

**Candidate  
Information  
Booklet**

**IRC268112**

**Regulation Unit – Senior Scientific  
Officer (SScO) – Water**

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

**Northern Ireland Environment  
Agency (NIEA)**

**Completed Application Forms  
must be submitted to  
HRConnect no later than 12  
noon (UK time) on  
*Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021***

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

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

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***Northern Ireland Environment  
Agency (NIEA)***

**Communication between HRConnect and you**

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

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## **FOREWORD**

Thank you for your interest in this post of Senior Scientific Officer – Water, based in the Regulation Unit of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). NIEA contributes to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' vision of 'A living, working active landscape valued by everyone'.

An important element of our work involves co-operating with other Government departments and agencies to limit adverse impacts upon the environment and public health.

The Agency has a wide range of scientific and professional skills and expertise among its staff. This skills and experience base allows us to manage and protect our landscapes and their wildlife, and to maintain a healthier environment.

If you believe you have the skills and experience to tackle this post, I would be delighted if you would take the next step and complete and submit the application form.

**Paul Donnelly**  
**Chief Executive Northern Ireland Environment Agency**

## **BACKGROUND**

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has responsibility for food, farming, environment, drinking water quality, 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.

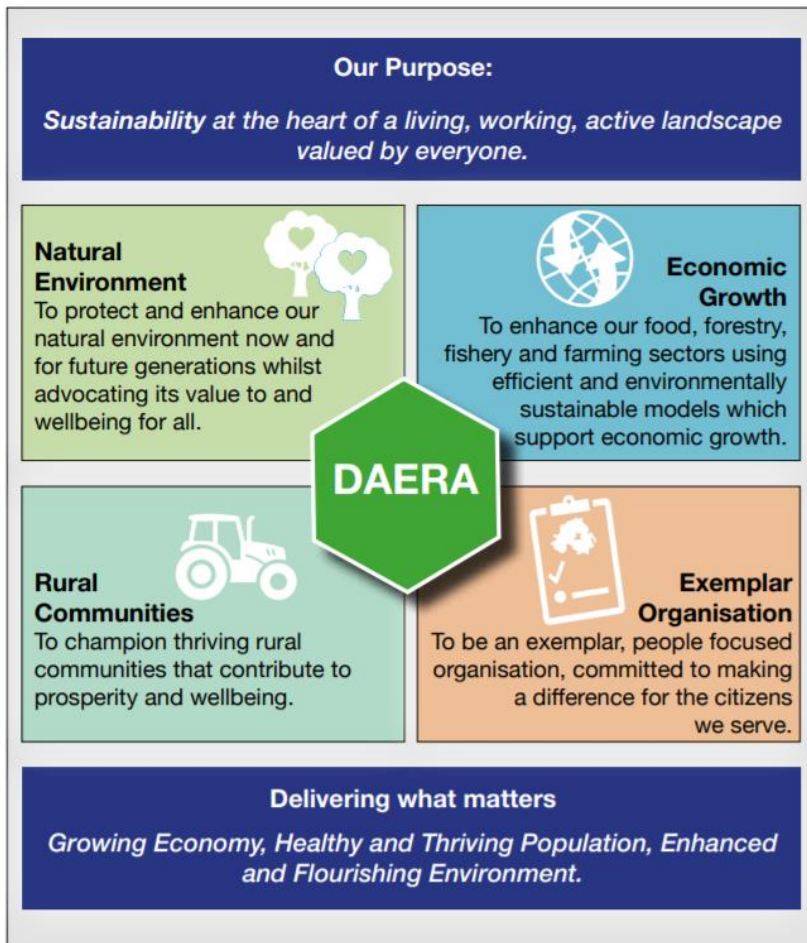
DAERA provides a business development service for farmers and growers and a veterinary service for administration of animal health and welfare. The Department's College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) delivers training and further and higher education courses in the agri-food sector. 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 in Northern Ireland.

## **DAERA VISION AND STRATEGIC GOALS**

### **Vision**

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

## DAERA PURPOSE AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



### How we operate:

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

### DAERA Top Management Group comprises:-

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

### DAERA has two Executive Agencies:

Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and the Forest Service

DAERA has one Statutory Advisory Council, namely the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside.

