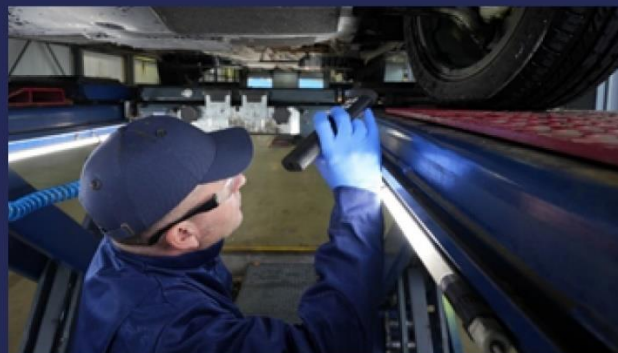
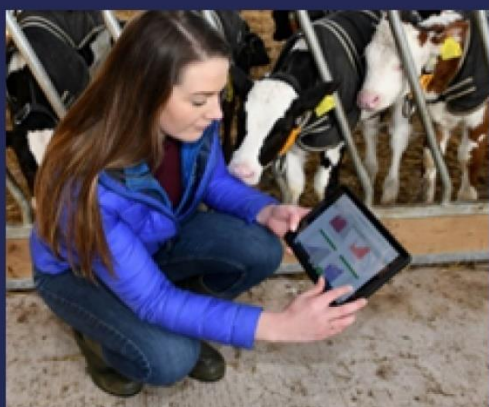


Recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service

Annual Report 2023



CONTENTS

SECTION	PAGE
ONE Introduction	3
TWO Executive summary	5
THREE Key developments, new initiatives, and improvements to services in 2023	7
FOUR Recruitment activity	11
FIVE Exceptions to the Merit Principle	24
SIX Recruitment related assurances	27
SEVEN Audits	30
EIGHT Promotion of careers in the Northern Ireland Civil Service	33
NINE Diversity and Inclusion	40
TEN Conclusion	48
Appendix 1 – Recruitment competitions closed to activity during 2023	49
Appendix 2 – Summary of eligible application and updated appointment figures	53
Appendix 3 – Extensions to Merit Lists 2023	56

ONE INTRODUCTION

This report is published by People and Organisational Development ('People and OD function') on behalf of all Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) departments and agencies. The report details recruitment activity across NICS departments and agencies during the period 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023.

In its commitment to build the capacity and capability of the NICS, the People and OD function sets strategic direction, policy and the provision of guidance and support in areas including strategic workforce planning, NICS workforce model, skills and career pathways, talent management, Senior Civil Service (SCS) resourcing, diversity and inclusion and industrial relations. NICS HR functions focus on delivering a wide range of HR services to the government departments.

Recruitment to the NICS is regulated by the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland ('Commissioners'). Under the Civil Service Commissioners (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 ('the 1999 Order'), Commissioners have a statutory duty to ensure that appointments to the NICS are made on merit, on the basis of fair and open competition known as the 'Merit Principle'.

Commissioners have an important role in seeking to ensure that recruitment decisions are free from personal and political patronage or partiality. Commissioners are independent of Government and the NICS.

This report is published in compliance with Article 4(5) of the 1999 Order which provides that Commissioners may require the publication of information, as specified by them, relating to recruitment and to the use of permitted exceptions to the Merit Principle.

The NICS is committed to the principle of selection for appointment on merit, in fair and open competition and takes proactive measures to ensure equality of opportunity to all. Recruitment, selection and appointment activities are managed in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland Recruitment Code ('Recruitment Code') and in line with best practice set out in the Code of Practice of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI).

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) produces and publishes annual NICS recruitment statistics. Its report “Analysis of NICS Recruitment Competitions 2023” (‘the NISRA Report’) summarises applications for, and appointments from, NICS recruitment competitions across various equality categories. Further analysis is presented in the NISRA Report relating to the various stages of recruitment competitions between application and appointment. The report covers competitions which closed to further activity during the period 01 January 2023 and 31 December 2023. The NISRA Report is published on NISRA’s website and can be accessed through the following link: [Analysis of NICS Recruitment Competitions 2023 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/analysis-of-nics-recruitment-competitions-2023).

Previous recruitment Annual Reports can be found here: [Annual Reports \(nigov.net\)](https://nigov.net).

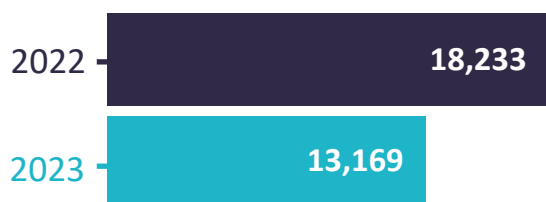
TWO EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2023 NICSHR continued to manage recruitment in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland Recruitment Code.

