service Pensions.
JOB DESCRIPTION

This is a full time, permanent appointment, however, applications may be considered from candidates wishing to work reduced hours within the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The successful candidate will be employed within the Department of Finance and Personnel and the appointment will be made at NICS Unified Grade 6 level.

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

Salary

Salary will be within the range £53,939 - £62,719 (under review) within which pay progression will be performance related.

Starting salary will be at the minimum of the scale. If the successful candidate is an existing civil servant, normal pay on promotion/re-grading arrangements will apply.

Location

The successful applicant will be based in Lincoln Building, 27-45 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7SH.

Travel

The post may require the post holder to travel on official duty. The successful candidate must have access to a form of transport which will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities. Travel throughout Northern Ireland, as well as nationally, may also be required. Since part of the functions of the post may involve working with the NI Prison Service, applicants must be willing to carry out visits to prison premises.

Working Hours

Normal working hours are 37 per week and flexible working is available.

Annual Leave

The annual leave allowance will be 25 days rising to 30 days after 5 years. In addition statutory/public holidays, up to a maximum of 12 days, will also be granted.

Pension

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. Further details of this can be found on page 17 of this booklet.
Security

The security level required for this post is Counter Terrorist Check.

Probationary Period

The successful candidate will be required to serve a one year probationary period.

Further Information

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may contact Mrs Margaret McGurk on telephone number 028 9025 1804 or by email to margaret.mcgurk@nicsohs.gov.uk

If you have any questions about the competition process, you should contact HR Connect on 0800 1 300 400 or by email at recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net
KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The post holder reports to the Director of the NICS Occupational Health Service. The main duties of the post include:

- assisting the Director in providing advice and guidance to all Government Departments, Executive Agencies including the NI Prison Service and other public bodies on occupational health matters;

- medical examinations in Belfast and centres elsewhere in NI of employees referred to OHS by client bodies, including recruitment, fitness for post, health surveillance and sickness absence;

- providing medical advice on cases referred to OHS by the Driver and Vehicle Agency, Teachers’ Superannuation Scheme, the Health and Social Care Superannuation Scheme and Civil Service Pensions;

- co-operating with the OHS multi-disciplinary team in promoting and maintaining an occupational health service for the NICS including participation in health promotion activities; and

- co-operating with client bodies in assisting them to meet their occupational health needs.
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

1. Currently hold, or be entitled to hold, full registration with the General Medical Council and a valid licence to practise medicine in the UK*.

   *Candidates must obtain the necessary registration and valid licence by October 2014 which is the anticipated date of appointment.

AND

2. Have at least 5 years’ post registration (or post entitlement to hold full registration) clinical experience*, gained within the last 10 years.

   *Clinical experience is defined as having worked in, for example, general practice, general medicine, surgery, psychiatry or occupational medicine.

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criteria will be used:

1. Possess a higher specialist medical qualification awarded by a Royal College, Faculty or University.

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 Department 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.
- 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.
- The Department may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.
- Further information on the Core Competences for this grade can be accessed through www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk
PERSON SPECIFICATION

CORE COMPETENCES

The Core Competence Framework, which is grade specific, 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.

Medical Officer is analogous to Grade 6 in the NICS. Further information on the Core Competences for this grade can be accessed through www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk.

INTERVIEW CRITERIA

In addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria and shortlisting criteria (if applicable) applicants will also be expected to display the following qualities and skills at interview:

1. **Professional Knowledge and Technical Skills**

   Knowledge and understanding of the organisation and delivery of occupational health services. Knowledge and understanding of current and emerging clinical issues. Developing and applying professional knowledge and skills.

   Marks available: 45
   Minimum standard: 27

2. **Strategy / Policy**

   Knowledge of policy and strategic planning issues relating to occupational health services.

   Marks available: 10

3. **Services**

   Ability to analyse complex problems and issues and produce appropriate solutions, including the analysis and use of relevant information.

   Marks available: 15
4. **Resources**

Ability to demonstrate the achievement of value for money, high level outcomes and standards.

