

**Candidate  
Information  
Booklet**

**IRC233715**

**Inspector Group 1**

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

**Completed Application Forms  
must be submitted to  
HRConnect no later than 12  
noon (UK time) on  
*Friday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2019***

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

***Department of Agriculture,  
Environment and Rural Affairs***

**“A living, working, active landscape valued by  
everyone”**

**Communication between HRConnect and you**

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

**Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Key Responsibilities</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Terms and Conditions</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Assessment Process</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>General Information</b>	<b>21</b>

## **BACKGROUND**

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

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

The Department is currently preparing for BREXIT working closely with our partners in NI and with colleagues in the other UK administrations.

## **DAERA VISION AND STRATEGIC GOALS**

### **Vision**

“A living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.”

### **Strategic Outcomes**

1. Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors.
2. A clean, healthy environment, benefiting people, nature and the economy.
3. A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing.

How we operate:

4. A well led, high performing organisation focused on outcomes.

### **DAERA Top Management Team comprises:-**

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

## **DAERA has two Executive Agencies:**

- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Forest Service

The Department also sponsors a number of NDPBs including the Agri-food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI).

The [Permanent Secretary](#) of DAERA is Dr Denis McMahon.

## **VETERINARY SERVICE ANIMAL HEALTH GROUP**

Veterinary Service Animal Health Group (VSAHG) is responsible for the development of animal health and welfare policy for both farmed and non-farmed animals and the implementation of that policy in respect of farmed animals. VSAHG is also responsible for policy development and implementation in respect of food animal identification and exports of animals and animal products to non-EU countries.

VSAHG contributes to DAERA's strategic goal to: "Develop sustainable agricultural, fisheries and industrial sectors" (Goal 1) by ensuring that the health standards of the farmed animal population are such that the NI producers have the maximum access to all markets, European and overseas, and that production costs associated with poor animal health and welfare are minimised.

VSAHG also supports DAERA through the implementation, delivery and the enforcement of veterinary public health controls, and agri-food legislation relating to feed and food safety, product certification, marketing standards, labelling, classification and price reporting on behalf of DAERA and Food Standards Agency.

## **VETERINARY SERVICE ANIMAL HEALTH GROUP - VISION**

It is the vision of VSAHG to enable production of the safest food from the healthiest animals in Europe. Our mission is to ensure that animal health and welfare policies and agri-food legislation are delivered and enforced in order to safeguard public and animal health and animal welfare.

This vision is delivered through the following aims:

- To prevent the entry of, and maintain preparedness to stamp out, important exotic diseases.
- To control and eradicate key diseases, in accordance with legislation and in partnership with industry.
- To implement public health official controls.
- To develop and maintain animal health and welfare policies.
- To commission and monitor related research.
- To enforce animal welfare legislation for farmed animals.

- To achieve compliance with EU and International standards.
- To support current and future trade.
- To implement agri-food legislation relating to food and feed safety, classification, price reporting and marketing standards.

## **VETERINARY SERVICE ANIMAL HEALTH GROUP - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

VSAHG's purpose is to develop and implement policies that aim to prevent, control and/or eradicate animal diseases affecting livestock production and trade, to ensure that meat is safe and wholesome, animal welfare requirements are observed and agri-food legislation relating to feed and food safety is implemented.

This will help deliver the Department's vision of a thriving and sustainable economy, environment and rural community in NI.

## **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

VSAHG is headed by a Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), Unified Grade 3. VSAHG comprises several groups of staff including professional, technical and administrative staff. There are six Grade 5 officers heading up the various divisions and sections that make up VSAHG: three Deputy Chief Veterinary Officers and, three Programme Directors plus one administrative Grade 6 who reports directly to the CVO.

An outline of the current structure is provided on the next page but is subject to change.

