HR CONNECT

Human Resources for the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Northern Ireland Office

RE-SS 1.18a

Candidate Information Booklet

IRC331440

Scientific Officer (ScO)

Water Chemistry Analytical Laboratories, Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs

Completed Application Forms must be submitted to HRConnect no later than 12 noon (UK time) on Friday *11th December 2026*

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

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs

"Delivering a net zero nature positive future, supporting sustainable agriculture and thriving rural communities."

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

	Page
Foreword	**3**
Background	**4**
Key Responsibilities	**9**
Appointment/Terms and Conditions	**11**
Eligibility Criteria	**14**
Assessment Process	**18**
Guidance for Applicants	**20**

FOREWORD

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) is seeking to fill Scientific Officer roles that require specific skills and experience.

This booklet provides information on the key responsibilities of the Scientific Officer (laboratory analyst) role in the NIEA and sets out the skills and competencies required. We have also included important information on the selection process.

There are currently 7 full-time vacancies within Water Chemistry Analytical Laboratories, Water Science & Evidence Unit of the NIEA within the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). The current posts on offer will be based at Lisburn. 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.

If you believe you have the skills and experience required to undertake these posts, I encourage you to apply for this opportunity and challenge.

Thank you for your interest in these posts.

Dr Richard Crowe
Acting Chief Executive
Northern Ireland Environment Agency

BACKGROUND

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DAERA)

DAERA has responsibility for food, farming, environment, fisheries, forestry, sustainability policy and the development of the rural sector in Northern Ireland (NI). The department is structured into six groups including one Executive Agency, Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and is also accountable for one Public Corporation (Forest Service) and all groups and agencies work together to support the delivery of DAERA's strategic objectives.

Our purpose is *'Delivering a net zero nature positive future, supporting sustainable agriculture and thriving rural communities'* and, thereby, improving the lives of the people living in NI. You can read more about the work of the department in its most recent annual report and accounts on the DAERA website.

NORTHERN IRELAND ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (NIEA)

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) is an Executive Agency. The NIEA has three Divisions – Water Regulation and Enforcement Division, Waste and Industrial Pollution Regulation and Enforcement Division and Natural Environment Division.

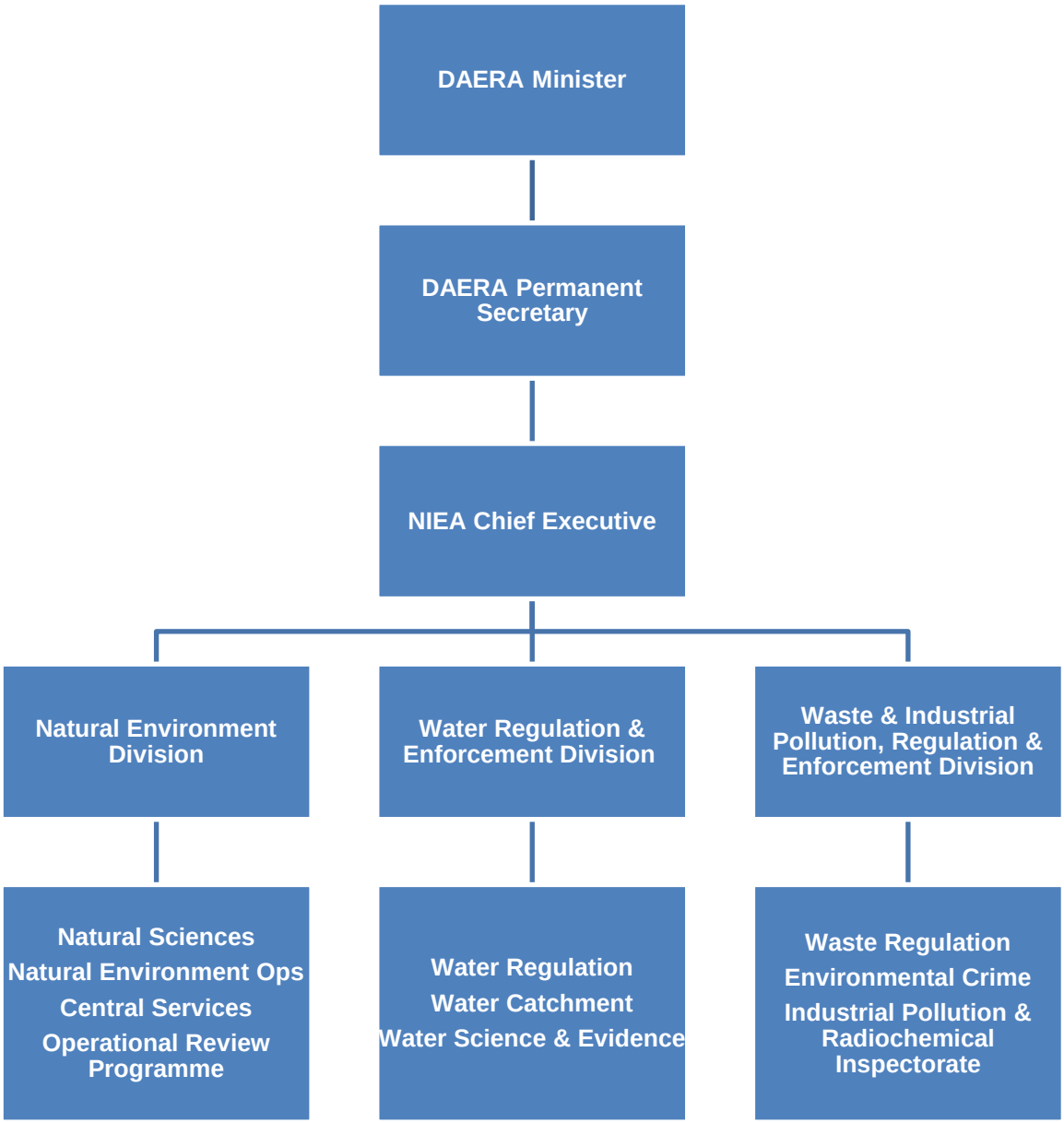
The role of NIEA is to:

- 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 600 staff, the greater percentage being scientific and technical staff, at its headquarter building in Lisburn and a number of regional locations.

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

Organisation Chart



Water Regulation and Enforcement Division (WRED)

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.

Water Catchment and Water Science & Evidence Units (WCU & WSEU)

The overall aim of these units is the protection and improvement of Northern Ireland's aquatic environment, with the responsibility to improve and protect the status of water bodies (quality and quantity) both in waterways and underground. Much of the current and future work is focussed on delivering the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, which aims to take a holistic approach to water management, as water flows through a catchment from groundwaters, through lakes and rivers towards estuaries and thence the sea.

Many of the primary powers come from the Water (NI) Order 1999, which places a duty to promote the conservation and cleanliness of the water resources of Northern Ireland.

The WCU & WSEU protects the aquatic environment through a number of activities including monitoring water quality (chemical and biological) and quantity, integrated catchment management and the development and implementation of river basin management plans. It leads on pollution prevention, pollution response and investigation, regulation of agricultural activities likely to impact on the water environment, and associated enforcement activities as well as commissioning relevant research and development.

The WCU & WSEU are required to implement the provisions of a range of water-related legislation and international agreements.

Water Chemistry Analytical Services Group

The Water Chemistry Analytical Laboratories sits within the Water Science & Evidence Unit of the NIEA and provides analytical services in the fulfilment of the Agency's obligations.

The Group's laboratories provide scientific data used by policy makers to implement environmental strategies designed to protect and improve Northern Ireland's aquatic environment.

Laboratory analysis forms part of the evidential basis used by the Agency in regulatory enforcement cases, including those relating to breaches of legislation such as the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999. Staff may, from time to time, be required to provide expert witness advice or evidence in support of prosecution proceedings.

The laboratories also deliver the aquatic monitoring and assessment of Northern Ireland's surface waters and biota to an agreed plan, as well as carrying out investigative work and analysis relating to pollution cases.

The Group works across three analytical areas; inorganic, organic and metals analysis alongside support from the LIMS and quality teams.

Inorganic Chemistry Team

The Inorganic Chemistry Team is responsible for the analysis of samples from rivers, lakes, estuaries and effluents for general pollution indicators such as Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) and suspended solids. It also performs very low-level nutrient analysis.

In recent years the team has introduced new technology to automate more routine tests and operates a number of 'state of the art' auto-analyser instruments for the analysis of nutrients.

The generation of data for pollution investigations is another important aspect of the work of the team and staff may be required to present their findings at court in prosecution cases.

Trace Metals Team

The Trace Metals team undertakes analysis of toxic metals which may be found in freshwater and marine environments.

To achieve the necessary detection limits, use is made of complex analytical methodologies, including, Ion Chromatography (IC), Inductively Coupled Plasma Optical Emission Spectrometry (ICPOES), Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICPMS) and Cold Vapour Atomic Fluorescence Spectroscopy (CVAFS).