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

The interim Permanent Secretary of DAERA is Anthony Harbinson.

## **NORTHERN IRELAND ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

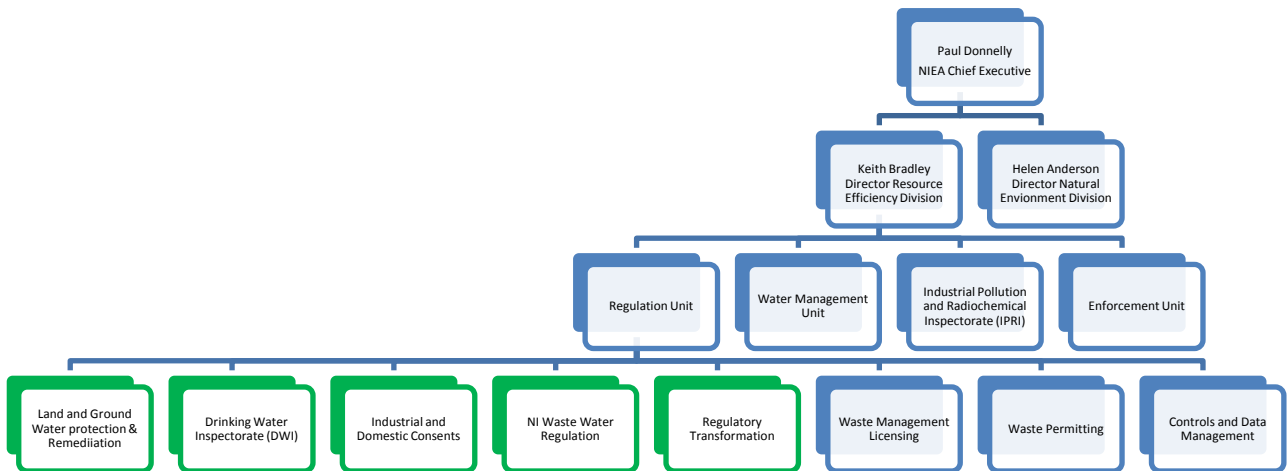
The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) is an Executive Agency within the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). The NIEA has two Environmental Divisions – Resource Efficiency Division and Natural Environment Division.

The role of NIEA is to:

- promote both public awareness of environmental issues and action to deal with them;
- regulate adverse human impacts upon the environment;
- work in partnership with others to protect the environment;
- protect public health through regulation of drinking water quality
- provide financial support to others to encourage action to protect the environment;
- manage our properties to promote public access to, and understanding of, the environment; and
- advise Government and other key sectors on environmental issues.

NIEA has over 550 staff, the greater percentage being scientific and technical staff, at its headquarter buildings in Belfast, and Lisburn and a number of regional locations.

Further information about NIEA can be obtained on the Internet at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/northern-ireland-environment-agency>



## Resource Efficiency Division

The Resource Efficiency Division is the largest Division within the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). The Division is responsible for a diverse range of activities and seeks to safeguard the quality of the environment through effective regulation of activities that have the potential to impact on air, water and land. This involves engagement with businesses and the public to provide information and advice; monitoring, recording, reporting and setting standards for compliance; issuing consents, licences, permits and authorisations and enforcing legislation.

### Regulation Unit

The Regulation Unit sits within the Resource Efficiency Division. The Unit is responsible for waste regulation, water regulation, land remediation, groundwater protection and drinking water regulation.

The Regulation Unit was established as a distinct unit in 2016 with the specific aim of acting as the central regulation hub for the Resource Efficiency Division (RED). The Unit comprises of a number of distinct business areas i.e. Waste Regulation, Water Regulation, Land remediation, Groundwater protection, Regulatory Transformation and the Drinking Water Inspectorate. The Unit is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of various regulations for the transport, keeping, treating and disposal of waste; discharge consents; remediation of contaminated land; protection of groundwater and regulation of drinking water supplies. The Unit's staff cover all parts of Northern Ireland ensuring the appropriate legislation is complied with as well as taking further regulatory and/ or enforcement action, as necessary. The Unit also includes the Regulatory Transformation Team, a project team working to transform regulatory activity and to develop strategic and innovative interventions.