Following an internal restructuring of NICSHR functions, responsibility for managing all recruitment competitions i.e. Senior Civil Service (SCS) competitions and all competitions below SCS level, now sits with NICSHR.

The level of recruitment activity to the NICS decreased in 2023 with 112 competitions openly advertised compared to 149 in 2022, a reduction of 24%. The number of applications received for NICS competitions in 2023 was also significantly less than in 2022, 13,169 and 18,233 respectively, a reduction of 28%. There are a number of factors that may be attributed to this decrease including, departmental budgetary constraints which led to merit lists for high volume competitions being extended as opposed to launching new competitions.

No. of Applications



No. of Competitions



No. of External Competition Merit List Extension

Throughout 2023, work continued to promote the broad range of career opportunities available within the NICS, to encourage applications from the widest applicant pool using a mix of advertising, communications, engagement and outreach activity.

Following the success of the Jobstart scheme pilot, which launched in 2022, during 2023 the NICS commenced work on the development of the next phase of the scheme. Phase two will provide nine-month job placements for young people aged 16-24 who are at risk of long-term unemployment and unlike the pilot, which restricted job opportunities to within the Department for Communities, phase two will provide opportunities across the majority of NICS departments. It is anticipated that the scheme will launch early 2024.

THREE

KEY DEVELOPMENTS, NEW INITIATIVES AND IMPROVEMENTS TO SERVICES IN 2023



Review of recruitment policy and development of new initiatives

During 2023 the NICS and Commissioners continued to work in partnership, through the Recruitment and Selection Development Group, to reform our approach to recruitment in the NICS including the review of associated recruitment policies and the development of new initiatives.

As part of the NICS People Strategy 2018-23, People and OD function has progressed the development of an Apprenticeship policy to provide a policy framework and guidance to support the development of apprenticeships in the NICS. It is hoped that the policy can be finalised with a view to implementation during 2024/25.

A review of recruitment advertising in the NICS commenced in 2023. A public consultation launched in August 2023 to seek the views of the public on the policy proposal to allow the NICS greater flexibility on its choice and use of advertising channels in recruitment to maximise advertising reach and deliver better value for money. The consultation closed in October 2023. Responses from the consultation are being considered and publication of the consultation report will follow in 2024.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

As part of our commitment to the employment of disabled people, the NICS introduced a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) in January 2022 for use in external competitions, where appropriate. It does not guarantee a job, but it is intended to ensure a guaranteed number of disabled applicants, who meet the minimum essential eligibility criteria for the role they have applied for, are offered an interview.

An evaluation of the GIS for external competitions which closed to applications during 2022 has been prepared using data provided by NISRA. Initial findings indicate that the GIS operated in 96 out of 141 external competitions closed to applications during 2022, with 955 out of 15,122 (6.3%) applicants applying under GIS.

The GIS will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis.

Ring-Fencing Scheme

As part of our Diversity Action Plan the NICS committed to introducing a Ring-Fencing Scheme (RFS) for disabled applicants. Ring fencing guarantees an offer of appointment to a minimum number of disabled applicants who have demonstrated, through the relevant selection process, that they meet the required standard for appointment. Work to develop a RFS draft policy is advancing and engagement on operational processes to support implementation has commenced with a view to implementing the new RFS policy during 2024/25.

Civil Service Skills Academy pilot

A pilot Civil Service Skills Academy, developed in collaboration with Department for Economy (DfE) and The Executive Office (TEO), launched in July 2022. Modelled on DfE's Assured Skills programme, the pilot employability initiative was aimed at people with Level 5 or higher qualifications, who were unemployed, underemployed or seeking to retrain. The pilot offered pre-recruitment training to 80 participants through a Skills Academy, delivered by Belfast Met, which, if successfully completed, guaranteed an interview for a permanent post in the NICS at Staff Officer (SO) or Deputy Principal (DP) grade (recruitment stage).

Eighty applicants were selected to take part in the Skills Academy (40 for SO training and 40 for DP training). Training cohorts were offered on both a part-time and full-time basis to support inclusion. Participants received training across areas such as policy development, governance and finance, and programme/project management.

The pre-recruitment Skills Academy training started in August 2022 and was completed by early December 2022. Recruitment interviews were held as each training cohort completed, with appointments being made from late October 2022.

From 80 Academy places available:

- 79 participants passed the training course;

- 76 participants applied for SO or DP posts;
- 66 offers of employment were made;
- 35 participants (18 SO and 17 DP) took up post in 2022; and
- 29 participants (14 SO and 15 DP) took up post in 2023.