Trace Organics and Screening Team

The Organics Team carries out monitoring for organic contaminants, such as pesticides and industrial chemicals, in a wide range of samples relating to the freshwater and marine environments.

To achieve the extremely low detection limits required by legislation, the team uses a wide range of complex analytical methodologies including gas chromatography (GC), gas chromatography/mass spectrometry (GCMS) and liquid chromatography/mass spectrometry (LCMS). The Team also uses

Accurate Mass GCMS and LCMS instrumentation for non-Target Screening of samples.

Quality Team

The Quality Team develop and maintain the Quality Management System. This is implemented across the Water Management Unit's Chemistry, Biology and Sampling groups. The Quality System delivers compliance with the BS EN ISO/IEC 17025:2017 standard, ensuring the competence, impartiality and consistent operations of the laboratory.

A high value is placed on the quality of data produced by the Water Chemistry Analytical Laboratories. External proficiency schemes are used to provide an independent assessment of analytical performance.

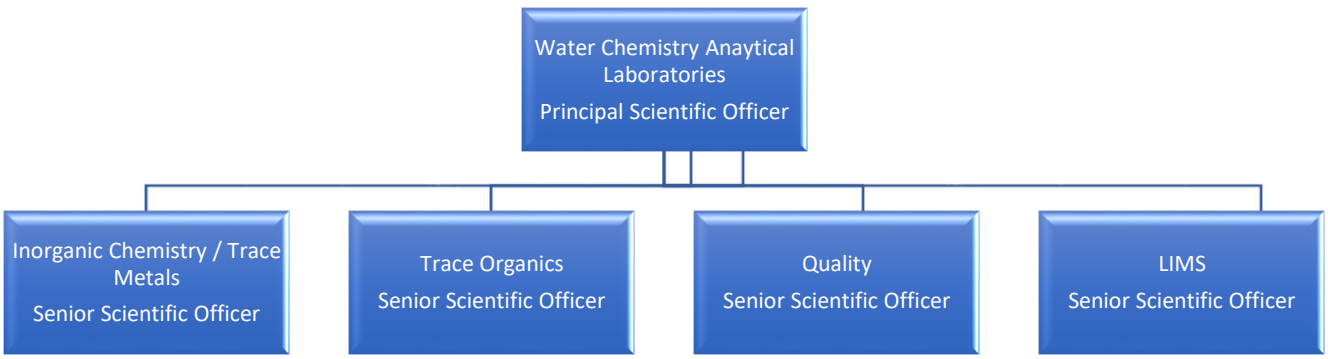
Compliance with the standard is continually assessed by a system of internal audits by trained assessors and independently by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS).

The Water Chemistry Laboratories are accredited to BS EN ISO/IEC 17025:2017 for a range of testing and calibration activities.

LIMS Team

The LIMS Team manage the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) with most analytical instrumentation being automated and PC controlled. A proportion of the equipment is interfaced with LIMS.
LIMS automates the scheduling of sampling of river monitoring networks, to pre-print bar-coded sample bottle labels, to receive incoming samples and assign tests to capture outputs from instruments and to generate monthly data reports. Reports and outputs are mostly transferred to colleagues and customers electronically.

The group is currently working closely with the ISLAND project, part of the science transformation programme working towards the roll-out of a modern LIMS system for DAERA, NIEA & AFBI to facilitate analysis, storage & sharing of scientific data and facilitate statutory reporting.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Scientific Officer will report directly to a Higher Scientific Officer (HSO) within the laboratory.

Duties Specific to Trace Metals Team

- Sample preparation and analysis for Total and Dissolved Metals in a range of matrices in line with documented analytical procedures.
- Operation of ICP-OES, ICP-MS, IC & CVAFS analytical instrumentation and routine system maintenance.
- Provision of resources for AMAP Monitoring programmes.

Duties Specific to Inorganic Chemistry Team

- Sample analysis for methods including Alkalinity, Total Hardness, Dissolved Oxygen, Ammonia, Chloride, Chemical & Biochemical Oxygen Demands, Chlorophyll-a, pH, Conductivity, Colour, Anionic Surfactants, Suspended Solids and Trace Nutrients.
- Operation of Continuous Flow and Discrete Autoanalysers, Robotic BOD Analyser, Automated pH, Conductivity, Alkalinity and Hardness Analysers, Spectrophotometers and Titrators.

Duties Specific to the Trace Organics Team

- Sample preparation and analysis for a wide range of organic substances.
- Operation/management of a wide range of GCMS and LCMS instrumentation and automated sample preparation systems.