## **Land and Groundwater Protection and Remediation**

The Land and Groundwater Protection and remediation i Teams within the Regulation Unit are responsible for implementing a regulatory framework for the remediation of contaminated land and groundwater and for protection of groundwater resources. The Groundwater team is responsible for monitoring regional groundwater quality and resources and reporting the outcomes under various national and international reporting requirements, including the Water Framework Directive and Nitrates Directive. Their approach promotes the application of the UK risk management framework for remediating contaminated groundwater and land. It provides advice and guidance on risk assessment and remediation to planning authorities within Councils and the Department of Infrastructure.

## **Drinking Water Inspectorate**

The Drinking Water Inspectorate is a small team within the Regulation Unit. The Inspectorate is headed up by the Chief Inspector who is designated by the Minister to act on behalf of the Department and has responsibility for protecting public health through effective drinking water regulation. The Inspectorate has responsibility for ensuring Northern Ireland Water fulfil their regulatory duty to provide safe, clean, wholesome water. They are also responsible for the monitoring and regulation of water supplied from private supplies to commercial or public buildings or to domestic premises where two or more properties are supplied.

## **Water Regulation**

Water Regulation consists of two teams who have the responsibility of implementing the regulatory framework which protects the aquatic environment. One is responsible for regulating water utility discharges and water abstraction for drinking water supply and industrial uses. The other team regulates domestic and industrial discharges. The regulatory processes include application determination, compliance assessment and enforcement action against non-compliances.

## **Regulatory Transformation**

The Regulatory Transformation Team is a small team which leads on the transformation of NIEA's approach to regulation of businesses by combining the existing complex regime, into a single streamlined framework. The vision for the programme extends beyond the impact of new regulations to secure wider business transformation through an ambitious project to make more effective use of digital and technological solutions to deliver an efficient and focussed regulatory service.



## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Senior Scientific Officer (SScO) will report to a Principal Scientific Officer (PScO).**

The posts could be in any one of the four areas:

- Land and Groundwater Remediation
- Drinking Water Inspectorate
- Water Regulation
- Regulatory Transformation

The post holder's main duties and responsibilities in the different regulatory teams include: land and groundwater remediation, groundwater protection, drinking water quality, water regulation and regulatory transformation.

### **Duties relevant to the Land and Groundwater remediation / protection**

- Manage and deliver new policies and strategies supporting groundwater protection and risk management / remediation of land and groundwater;
- Manage internal procedures for effective and consistent delivery of business objectives and targets in support of remediation and groundwater protection;
- Manage the groundwater programme to deliver the significant water management issues, programme of measures, groundwater classification, trend assessments and reporting requirements under the Water framework Directive;
- Manage and deliver the regulation of hazardous substances in groundwater in partnership with other regulatory teams. Manage assessment of non-compliance of relevant groundwater regulatory authorisations / compliance standards and take enforcement action in line with the Departmental Enforcement Policy;
- Manage and deliver advice in support of implementing a new regulatory framework for remediation of contaminated groundwater and land which supports both national and European legislation (e.g. Part 3 of the Waste & Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997, Environmental Liability Regulations 2009);
- Provision of regulatory and technical advice on the remediation of contaminated groundwater and land and/or the protection of groundwater resources to the Planning Authority in the Department of Infrastructure and Councils and to other Departments and Government Agencies within agreed timelines;

- Provide regulatory and technical advice on the risk management and/or remediation of waste sites and priority sites, including good quality technical witness evidence and a lead role in enforcement cases as required;
- Lead, manage and deliver the Northern Ireland regional groundwater monitoring network and all associated reporting requirements including, annual nitrates and pesticides reporting; and
- Lead, manage and /or contribute to relevant internal and external technical advisory groups and Task & Finish Groups.