Open Data NI

During 2023, NICS continued to publish data on the Open Data NI portal (opendatani.gov.uk) following the completion of each stage of the selection process of NICS volume recruitment competitions. The data published includes the breakdown of applicants at each stage of the competition under the following headings:

- gender;
- community background;
- age;
- declared disability;
- ethnic background;
- sexual orientation; and
- NICS employment history.

FOUR RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY



Recruitment activity

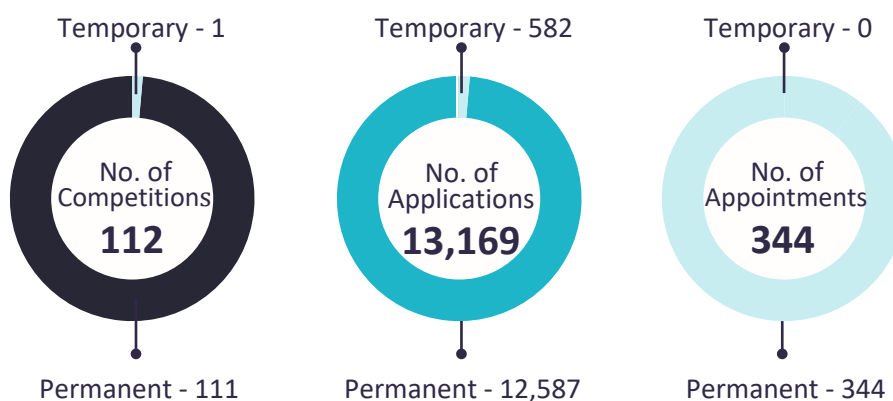
During the reporting period all recruitment competitions for NICS departments were managed by HRConnect. A list of competitions that closed for applications during 2023 can be found at **Appendix 1**.

Over the period 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 a total of 112 recruitment competitions were advertised attracting a total of 13,169 valid applications.

The table below shows the breakdown of these competitions including applications received and appointments made. The figures included in the table have been provided by NISRA and NICSHR.

Type of Competition	Permanent		Temporary	
	SCS ¹	Below SCS ¹	All Grades	Total
No. of competitions	11	100	1	112
No. of applications	239	12,348	582	13,169
No. of appointments	8	336	0	344

¹ SCS – Senior Civil Service



For comparison purposes, 23 internal competitions (promotions and trawls) were run during the same period. The table below shows details of internal competitions and appointments.

Type of Competition	Internal SCS ¹	Internal Below SCS ¹	Total
No. of competitions	1	22	23
No. of appointments	0	42	42

¹ SCS – Senior Civil Service

Senior Civil Service Competitions

The approach to SCS recruitment competitions throughout 2023 continued to demonstrate our commitment to attracting the widest applicant pool.

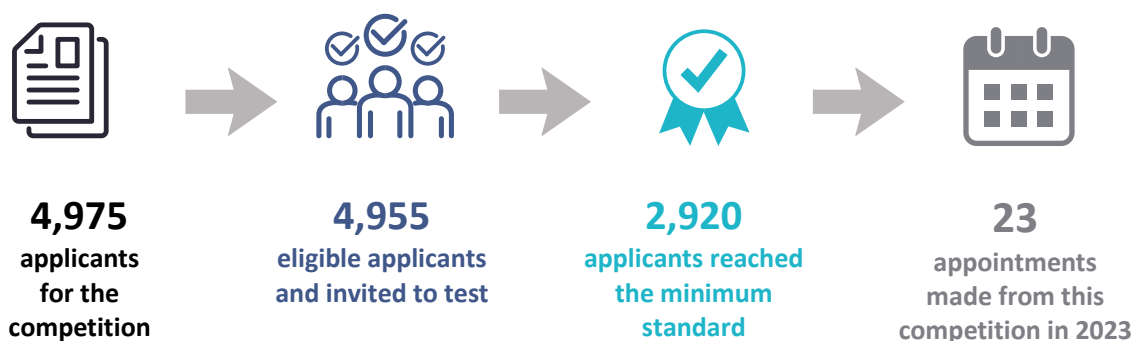
A total of 11 SCS competitions were delivered in 2023, with eight appointments made. In accordance with Article 6 of the 1999 Order, all SCS appointments were approved by Commissioners, who in addition to exercising their authorisation and approval function at all stages of the competitions, chaired the selection panel of each competition.