Duties Specific to the Quality Team

- Maintenance of the ISO17025:2017 Quality Management System.
- Carry out management system and technical internal audits.
- Coordination of contract review process (AMAP).
- Coordination and review of outcomes of external proficiency Schemes and calibration schedules.
- Maintenance and review of QMS documentation and policy.
- Assistance with UKAS external Audit.

Duties Common to all Teams

- Quality assurance of analytical data – monitoring of Internal Quality Control & other Quality parameter Charts – record & assess data; QC chart review. Compliance with ISO 17025 and UKAS accreditation. Recording and investigation of non-conforming work.
- Reporting of analytical data within target turnaround times.

- Checking of analytical results and data transcription onto specified end users worksheets and using LIMS (Laboratory Information management System) to transfer results to end user teams.
- Assist with Method Development & Validation.
- Management of laboratory resources - stock Control / ordering of laboratory consumables and ensuring that laboratory equipment issues are highlighted or dealt with. Receipt of items received, compliance with procurement procedure, recording of expenditure for financial management purposes.
- Maintenance & Calibration of laboratory equipment.
- Writing of technical reports.
- Attendance at court when required.
- Participation in internal (in-house quality section) & external audits (UKAS).
- Participation in External Proficiency Scheme.
- Compliance with Health & Safety policies within the laboratory (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) & Risk Assessments).
- Supervision and training of temporary and permanent staff as required and ensuring said staff adhere to H&S policies within the laboratory.
- Liaison with end user teams and sampling field staff.
- Assist with evaluating capital equipment purchases, i.e. assessing requirements, obtaining quotes, tender evaluation.
- Undertake internal and external training required to develop and enhance skills and knowledge.
- Develop background knowledge of method analysis and directives driving the analysis.
- Assist with day to day running of the Chemistry Laboratories.
- Adherence to performance management system – including In Year Reviews and End of Year Reviews with line management.
- Flexibility required with regards to working hours as the laboratories are extremely busy in the afternoon once samples are received.
- Overtime to include weekend work.
- Travel on official duty in accordance with business needs.

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

The working environment for these posts includes laboratories. Duties will include lifting sample boxes containing samples, moving trolleys around the labs laden with samples, glassware or sample extracts and transferring analytical reagents, including bottles of acids and solvents, between labs.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

There are currently 7 permanent, full time vacancies within the Water Chemistry Analytical Laboratories, Water Regulation and Enforcement Division within NIEA.

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

These posts will be based at NIEA Headquarters, 17 Antrim Road, Lisburn, BT28 3AL.

Salary

Salary will be within the range £33,542 - £34,231 (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. You'll find further details on the Civil Service Pensions (Northern Ireland) website at 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 normal conditioned hours of work are full-time: 37 hours net Monday to Friday. Most offices work flexi-time. ***These positions are laboratory based requiring onsite attendance.***

The successful candidates may be required to participate in a rota for attendance at the laboratories at Weekends and Bank/Public Holidays which attracts the appropriate allowance.

Travel

The successful candidate will be expected to travel throughout Northern Ireland if required. Travel within GB, ROI and Europe may also be required. Postholders may be required to drive departmental vehicles therefore applicants will require a full valid driving licence which permits the licence holder to drive in Northern Ireland and /or access to a form of transport which will enable the applicant to meet the requirements of the post.

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 into 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 contact Dr Raymond Thomas on 02890 (623045) or email: Raymond.Thomas@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.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications have:

1. At least four GCE/GCSE 'O' Levels, grades A-C, in separate subjects which must include English Language, Mathematics and at least one Science subject (Chemistry, Biology, Physics) *;

AND

2. At least 2 years' practical experience working in a chemistry laboratory where the primary position of the role involves:

- Sample preparation and analysis, or
- Quality assurance of data e.g. ISO 17025 compliance;

Experience may be gained in academia (e.g., postgraduate research), voluntary or work-related fields. Experience gained working part time must be equivalent to 2 years' full-time experience.

AND

3. A full valid driving licence which permits the licence holder to drive in Northern Ireland and /or access to a form of transport which will enable the applicant to meet the requirements of the post.

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.**

You will be required to provide documentary evidence of your qualifications at interview so please ensure you have these readily available.

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 incrementally

1. A HNC/HND or (equivalent/higher qualification) in the subject of Chemistry or in a subject where the study of Chemistry is a major component**.

2. The Panel will carry out an objective evaluation of the depth and breadth of information provided by candidates in response to eligibility criterion 1.