### **Duties relevant to the Drinking Water Inspectorate**

- Ensure NI Water's risk assessments are undertaken in line with regulatory requirements and associated guidance and remedial measures are appropriate and timely in maintaining and enhancing a wholesome water supply and protecting public health;
- Manage the compliance assessment process for contraventions, water quality events and lead on enforcement where necessary, including chairing of meetings and preparing case files to ensure effective regulation to protect public health according to the Departmental Enforcement Policy;
- Technical auditing of NI Water's assets and processes including, water treatment works, distribution network, sampling and analysis facilities;
- Liaise with Northern Ireland Water and other stakeholders to influence the NI Water capital investment programme for drinking water;
- Prepare relevant guidance to support the interpretation of regulatory requirements and issue to relevant stakeholders;
- Manage the Product Approval Process for use of products in contact with drinking water in Northern Ireland;
- Manage internal procedures for effective and consistent delivery of business objectives in ensuring the implementation of drinking water legislation;
- Liaise with policy colleagues to assist the development of regulations and policies to support protection of public health in the provision of safe, clean wholesome water;

- Ensure effective management and implementation of the private water supply monitoring and risk assessment programme to meet regulatory requirements and protect public health;
- Develop and deliver training programmes for staff conducting work on the Department's behalf under a Service Level Agreement;
- Manage the delivery of the contracted service for private water supplies and chair quarterly meetings to ensure delivery to the required standards within budgetary controls;
- Manage the publication of the Drinking Water Inspectorate's Annual Report and submission of statutory returns as required; and
- Provide support to the Chief Inspector to ensure effective regulation of drinking water quality in Northern Ireland.

### **Duties relevant to Water Regulation**

- Manage internal procedures and policies for effective and consistent delivery of business objectives to implement the requirements of Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive;
- Manage the delivery of a planned site inspection and sampling programme to assess compliance with Water Regulation Authorisations and take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance detection;
- Manage the determination of water regulation authorisations ensuring applications are determined within the statutory timeframes in line with all necessary policies and procedures in place to protect the environment;
- Manage assessment of non-compliance with water regulation authorisations and take enforcement action in line with the Departmental Enforcement Policy;
- Manage the team's response to public complaints, engaging with elected representatives when required in relation to water regulation authorisations;
- Lead and oversee responses to correspondence including Freedom of Information/Environmental Information Regulation requests and other time dependent activities.
- Manage the development of appropriate tools and ICT solutions to manage applications, assess compliance and meet reporting requirements across water regulation authorisations;
- Actively engage and lead the team in the implementation of the

Regulatory Transformation Programme;

- Manage the publication the Water Utility Compliance Report and submission of statutory returns to both European Commission and DEFRA;
- Actively engage with Northern Ireland Water in relation to pre- application and application determination, ecosystem modelling, solution design, and compliance programme;
- Liaise with Northern Ireland Water and other stakeholders to influence the NI Water capital investment programme for waste water; and
- Liaise with policy colleagues to assist the development of policies to support the protection of the aquatic environment.

### **Duties relevant to Regulatory Transformation Programme (RTP)**

- Lead and manage the RTP project. Leading and chairing workshops and seminars, participating in working groups, analysing solutions and presenting options to the Project Director and Board;
- To research, analyse and review key strategic issues, prepare discussion documents, policy briefings and implementation plans and communicate information necessary to support decision making on operational changes;
- Act as liaison between policy and NIEA on development of new legislation as part of RTP, with regular meetings and updates, facilitating information exchange etc;
- Act as liaison between Digital Services Division and NIEA on development of new ICT solutions as part of RTP, with regular meetings and updates, facilitating information exchange etc;
- Provide support and oversight to Regulation Unit teams for the ICT solutions developed by Digital Services Division to deliver RTP. Participate in workshops and maintain overview of progress;
- Provide scientific and technical advice to the team and other colleagues in relation to Regulatory Transformation, the regulatory responsibilities of NIEA; and
- To liaise with other Government Departments, the Environment Agency, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, the Environment Protection Agency in the Republic of Ireland, IMPEL and other relevant bodies within and outside the UK in respect of Regulatory Transformation and related issues. Take part in relevant working groups and engagement activities.