Marks available: 10

5. **People**

Evidence of strong professional and team leaderships. Ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team.

Marks available: 15

6. **Information and Communication**

Excellent interpersonal, oral, written and electronic communication skills.

Marks available: 15

7. **Programme and Project Management**

Ability to effectively and efficiently manage projects and to deliver results, within challenging timescales.

Marks available: 10

**Total marks available: 120**

**Overall pass mark: 72**

**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**

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Avenue House, Belfast during week commencing 4th August 2014.
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.

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, unless it is specifically requested in the application form and candidate information booklet, eg an organisational chart.
- Should an organisational chart be required this must be submitted to HRConnect by the closing date for applications.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- 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.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write “I” statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out 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.
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. Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is also the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect. HRConnect will not accept any application where they are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.
- 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 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.

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 one year.

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 page 19.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an equal opportunities employer.

As women are currently known to be under represented at this grade across the NICS, applications from 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/shortlisting criteria (if applicable) 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 Medical Officer 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 A.

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

**Vetting Procedures**

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For Medical Officer posts in the NICS the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

a) Your passport **OR**  
b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) **AND** your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).  
c) Other acceptable documents are listed on 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 organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants to be carried out by AccessNI. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is;

**Counter Terrorist Check (CTC)**
For more information, the address of the AccessNI website is: http://www.accessni.gov.uk/. 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. 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.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

2. Counter Terrorist Check (CTC): as point 1 plus check of Security Service records.

**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:

http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni/index/new-members.htm

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@dfpni.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
Completed application forms should be sent to the HRConnect Recruitment Team:

HRConnect
PO Box 1089
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW

NOTE: Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted.

Contact Details:

If you have any queries regarding the competition process please contact HRConnect at the address above or by:

Email: Recruitment@HRConnect.nigov.net
Tel: 0800 1 300 330
Fax: 028 9024 1665
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy statement is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to providing equality of opportunity. 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 in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to recruit, retain and promote the best available people. Our equal opportunities policy is central to this strategy. We aim to foster a culture which encourages every member of staff to develop his or her full potential and which rewards achievement. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

The NICS seeks to maintain the confidence of the whole community. It will continue to promote equality of opportunity and fair participation within the framework of the law and will strive to achieve a workforce that is broadly representative of the society which it serves.

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.
**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 necessary to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return, 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 age.

**Community Background**
The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The information requested in the Community Background section of the monitoring form is required in connection with the requirements of the above Order and to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission for NI.

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**
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. 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.

Substantial: put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carry out 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; 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.

**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.

**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 & Dependants**
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 and between persons with dependants and persons without.

**Use of Monitoring Information**
Monitoring information is used to enable the NICS to assess the effectiveness of its EO policies and to determine the impact (if any) of various policies and procedures on different categories of staff. In addition to this internal focus community background and gender information on both staff and applicants is used to complete the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission.
Confidentiality of Monitoring Information
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.

The confidentiality of community background information is also protected
through regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI)
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 used for
the purposes of monitoring under FETO.

The release of an individual's monitoring information is permitted by
legislation as part of prospective or actual proceedings under equality
legislation, e.g. where another individual has made a complaint of alleged
discrimination.

Many people from all backgrounds in Northern Ireland and beyond are
interested in the profile of the NICS workforce and the candidates who apply
for jobs. For this reason the NICS regularly publishes data in the form of
statistical summaries, graphs etc. On occasions it may also be necessary to
use monitoring information to answer questions from Assembly Members,
MPs and MEPs or to respond to requests for information under the Freedom
of Information Act. In all cases where information is made public, the format
of presentation will be such that it will not be possible to identify any
individual's information.
ANNEX A

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
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- **Croatia**
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- 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
AN INTRODUCTION
Ensuring appointment on merit
And safeguarding ethics

WHO ARE WE?

Brian Rowntree, CBE (Chairperson)
Vilma Patterson, MBE
Dr Raymond Mullan, OBE
Marian Matchett, CBE
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
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

• 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.