**Head of VSAHG /  
Chief Veterinary Officer**

**DCVO –Director of Enzoitic  
Disease and Animal Welfare**

**DCVO – Director of International  
Trade Facilitation**

**DCVO – Director of Epizootics  
and Public Health**

**Director of Animal  
Health & Welfare  
Policy**

**NIFAIS  
Programme  
Director**

**Director of  
Structural  
Change and  
Staff  
Engagement**

**Programme Delivery Manager,  
Management of Divisional Veterinary Offices and Delivery of Field  
Work Programmes**

**Programme Delivery Manager  
TB Programme and Contracts, Welfare & Enforcement**

**Programme Delivery Manager  
TB Strategic Partnership, Veterinary Epidemiology & Wildlife Unit**

**Programme Delivery Manager  
Imports, Portal Inspection**

**Programme Delivery Manager  
International Relations and Veterinary Trade Facilitation**

**Programme Delivery Manager  
Veterinary Public Health Programme**

**Programme Delivery Manager  
IRM, Cross Compliance, Standards & Compliance, TSE/ABP, Epizootics  
(incl. Br) & CPED**

**Programme Delivery Manager  
Surveillance & Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR)**

**Animal Health and Welfare European Union (AHWEU) Legislation,  
Transition and Policy (NC)**

**Animal Health and Welfare Disease Control, Trade, TB and BR (CF)**

**NIFAIS  
Business Change Manager**

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

**The successful candidate may be required to carry out any of the duties listed below.**

The successful candidate will be required to carry out duties to meet the objectives of VSAHG. The duties, which are interesting and worthwhile, are also physically demanding and undertaken outdoors and in all weathers. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided.

The main purpose of the Inspector Group 1 role is to assist in the enforcement of VSAHG's animal health and welfare and public health legislation and thereby serve and protect the agri-food industry and its trading potential. This is done, through the Inspector Group 1s using their technical expertise and knowledge of VSAHG policies in order to complete a range of inspection and sampling duties. Their duties will be in the areas listed below:

- **Public health;**
- **Animal health and welfare;**
- **Enzootic disease control;**
- **Epizootic disease control;**
- **Zoonotic disease control; and**
- **Facilitation of trade.**

The Inspector Group 1 provides a unique contribution to the:

- **Control and eradication of enzootic disease;**
- **Eradication of epizootic disease as required;**
- **Promotion and maintenance of acceptable animal welfare standards;**
- **Promote the control of zoonotic disease; and**
- **Support public health standards.**

There are a number of Inspector Group 1 posts within VSAHG. These posts are based, for example, within the Field Operations structure in the Divisional Veterinary Offices (DVOs) as Animal Health and Welfare Inspectors (AHWI) or in Portal Branch as Portal Inspectors (PI).

### **Main Activities**

The Inspector Group 1 will support the delivery of VSAHG programmes by providing technical support across a number of work areas as detailed below;

## **Problem Solving**

- The Inspector Group 1 will be responsible for investigating queries passed from their line management, from Customer Service Branch or from the Veterinary cadre within their work area.
- The Inspector Group 1 will investigate discrepancies relating to Identification, Registration and Movement (IRM) of livestock. This involves a physical inspection of an animal and possible re-identification. This ensures public confidence in our food animal information systems.
- The Inspector Group 1 will investigate discrepancies relating to imports and exports, often outside core hours and without direct access to line management.
- The Inspector Group 1 will have a key role in liaising with Private Veterinary Practitioners (PVP's), herd/flock keepers, landowners, livestock transporters and the general public.

## **Inspections/Compliance**

- The Inspector Group 1 will provide the initial response to on-farm welfare complaints as directed by their line management and complete the inspection report form. The Inspector Group 1 will request a veterinarian to attend the farm in any case of unnecessary suffering.
- The Inspector Group 1 will inspect applications for animal group numbers. They will confirm the identity of the applicants. They will check boundary fences, housing, isolation facilities and testing facilities and report on their suitability.
- The Inspector Group 1 will inspect the cleansing and disinfection of premises and equipment during disease outbreaks.
- The Inspector Group 1 will be responsible for enforcing legislation relating to the welfare of animals during transport. They will issue notices for any non-compliances found.
- The Inspector Group 1 will investigate reports of livestock carcasses dumped or not disposed of. The post holder will issue disposal notices and complete a follow-up inspection to check for compliance.
- The Inspector Group 1 will complete Biosecurity Surveys, Dairy Herd Questionnaires and Medicine Record Inspections.
- The Inspector Group 1 will complete inspections at rendering plants.
- The Inspector Group 1 has to ensure that they have the equipment required for

a task and ensure it is fit for purpose. The necessary PPE will be provided.