## **General duties and responsibilities applicable across all teams**

- Lead, manage and motivate the team to deliver agreed objectives and targets as set out in the Regulation Unit's annual Business Plan;
- Manage and deliver the assessment of complex site datasets and critical evaluation of third party reports;
- Manage and deliver priority projects to time and budget. This includes preparing business cases, project specifications and work plans, review of draft documents, consultations and finalisation of quality project outputs;
- Manage and prepare good quality correspondence including responses to Ministerial correspondence and information requests within the required timescales;
- Provide good quality technical witness evidence and provide lead role in enforcement cases as required;
- Support transformation throughout the Unit and NIEA. Continually review and revise procedures for relevant work areas, including contribution to the development of suitable IT solutions to ensure efficient working practices;
- Contribute to the development of operational policy in relation to specific work areas, providing professional / technical expertise to support operational priorities consulting and involving relevant stakeholders;
- Provide operational input, technical support, guidance and in-house staff training for the team and the wider Regulation Unit. Support team members to resolve issues ensuring that decisions are made on robust technical grounds and in line with best practice within required timescales;
- Participate in national forums with other UK and European Regulators;
- Prepare and deliver presentations and papers internally to teams and senior managers and externally to Stakeholders and other Government Departments and Agencies.
- Engage and develop effective communications and working relationships and networks with a broad range of stakeholders including industry representatives and trade bodies, community groups, Councils, NIEA colleagues, Government Departments and Agencies and other Environment Agencies and other Regulators across the UK and Europe;
- Ensure that you and staff meet the requirements of Departmental Health and Safety procedures and risk assessments;
- Keep professional and technical knowledge up to date through

attendance at appropriate national fora, lectures, seminars and training courses; and

- The post holder will be required to visit establishments throughout Northern Ireland for meetings, site visits and to check compliance with legislative requirements.

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

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

There is currently one permanent, full-time post in the Regulation Unit at the Senior Scientific Officer grade in the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, within the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs.

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

### Location

Depending on business need, the post holder will be based in either

- NIEA, Klondyke Building, Cromac Avenue, Lower Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 2JA or
- NIEA, 17 Antrim Road, Tonagh, Lisburn BT28 3AL,

However at present, successful candidates may be required to work from home for a period of time due to the COVID pandemic.

Other vacancies at this grade may arise during the lifetime of this competition at various locations across the whole DAERA estate, including Ballykelly, in Northern Ireland.

### Salary

Salary will be within the range £39,748 - £42,639 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 successful candidate will normally be required to work 37 hours per week (excluding meal breaks) Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm, however they may be expected to work outside of conditioned hours as dictated by business needs.

## **Travel**

The successful candidate will be expected to travel throughout Northern Ireland if required. Travel within GB, ROI and Europe may also be required. The successful candidate must have a current driving licence and/or access to a form of transport which will enable them to meet the requirements of the post in full.

## **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.

## **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.

## **Career Development**

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

## **Conflict of Interest**

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

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



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

### **Further Information**

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may telephone Berni Corr on 028 9056 9479 or email [berni.corr@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:berni.corr@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 have, by the closing date for applications:

1a. A degree or an equivalent qualification in environmental science, hydrogeology, geology, earth sciences, hydrology, chemistry, biological sciences, environmental engineering, environmental / water management, water resource management, environmental health, or where these subjects provide a core component\*;

AND

1b. At least 3 years' experience gained within the last 8 years at a professional level\*\* in groundwater protection and/or groundwater / remediation regulation; or drinking water regulation; or water quality regulation to include:

- making informed decisions using scientific based evidence;
  - assessment of scientific information against specific criteria;
  - scientific data management and preparation of technical reports;
  - collection of data/ evidence used in investigating regulatory breaches;
- and
- managing a team to deliver against objectives in their business area.

OR

2a. A HND / HNC or an equivalent qualification in environmental science, hydrogeology, geology, earth sciences, hydrology, chemistry, biological sciences, environmental engineering, environmental / water management, water resource management, environmental health, or where these subjects provide a core component\*;

AND

2b. At least 5 years' experience gained within the last 8 years at a professional level\*\* in groundwater protection and/or groundwater / remediation regulation; or drinking water regulation; or water quality regulation to include:

- making informed decisions using scientific based evidence;
  - assessment of scientific information against specific criteria;
  - scientific data management and preparation of technical reports;
  - collection of data/ evidence used in investigating regulatory breaches;
- and
- managing a team to deliver against objectives in their business area.

**The following clarification is provided:**

\* **Core component** is defined as: At least 50% of the course covers core modules from the list in Eligibility Criteria 1a and 2a.