2022 Staff Officer and Deputy Principal competitions

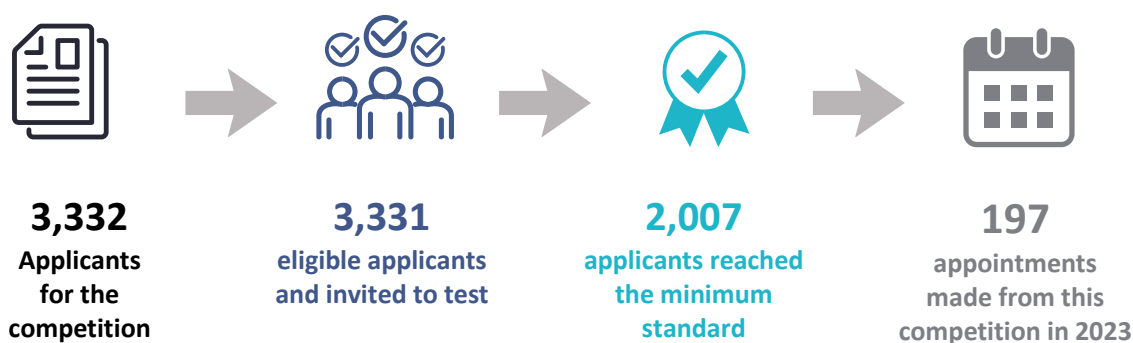
The selection process for these competitions consisted of online assessment tests, an online presentation and interview. Both competitions attracted a high volume of applicants.

In 2023, 197 appointments were made from the Deputy Principal (DP) competition and 23 appointments made from the Staff Officer (SO) competition.

Appointments from both competitions will continue to be made during 2024.

STAFF OFFICER COMPETITION

An analysis of applicants, for each stage of the SO recruitment and selection process can be found on Open Data NI at [\(IRC275969 - Staff Officer\)](#).

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL COMPETITION

An analysis of applicants, for each stage of the DP recruitment and selection process can be found on Open Data NI at [\(IRC277837 - Deputy Principal\)](#).

Executive Officers

The Executive Officer Grade 2 (EO2) and Executive Officer Grade 1 (EO1) competitions, which both launched in 2021, attracted a high volume of applicants (over 11,000 applications were received for each competition).

In 2023, 173 appointments were made from the EO1 competition, and 95 appointments made from the EO2 competition.

Appointments from both competitions will continue to be made during 2024.

An analysis of applicants for each stage of the recruitment and selection process can be found on Open Data NI, for EO2 at ([IRC265817 - Executive Officer 2](#)) and EO1 at ([IRC265807 - Executive Officer 1](#)).

Administrative Officers

The Administrative Officer (AO) competition launched in December 2019 and vacancies continued to be filled from this competition merit list, with 232 appointments made in 2023.

An analysis of applicants for each stage of the recruitment and selection process can be found on Open Data NI at ([IRC240709 - Administrative Officer](#)).

2023/24 NICS Student Placement competition

A competition to fill approximately 150 student placements for a period of up to 51 weeks across a number of NICS departments launched in October 2023. These placements will provide excellent opportunities for students to gain valuable experience with the NICS, develop skills and gain practical experience in a professional working environment.

Twenty-two categories of placement were on offer and candidates were invited to select a maximum of two placement categories. The competition attracted 587 applicants and the assessment process for this competition will involve candidates undertaking an online interview.

Graduate Management Programme

The NICS Graduate Management Programme (GMP) was developed by People and OD function and launched in September 2022 attracting 2,916 applications for 36 places. This four-year accelerated leadership development programme was aimed at graduates who have the ability and potential to become senior leaders.

Candidates undertook an intensive selection process which included a series of online tests, an assessment day consisting of a written exercise, a group activity,

a presentation, and an interview. The 100 applicants with the highest scores in the online tests were invited to the assessment centre.

Thirty-six successful recruits were placed in various departments across the NICS between February and April 2023.

Successful recruits enter the programme at Staff Officer grade and undertake a structured programme of six month and twelve-month placements to gain a breadth and depth of experience and skills across a range of diverse and challenging roles which will develop leadership potential. During the final year of the programme, participants will be offered the opportunity to be assessed for suitability for Grade 7 posts.

Northern Ireland Prison Service competitions

During 2023 the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) appointed successful applicants from competitions that commenced in previous years and launched four new volume recruitment competitions for four of its business-critical roles: Custody Prison Officer (CPO); Prisoner Custody Officer (PCO) 40 Hour Driver/Escort; Prisoner Custody Officer (PCO) 30 Hour (Escort); and Night Custody Officer (NCO).

Custody Prison Officer

Further appointments from the 2021 and 2022 CPO recruitment competitions were made throughout 2023. At 31 December 2023, 18 appointments were made from the 2021 CPO competition and 69 appointments from the August 2022 CPO competition. Appointments from these competitions will continue to be made during 2024.

To maintain supply at this grade, a new CPO external recruitment competition was launched in May 2023. In addition to the situational judgement test, which was first introduced for the 2021 CPO competition, candidates were invited to sit two online assessment tests.