### **Epizootics/Trade**

- The Inspector Group 1 will monitor the import and export of livestock, meat, meat products, poultry, plants and timber. The Inspector Group 1 will ensure compliance with import and export regulations, complete checks to detect and prevent illegal movements and illegal import of products of animal origin. The Inspector Group 1 will issue rectification and detention notices for non-compliances.
- The Inspector Group 1 will assist with the investigation of animal import and export discrepancies.
- The Inspector Group 1 will complete inspections at Ports to prevent the entry of Epizootic disease.
- The Inspector Group 1 will audit Scrapie Monitored flocks annually. This is to ensure compliance with the scheme rules regarding animal identification, record keeping and that the premises meet the required standard. This enhances the marketability of high genetic merit animals to other EU member states.
- The Inspector Group 1 will ensure they have the knowledge to assist in the event of an Epizootic disease outbreak. This could involve taking a lead role in the event of an outbreak e.g. Site Operation Controller or Team Leader of one of the other teams.

### **Public Health**

- The Inspector Group 1 will collect blood samples from all species of farmed animals for disease detection and survey work.
- The Inspector Group 1 will collect samples as part of the On-farm Residues National Plan and ensure they are stored and transported in accordance with requirements. All relevant sample submission and continuity forms will be completed.
- The Inspector Group 1 will collect samples for salmonella testing from different categories of poultry flocks. This work requires high bio-security standards and communication and coordination with poultry processing representatives.

### **Enforcement**

- When a prosecution case is being taken the Inspector Group 1 will, when required, provide a witness statement and attend court to present evidence.

## **Enzootics**

- The Inspector Group 1 may be involved in wildlife intervention work in relation to eradicating Bovine Tuberculosis (Tb).
- The Inspector Group 1 will gather data by completing Tb Disease Investigation forms. This includes mapping farms and recommending to Veterinary Officers (VO) / Veterinary Inspectors (VI) / Inspector Group 4s which neighbouring herds are at risk. The data gathered enables the VO / VI to make evidence based decisions when managing a disease outbreak in a herd/region.

**The above list is not exhaustive but gives a good indication of the main duties of the role. The emphasis on particular duties may vary and develop over time according to business needs. Group Staff can be allocated to other duties, commensurate with their grade at any locations and in other environments, for example in food business establishments e.g. meat and milk/dairy plants, coldstores and cutting plants.**

### ***Please note:***

- i. Some of the activities of the Group 1 require the driving of Departmental vehicles including 4x4 vehicles with a trailer.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This competition currently intends to make appointments to fill **15 permanent full time vacancies** at Inspector Group 1 Grade.

Please note that the competition may also be used to appoint staff on an **up to 51 weeks' fixed term basis** to ensure the Department is in a state of readiness and in a position as required, to meet the anticipated business needs associated with Brexit implications.

Applicants are advised that it is currently intended that the top 15 candidates on the merit list will be offered permanent positions.

Thereafter, if there is a requirement for fixed term posts as a result of Brexit implications, those posts will be offered to eligible\* successful candidates in merit order on an up to 51 weeks' fixed term basis as business needs arise.

(\*NICS staff (permanent, temporary or fixed term) are not eligible to be appointed on a fixed term basis).

The continuing need for any fixed term appointment/s made will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and also prior to expiration at 51 weeks. Depending on the then evolving Brexit implications/out workings and associated business needs, there may be potential for extension beyond 51 weeks' duration. There is also a possibility that consideration may be given to conversion to permanency in accordance with section 10.4 of the NICS Recruitment Policy and Procedures Manual. (Given the uncertainty around Brexit it is not currently known if this is a likely possibility or not.)

In the event business needs decline, the Department may terminate the fixed term appointment before the expiry of 51 weeks with appropriate notice which will not be less than 5 weeks' notice.

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

Successful candidates will be employees of the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

### Location

The successful candidates will be based at any one of a variety of locations throughout Northern Ireland (NI). Primarily the work will be within Field Delivery, with posts based in Divisional Veterinary Offices (co-located with DAERA Direct Offices) or in Portal Branch Offices at ports and airports. There may also be occasions when staff are required to work in cold stores or other meat premises.

The decision on where any successful candidate will be posted will be based on business need at the date employment commences.

However, once appointed, successful candidates will be required to, and must be willing and able to, cover duties anywhere in NI as required.

### **Salary**

Salary will be within the range £24,429 - £25,225 (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.