Candidates must provide documentary evidence of their qualifications in their application. The onus is on the applicant to clearly illustrate that their degree

meets the 'core component' criteria. All applicants should list all of the modules studied during the degree (including those with relevant content), and also briefly set out details of each of the relevant core modules detailed above and show that they add up to at least 50% of the total number of modules studied.

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

**Relevant or equivalent** qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc so that a well-informed decision can be made.

**\*\* Professional Level** is defined as being or having been engaged in a specific environmental or public health related activity as one's main occupation.

### **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 Panel will carry out an objective evaluation of the information provided by candidates in response to Eligibility Criteria 1b or 2b This will be completed on a scored criteria basis and only the highest scoring applicants will proceed to interview.

**Please note:**

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

## **ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The selection process will include a competence based interview.

### **COMPETENCE BASED 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. For all staff, it is about focusing your contribution on the activities which will meet Departmental and Programme for Government goals and deliver the greatest value.

Marks Available: 30

Pass Mark: 18

#### **2. Leading and Communicating**

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

Marks Available: 30

Pass Mark: 18

#### **3. 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

Pass Mark: 18

#### **4. 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: 30

Pass Mark: 18

## **5. 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

## **6. Managing a Quality Service**

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

Marks Available: 20

**Total Marks Available: 160**

**Overall Pass Mark: 96**

## **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 in by video conferencing from week commencing 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

## **NICS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK**

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at level 3.

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

You can apply online at [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk).

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

#### **Please note:**

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

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

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

You can also get advice or assistance from local disability employment organisations. To find out more about local disability employment organisations contact Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE), an umbrella group for individuals and organisations promoting opportunities for people with disabilities to access and maintain employment, email



info@niuse.org.uk, tel. 0044 (0)28 71 377709, text phone 0044 (0) 28 71 372077

## **GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

### **INTERVIEW PREPARATION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **The Merit Principle**

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

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

### **Disability Requirements**

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part

of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please contact HRConnect.

### **Documentation**

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

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

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

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom and satisfy the Nationality requirements for appointment to the NICS. Please note **ALL** applicants for external recruitment will be subject to a Nationality validation check.

Applicants must be either:

- (i) UK national; or
- (ii) National of a Commonwealth country; or
- (iii) National of the Republic of Ireland; or
- (iv) EEA nationals with settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme; or
- (v) Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service; or
- (vi) Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service; or
- (vii) Certain family members of the relevant EEA & Turkish nationals

For candidates applying under categories iv – vii you are required to provide the following information in the Right to Work and Nationality Requirements response box in Part 1 of your application form. Failure to provide the requested information **WILL** result in your application being rejected.

Category iv – Please provide your 'Share code' in the 'Share code' field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your ['share code'](#) here

Category v - Please provide your 'Share code' in the 'Share code' field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your '[share code](#)' here. You are also required to provide your payroll number in the nationality response box to demonstrate that you are working in the Northern Ireland Civil Service;

Category vi - Please provide your 'Share code' in the 'Share code' field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your '[share code](#)' here. Alternatively please provide confirmation in the nationality response box that you hold indefinite or limited leave to remain in the UK and that this was granted prior to 31st December 2020.

Category vii - Please provide your 'Share code' in the 'Share code' field which will be used to validate your right to work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your '[share code](#)' here. In addition, please provide evidence in the nationality response box to support your application for applying as a family member of a relevant EEA and Turkish nation. Further documentary evidence may be request from HRConnect to support this;

'Family member of the relevant EEA or Turkish nationals' means:

- (i) That national's spouse\*; or
- (ii) A direct descendant (child, grandchild etc.) of that national or his/her spouse who is under 21 years of age or is their dependent; or
- (iii) A dependent relative in the ascending line (parent, grandparent etc.) of the EEA national or his/her spouse.

\*Note: 'Spouse' does not include a party to a marriage of convenience and in the case of EEA national vocational students family members are restricted to spouses and dependent children only

Where a candidate has a right to work status which has a time limitation, ongoing checks will be in place to ensure the right to work is maintained.

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

## **Security**

### 1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For this post 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. Further information regarding policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the vetting process is available at [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk) in Recruitment Policy and Procedures manual.

Security Policy for AccessNI Disclosure Information is available at [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk) under Useful Information.

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, and as young people (people under**

**the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are currently under represented in NICS, we would particularly welcome applications from these groups.**

**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**