In respect of the May 2023 CPO recruitment competition there were:

- a total of 661 applicants;

- 271 of these applicants completed the three online tests; and
- 184 of those reached minimum standard at test stage.

No interviews were conducted for this competition and offers, which were subject to satisfactory completion of pre-appointment checks, were made to the 184 candidates in test score merit order. Seventy-three appointments were made from this competition during 2023.

Night Custody Officer

During 2023 one final appointment was made from the 2020 NCO competition, while 22 appointments were made from the 2022 NCO competition. Merit list supply for both competitions have now been exhausted.

To maintain NCO supply at this grade a new external recruitment competition was launched in August 2023.

In respect of the August 2023 NCO recruitment competition there were:

- a total of 327 applicants;
- 85 of these applicants completed the two online tests;
- 59 of those reached minimum standard at test stage; and
- 34 candidates passed the interview.

No appointments were made during 2023 as pre-appointment checks were ongoing for all 34 candidates who passed the interview.

Prisoner Custody Officer 40 Hour Driver/Escort

One final appointment was made from the 2020 competition during 2023 which exhausted merit list supply.

To maintain supply at this grade a new PCO Driver/Escort external recruitment competition was launched in June 2023. Eligible candidates were required to

hold a D1 licence, UK driving licence with no more than 3 penalty points and not been disqualified from driving in the previous 4 years. All candidates who passed the driving licence sift were invited to sit two online tests to compete to proceed to interview stage.

In respect of the June 2023 PCO Driver/Escort recruitment competition there were:

- a total of 258 applicants;
- 152 applicants passed the eligibility sift;
- 90 of these applicants completed the two online tests;
- 70 of those reached minimum standard at test stage; and
- 36 applicants passed the interview.

No appointments were made during 2023 as pre-appointment checks were ongoing for all 36 candidates who passed the interview.

Prisoner Custody Officer 30 Hour Escort (Court based)

To maintain supply at this grade, a new PCO Escort (30 Hour) external recruitment competition was launched in October 2023. Eligible candidates were required to hold a UK driving licence with no more than 3 penalty points and not been disqualified from driving in the previous 4 years. All candidates who passed the driving licence sift were invited to sit two online tests to compete to proceed to interview stage.

In respect of the October 2023 PCO Escort (30 Hour) recruitment competition there were:

- a total of 133 applicants;
- 125 applicants passed the eligibility sift;
- 39 of these applicants completed the two online tests; and

- 29 of those reached minimum standard at test stage.

No appointments were made during 2023 as all 29 candidates who passed the test were invited to interviews scheduled to take place during early 2024.

Analysis of professional and specialist recruitment

The NICS continues to meet its statutory obligations under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, which includes submission of an annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return and a tri-annual Article 55 Review to the Equality Commission for NI (ECNI), both of which assess the composition of the NICS workforce and its applicants and appointees.

In addition, equality monitoring is undertaken on a quarterly basis for competitions which closed to further activity (i.e. no further appointments made) in the preceding quarter and includes those for professional and specialist roles. Monitoring is undertaken at three key stages of the selection process (application; invited to interview; and successful at interview) to determine if equality groups are fairly represented.

The analysis of the applicant pool composition spans a range of equality categories including age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation etc, across the three stages of the selection process. It includes a comparison of the equality composition (gender and community background) of the applicant pool against the potential applicant pool (i.e. relevant comparator in the NI economically active population from 2011 Census data as 2021 data is currently not available); assesses how applicants learned about the post; and details the lifespan of the competition and any outreach activity undertaken.

Analysis of the competitions which closed to appointments in 2023 (136 competitions) is complete. The findings from the individual competition analysis and from other equality monitoring undertaken (e.g. the latest NICS Workforce Review) will inform a programme of targeted outreach activity to address any areas of under-representation in the NICS workforce and applicant pools.

Through action taken to date, progress has been made in diversifying the NICS workforce composition- workforce data at 01 January 2023 indicates that:

- the historic trend of under-representation of women in senior leadership roles is reversing - 42.8% of Senior Civil Servants were female in comparison to 11.3% in 2000;
- the number of civil servants declaring a disability had risen to 5.7% from 4.0% in 2003;
- the number of minority ethnic colleagues had risen to 0.5% from 0.3% in 2014; and
- the number of colleagues who identify as LGBTQ+ had risen to 5.9% from 3.3% in 2019.

Equality data is missing for staff in the areas of disability, sexual orientation and ethnicity therefore the figures above are likely to be higher. Actions have been and will continue to be taken to encourage staff to update their equality data during 2024.