### **Pensions**

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. Further details can be found on the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme (Northern Ireland) website at [www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni](http://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni)

### **Holidays**

In addition to public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, the annual leave allowance will be 25 days, rising to 30 days after 5 years' service.

### **Hours of Work**

The standard net working hours are 37 per week Monday to Friday (excluding meal breaks). Duties may include some early morning, evening and weekend work.

Some posts will require shift work. This will attract the appropriate pay allowances. In addition, the successful candidates will be required to participate in weekly on-call rotas during weekdays, weekends and evenings.

### **Travel**

The successful candidates must have a full valid UK driving licence including categories permitting towing. The successful candidates must also have access to a form of transport to enable them to fulfil the responsibilities of the post and be prepared to travel throughout Northern Ireland and elsewhere, as required. This may include overnight stays.

### **Vetting**

An appointment will be dependent on the individual satisfying the vetting requirements for the post. The level of vetting required for this post is Basic.

### **Medical**

Successful candidates will be required to undergo Tuberculosis and Brucellosis medical assessments to ensure their suitability to undertake the full range of duties of the post. Offers of appointment will therefore be on a conditional basis pending satisfactory Occupational Health Service results.

## **Permanent Appointments - Probation**

Confirmation of appointment will be dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of 1 year. If performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory the appointment may be terminated.

## **Fixed term Appointments**

Whilst not serving a formal 1 year probationary period, any candidates appointed on a fixed term basis of up to 51 weeks will be subject to performance assessments at 5 and 9 months. If at any stage performance, conduct or attendance is not satisfactory, the appointment may be terminated.

## **Career Development**

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

## **Conflict of Interest**

It is a basic requirement of all Civil Servants that their private activities should not bring them in to conflict with their official duties. The potential for conflict to arise is perhaps greater in Veterinary Service Animal Health Group than in many other disciplines because of the close and quite legitimate links that many Veterinary Service Animal Health Group staff have with the farming community, industry and business who are in essence their "customer".

Conflict of Interest is not limited to the individual's own private, financial or other interests arising, as family, friends and associates may also have dealings which affect the business of Veterinary Service Animal Health Group directly or indirectly. Therefore to avoid any conflict or potential conflict and to demonstrate impartiality to the public at all times, an officer must not, without prior approval, engage in any activity which could be considered to be in conflict with official business. As such, to protect employees and the Department from public criticism, it will be mandatory for the successful candidate to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration on appointment.

## **Training**

DAERA recognises that the skills of our people are our greatest asset and we will continually seek to train and develop them in line with our business goals.

## **Further Information**

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may telephone Kate Bell on 028 9182 5830 or email [kate.bell@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:kate.bell@daera-ni.gov.uk)

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

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications have:

1. At least 4 GCSE/GCE “O” levels at Grade C or above in 4 subjects (including English and Mathematics) or equivalent\*

**AND**

2. (i) A Level 3 Work-based Diploma in Agriculture.

**OR**

- (ii) A BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Agriculture.

**OR**

- (iii) Equivalent\*\*

**AND**

3. At least 3 months’ experience gained within the last 5 years of working with livestock.

“Livestock is defined as being agricultural animals, the main species being cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and poultry”.

**AND**

4. A full valid UK driving licence including categories permitting towing.

### Relevant or equivalent qualifications

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

\* Example of equivalent qualification to English and Mathematics GCSE/GCE “O” levels at Grade C or above is Essential Skills 2.

\*\* **Examples** of equivalent qualifications is a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 3 in Livestock or Crop Production or a BTEC National Diploma in Agriculture or a College Diploma in Agriculture or an Advanced Diploma in Agriculture or a National Certificate in Agriculture and a relevant NVQ Level 3 qualification.

Where applicants have applied under Eligibility Criterion 2 (iii) they must provide the necessary evidence in their application form. Such evidence must define the qualification and list the modules taken.

For relevant or equivalent qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body).

If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc. so that a well-informed decision can be made.