**** 'Major component' is defined as: At least 50% of the course covers core chemistry modules such as organic chemistry, in organic chemistry, physical or analytical chemistry modules.**

Candidates must provide documentary evidence of their qualifications in their application. The onus is on the applicant to clearly illustrate that their qualification meets the 'major component' criteria. All applicants should list all of the modules studied during the qualification (including those with no chemistry 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.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

As part of our commitment to the employment of disabled people, we operate a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS). The GIS does not guarantee a job. However, its objective is to ensure disabled applicants, who meet the minimum essential eligibility criteria for the role they have applied for, are offered an interview. Further information on the GIS can be found at Information for Disabled Applicants.

If you wish to apply under the GIS, you must declare this on your application form. Shortlisting criteria will not apply to GIS applicants.

If you do not wish to apply under the GIS, but do require us to make reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process, you should provide details on your application form. We will consider all requests for reasonable adjustments for any stage of this recruitment process. Details of any disability are only used for these purposes and do not form any part of the selection process.

If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability, are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be asked to outline any reasonable 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.

Disability Requirements and Reasonable Adjustment Requests

We wish to ensure all applicants have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. If you require any form of reasonable adjustment to participate in the selection process, please note this in the box provided on your application form and include details of your disability and the specific adjustment you need. We will consider all requests for reasonable adjustments for any stage of this recruitment process.

To ensure you are fully supported in the process, you may provide relevant supporting information regarding your adjustment request – for example, an Occupational Psychologist report or a GP's medical statement.

Information to support your request should be sent to HRConnect at recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net as soon as possible following submission of your application but no later than the competition closing date (11th December 2026). Please mark your correspondence with the competition reference number IRC331440 and title it 'Supporting information for reasonable adjustment request'.

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.**
- **No additional information or evidence provided in support of your experience will be considered at any time after the closing date for applications.**
- **The NICS Competency framework can be accessed via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk.**

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The selection process will include the following stages:

1. A sift on eligibility criteria (including shortlisting if applicable)
2. A competence based interview.

ELIGIBILITY SIFT

This is an assessment of the evidence provided in your application form against the eligibility criteria. Successful candidates at sift will progress to the next stage of selection.

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the below areas with Managing a Quality Service having 30 marks and all other competencies 20 marks available.

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

1.	**Managing a Quality Service**	**Minimum Standard: 18**
2.	**Changing and Improving**	**Minimum Standard: 12**
3.	**Making Effective Decisions**	
4.	**Delivering at Pace**	
5.	**Delivering Value for Money**	

Total Marks Available: 110

Overall Pass Mark: 66

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in NIEA Lisburn at 17 Antrim Road, Lisburn, Antrim during the months of January, February and March 2027.

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.

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**.**

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-and-benefits-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.

Artificial Intelligence can be a useful tool to support your application, however, all examples and statements provided must be truthful, factually accurate and taken directly from your own experience. Where plagiarism has been identified (presenting the ideas and experiences of others, or generated by artificial intelligence, as your own) applications may be withdrawn. Please see our candidate guidance, via the link below for more information on appropriate and inappropriate use.

Artificial Intelligence & Recruitment Guidance

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.

NICSHR 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.

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 Recruitment Team is informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances. It is important that HRConnect Recruitment Team has up to date contact details for you. If your email address changes then it is your responsibility to inform the Recruitment Team at HRConnect.

(Note for existing NICS staff – An update to your employee records will not result in your applicant profile being updated. You must still inform HRConnect Recruitment Team of a change in 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.

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 the Republic of Ireland; or

(iii) National of a Commonwealth country; or

(iv) Nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein with settled or pre-settled status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS); or

(v) Nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

(vi) Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service or who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service; or

(vii) Certain family members of the relevant EU, EEA, Swiss & Turkish nationals
ALL candidates are required to state their nationality and the category they are applying under in the Right to Work and Nationality Requirements response box in Part 1 of your application form.

For candidates applying under categories iii – vii you are required to provide the confirmation of Right to Work and Nationality Requirements, including your ‘Share code’ in the response box in Part 1 of your application form.

You should provide details of 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.

Failure to provide the requested information **WILL** result in your application being rejected.

EU Settlement Scheme EU, other EEA, Swiss citizens and family members provides guidance on EUSS and certain family members.

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 in the Nationality Guidance section of the NICS Recruitment website.

Security

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For these 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 Government baseline personnel security standard - GOV.UK (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 in Recruitment Policy and Procedures manual.

Security Policy for AccessNI Disclosure Information is available at www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk under Useful Information.

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via 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.

Applications from Protestants, females, young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are particularly welcomed for this post.

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