Summary of applications received and updated appointment figures

Appendix 2 of this report contains updated data tables for 2023 and internal competition data for 2021, 2022 and 2023. These are extracts from the NISRA report. For ease of comparison:

- table 1 shows a summary of eligible applications by equality group received for competitions which closed to further activity during 2023;
- table 2 provides a summary of eligible applicants by equality group who were invited to interview, passed interview and appointed for competitions which closed to further activity during 2023; and
- table 3 gives a summary of competition and appointment figures for internal competitions (promotions and trawls only) for 2021, 2022 and 2023 for comparison purposes.

While these tables are useful in that they give an overall view of the application and appointment rates by equality group, the figures contained within may be heavily influenced by the type of competition advertised within the reporting period. For example, some competitions historically attract more applications from one equality group than another e.g. more females than males or

Protestants than Catholics or vice versa. All competitions are now analysed at the close of the competition to identify trends at each stage of a competition. This analysis informs future competition plans.

Recruitment related complaints

HRConnect received 48 complaints relating to external competitions during 2023. Complaints allocated by competition lead department are shown below.

Department	Number of Complaints 2023
Department of Finance (DoF)	39*
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)	2
Department of Education (DE)	0
Department for Communities (DfC)	2
Department for the Economy (DfE)	0
Department for Infrastructure (DfI)	1
Department of Justice (DoJ)	3
The Executive Office (TEO)	0
Department of Health (DoH)	0
Public Prosecution Service (PPS)	1
TOTAL	48

*This figure includes complaints for corporate NICS wide competitions

During 2023 appointments continued to be made from the Executive Officer competitions which launched during 2021, the DP and SO competitions which launched during 2022 and 2019, and the AO competition which launched in 2019. Twenty-five complaints were received from applicants for these competitions.

A significant number of the complaints received related to decisions taken by panels at sift or interview. Other complaints received related to issues such as preplacement checks and job offer. Complaints are managed in accordance with

the complaints procedure for externally advertised competitions. Lessons learned from complaint investigations are, as appropriate, shared with our service provider, HR Connect and/or the Resourcing team in NICSHR and the People and OD function.

Extension to Merit Lists

Merit lists from external competitions are normally valid for 12 months, and up to two years for an internal competition. Any extension beyond these timeframes requires a case to be made by the department and approval given by NICSHR.

Details of approved merit list extensions, including the cogent and practical reasons for extending each list during 2023 are provided in **Appendix 3**.

Agency workers in the NICS

Temporary recruitment agency workers are used to fill vacancies required for urgent business needs, for example to temporarily fill vacant posts until staff are recruited permanently, cover maternity leave and long-term sickness absence.

The number of agency workers temporarily assigned to the NICS increased by approximately 23% from the previous year i.e. 3,662 in 2023 compared to 2,982 in 2022. Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), who absorb the cost of agency workers for work carried out on their behalf, account for approximately 39% of all agency workers in the NICS.

The increased use of agency workers in recent years is due to a number of factors including: a temporary pause on the recruitment of permanent staff; to deliver work carried out on behalf of the DWP within agreed targets; and continuing temporary pressures arising from EU Exit and Covid.

Over 100 NICS recruitment competitions are currently underway, to assist with future reduction in the reliance on recruitment agency workers.

The following table provides a breakdown of all recruitment agency workers temporarily assigned to the NICS and includes a separate DWP analysis. All figures are as of 31 December 2023.

**NICS Recruitment Agency Workers (headcount) at 31 December 2023
split by:**

- Full Time (FTE 1.0) / Part Time (FTE <1.0); and
- NICS/DWP funding.

NICS/DWP Funding	Full Time	Part Time	Grand Total
NICS	2,198	36	2,234
DWP	1,426	2	1,428
Total	3,624	38	3,662

FIVE

EXCEPTIONS TO THE MERIT PRINCIPLE



Exceptions to Merit Principle

Regulation 3 of the Commissioners' General Regulations 2007 sets out the circumstances in which the principle of selection on merit on the basis of fair and open competition shall not apply.

The purpose of exceptions is to provide flexibility where it can be justified to meet the business needs of the NICS. Commissioners monitor and scrutinise any request to make an appointment by way of exception to merit in order to be satisfied that it is not reasonably practicable for the appointment to be made in line with the Merit Principle.

Most of the appointments made by exception to merit during 2023 were under Regulation 3 (e) - appointment under Government programmes or initiatives. Twenty-nine participants were appointed through the pilot Civil Service Skills Academy.