**Please note:**

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

## **ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The selection process will be a competence based interview.

### **1. Making Effective Decisions**

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

**Marks available: 30**

### **2. 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 NICS, to help to achieve business objectives and goals. At all levels, it requires working collaboratively, sharing information and building supportive, responsive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, whilst having the confidence to challenge assumptions

**Marks available: 20**

### **3. Delivering Value for Money**

Delivering value for money involves the efficient, effective and economic use of taxpayers' money in the delivery of public services. For all staff, it means seeking out and implementing solutions which achieve a good mix of quality and effectiveness for the least outlay, thus reducing the risk of fraud and error. People who do this well base their decisions on evidenced information and follow agreed processes and policies, challenging these appropriately where they appear to prevent good value for money.

**Marks available: 10**

### **4. Managing a Quality Service**

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

**Marks available: 20**

## 5. Delivering at Pace

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

**Marks available: 20**

**Total Marks Available: 100**

**Overall Pass Mark: 50**

### COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

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

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

### INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place at the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE), Loughry Campus, Cookstown commencing 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

### NICS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at level 2.

The NICS competency framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results.

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competency at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

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

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

## GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

### APPLICATION FORM

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

#### **Please note:**

- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, hard copy application packs are available on request. All applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.
- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms, unless it is specifically requested in the application form and candidate information booklet.
- All applications must be received by the advertised closing date and time.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.
- The session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- You must click SUBMIT once you have finished your online application. You will receive an acknowledgement email. Please contact HRConnect if you do not receive an acknowledgment email within 24 hrs.

#### **Help with making your application**

You can get advice or assistance with making an application from your local Jobs and Benefits Office - contact details are available on NIDirect: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/jobs-benefits-offices-jobcentres-and-social-security-offices>

You can also get advice or assistance from local disability employment organisations. To find out more about local disability employment organisations contact Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE), an umbrella

group for individuals and organisations promoting opportunities for people with disabilities to access and maintain employment, email info@niuse.org.uk, tel. 0044 (0)28 71 377709, text phone 0044 (0) 28 71 372077

## **GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

### **INTERVIEW PREPARATION**

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

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

**A competence-based interview does however require you to:**

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

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

- **Situation** – briefly outline the situation;
- **Task** – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- **Action** – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- **Result** – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience to demonstrate the range of behaviours associated with the competences being assessed. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

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

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **The Merit Principle**

In accordance with the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, appointments to the NICS are made under the 'merit principle', where the best person for any given post is selected in fair and open competition.

Further information on the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at [www.nicscommissioners.org](http://www.nicscommissioners.org).

### **NICSHR Privacy Notice**

NICSHR are committed to protecting your privacy. HRConnect manage job applications on behalf of NICSHR, in line with the NICSHR privacy notice available via [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk)

### **Offers of Employment**

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

### **Changes in personal circumstances and contact details**

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances. It is important that HRConnect have up to date contact details.

### **Transgender Requirements**

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration, in confidence, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact HRConnect. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

### **Merit List**

**HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed.** It is presently intended that the merit list for this competition should remain extant for a period of one year, however you should be aware that circumstances may arise in the future where it will be necessary to extend the currency of the merit list for a further period. The merit list will only be extended where cogent practical reasons for doing so arise.

In the event this competition is also used to make fixed-term appointments, please note NICS staff (permanent, temporary or fixed term) are not eligible to be appointed on a fixed term basis.

## **Disability Requirements**

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please contact HRConnect.

## **Documentation**

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

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

**You should ensure that the required documents are readily available.**

## **Right to Work and Nationality Requirements**

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom and satisfy the Nationality requirements for appointment to the NICS. Applicants must be either:

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

Further guidance on Nationality requirements is available via [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk).

## **Security**

### 1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For Inspector Group 1 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) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

Further information regarding the Baseline Personnel Security Standard, including other acceptable documents is available via [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

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

### **Basic Disclosure Certificate**

You should not put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made.

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via [www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni).

Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment.

Failure to complete the application form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

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

### **Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form**

**Please note the Equal Opportunities monitoring section of the application form is mandatory in order to submit an application.**

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to the DoF website [www.finance-ni.gov.uk](http://www.finance-ni.gov.uk).

**As women are currently known to be under represented in this occupation across Northern Ireland, applications from women would be particularly welcome.**

**The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.**  
All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit

## **Feedback**

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair and in accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioners Code. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken in determining eligibility/shortlisting as well as at interview. Feedback in respect of eligibility/shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria. All requests for feedback are welcome.

**THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF  
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**