All appointments made by departments under Regulation 3 during the reporting period can be found in the following table:

Appointments made by Exception to Merit – 1 January to 31 December 2023		
Reg 3 -	Categories of exception to appointment on merit	
(a)	Secondment Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Department for the Economy (DfE) Department of Health (DoH) Department of Justice (DoJ) The Executive Office (TEO) Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Department of Finance (DoF) Department for Communities (DfC)	2 1 7 0 2 0 2 1
(b)	Transfer from another Civil Service of the Crown TEO	1
(c)	Transfer of persons employed on functions being transferred	0

(d)	Exceptional needs of the NICS DoH	1
(e)	Selected for an appointment under Government programmes or initiatives Department for the Economy (DfE) The Executive Office (TEO)	14 15
(f)	Reinstatement	0
TOTAL		46

SIX

RECRUITMENT RELATED ASSURANCES



Formal procedures are in place to ensure that recruitment to the NICS is in accordance with the four principles set out in the Recruitment Code. Policies and procedures are subject to internal monitoring and are reviewed regularly, taking account of good practice and any changes in legislation.

For the period 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023, the framework in place to provide recruitment assurances to Commissioners included:

- a. a review of four external competitions** which identified two areas of non-compliance with the recruitment policy relating to the HRConnect Resourcing Service Customer Survey, and declaration of any real or perceived conflict of interests during the competition planning stage. Recommendations to address these issues will be progressed by NICSHR during 2024;
- b. real time monitoring of exceptional appointments and extensions to merit lists is in place.** One area of non-compliance was noted which related to the existing process for updating approved extension to merit list dates on HRConnect. NICSHR is considering options to address this issue;
- c. assurance statements signed by HRConnect and competition leads when running an external competition have been provided.** HRConnect has confirmed that assurance statements have been processed in accordance with procedure by HRConnect representatives and NICS competition leads for all external competitions in the 2023 calendar year;
- d. annual assurances from Grade 7s within the NICSHR Resourcing team and the People and OD function for SCS have been completed.** One area of non-compliance was noted which related to the recording of appointments made under Regulation 3 Exception to Merit Principle on the HR Connect system. This information is recorded and held by NICSHR;
- e. annual confirmation has been received from each Permanent Secretary / Accounting Officer that all appointments to their department have been managed by NICSHR** to provide assurance that appointments to NICS departments have been made by NICSHR in line with NICS policy and procedures;

- f. annual assurance from the People and OD function has been completed** to provide an equality analysis of the 136 competitions closed to appointments in 2023. The analysis included a comparison between the actual applicant pool and the relevant comparator in the Northern Ireland economically active population (i.e. potential applicant pool) for each competition across a range of equality categories. Findings will be used by the NICSHR Resourcing team and the People and OD function for consideration when designing and planning future competitions; and
- g. a suite of evidence has been collated by the People and OD function and provided to the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Finance (DoF)**, who has written to the Chair of the Commissioners confirming that all appointments during the reporting period have been made in line with NICS recruitment policy and procedures and in accordance with the Recruitment Code.

SEVEN AUDITS



NICS Commissioners NI Audits

Commissioners have a duty to conduct independent audits of NICS recruitment policies, procedures and practices to be assured that these are operating in line with the requirements and principles of the [Recruitment Code](#).

This audit activity is in addition to the assurance given by the DoF Permanent Secretary following consideration of the suite of evidence provided by the People and OD function, NICS HR, HRConnect and departmental Permanent Secretaries.

The following paragraphs summarise the reviews that have taken place during 2023. The NICS remains committed to positive and regular engagement with the Commissioners on the topics included in their Audit and Review Plan.

The 2023/24 Commissioners audit plan covered two aspects of recruitment for audit:

- audit of nine competitions below SCS (one from each department); and
- a compliance of Article 6 approval process for two SCS competitions.

Audit of nine competitions below SCS

The purpose of this audit was to examine the application of the Recruitment Code to ensure that the selection process used in all nine competitions and the manner in which they were deployed in practice were consistent with upholding the Merit Principle. The majority of areas reviewed evidenced compliance with the Recruitment Code, however, the Commissioners made four recommendations to improve processes. All four recommendations are expected to be fully implemented during 2024 through work currently being undertaken by a cross-functional Task and Finish Group to review NICS Recruitment and Selection training.

Compliance audits of Article 6 approval process

Article 6 of the 1999 Order states that appointments to the SCS cannot be made without the written approval of Commissioners. In order to comply with Article 6, Commissioners chair all SCS open competitions, with each competition subject to their Article 6 approval process.

The Article 6 approval process covers four approval stages during an SCS competition and a final panel chair statement. The purpose of this audit is to examine a number of competitions to determine whether or not the assurances provided to the Commissioners at each stage of the Article 6 process are in order.

Commissioners carried out two audits of the Article 6 Approval Process during 2023. Both audits found evidence that the assurances were in order and that the Article 6 approval process was therefore operating in accordance with Commissioners' requirements.

EIGHT

PROMOTION OF CAREERS IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE



Promoting careers in the NICS - advertising, marketing and outreach activities

Throughout 2023 work continued to promote the range of career opportunities available in the NICS and encourage the widest applicant pool by using a mix of advertising, communications and outreach activity.

Advertising, marketing and communications

Advertising campaigns employing a mix of traditional, digital, social and outdoor channels were developed to support NICS recruitment competitions such as the DfC Administrative Officer (Alternative Working Pattern) competition, NICS Student Placement programmes, NI Prison Service recruitment campaigns and Senior Civil Service Permanent Secretary roles during 2023.

Advertising channels included print, social media (e.g. Facebook and Instagram) and radio advertising (Spotify, radio and podcasts). The Head of the NICS, Jayne Brady, featured in a video for the Senior Civil Service Permanent Secretary roles, highlighting the work of the NICS and the importance of these roles in making a positive difference to the lives of the people it serves.

Outreach and engagement

Throughout 2023 there was continued engagement with the education sector and participation in events with other employers to promote the diversity and inclusion agenda, as well as events to highlight to prospective applicants the many benefits of working in the NICS and showcase the work it does:

- outreach sessions with the disability and minority ethnic sectors in conjunction with Northern Ireland Union for Supported Employment and TEO's Racial Equality Unit to promote the Administrative Officer recruitment competition;
- participation in Belfast Pride, Black History Expo and Belfast Mela to promote the NICS as an inclusive employer;

- participation in the Chief Executive Forum’s “Women in Leadership” conference; the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) NI Annual Conference and Healthcare People Management Association (HMPA) Conference to promote the diversity and inclusion agenda to other employers and professionals;
- delivering an event with young female students promoting female civil servants working in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) roles to mark International Day of Women and Girls in Science; and
- participation in a range of careers fairs and activities with local universities including Queens University Belfast (QUB), Ulster University (UU) and The Open University (OU).

Queen’s University Belfast Internship Programme 2022/23

School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics

The People and OD function continued to work with QUB to facilitate work experience opportunities for undergraduate students from the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics within NICS departments. The aim is to provide a learning environment (a hybrid of workplace-based and remote working) that enables students to apply and develop the knowledge and skills acquired in their first years of university and to help prepare them for further study and/or career.

The internship module enables final year students to spend three days per week, for 12 weeks, at one of several participating public institutions to engage in workplace-based learning. The scheme also includes a placement module option with less commitment required, with students spending one-and-a-half days per week, for 12 weeks, with the host organisation. The types of projects for this module are similar to those for the internship, although more restricted in scope and depth. Both modules enable students to earn academic credit as formal elements of their degree.

The 2023/24 QUB School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics programme received 16 project bids from five departments for which 16 students were assigned by QUB during the academic year.

The table below shows the breakdown of internships (I) and placements (P) in which students participated by department:

NICS Department	Semester 1 (Sep – Dec 2023)	Semester 2 (Jan – Mar 2024)	Total
Department of Education (DE)	2 (1P+1I)	2 (1P+1I)	4
Department for Communities (DfC)	3 (3I)	1 (1I)	4
Department for the Economy (DfE)	1 (1I)	4 (3I+1P)	5
Department of Finance (DoF)	–	1 (1I)	1
The Executive Office (TEO)	–	2 (1I+1P)	2
Total	6	10	16

QUB School of Biological Sciences Placement Scheme

In December 2023 People and OD function worked, for the first time, with QUB School of Biological Sciences to seek project proposals from NICS departments for unpaid work placements for 2024/25 for students taking a range of undergraduate BSc and postgraduate MSc courses.

The undergraduate placement options include:

- a placement module which allows third year undergraduate students to spend five days per week, for a minimum of 14 weeks with an NICS department between June and September 2024; and
- a Professional Studies option which allows third year undergraduates to be placed for up to five days per week, for a minimum of 40 weeks or 1,400 hours between September 2024 and August 2025.

The Postgraduate placement modules focus on applying theory to practice whilst completing an academically assessed research project. This is likely to be a tangible piece of work in support of both student learning and the organisation's work.

The number of project proposals received from NICS departments will be confirmed with QUB early 2024.

Work experience opportunities

The NICS work experience scheme welcomed applications from a range of students in schools, Further Education Colleges, and universities, as well as those not in education, with the aim of providing meaningful work experience opportunities to all who apply. The NICS recognises it is important that those making career choices have an opportunity to learn as much as possible about the opportunities that exist in the service and by offering work experience opportunities, aims to highlight its wide variety of careers and encourage work experience participants to consider a career in the NICS in the future.

From 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023, 190 applications were received for work experience placements. People and OD function worked in partnership with all departments to facilitate 145 placements as shown in the table below.

Scheme information is available on the NICS Recruitment website under [Work Experience](#).

NICS Department	Number of Applications	Number of Placements Agreed
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)	44	32
Department for the Economy (DfE)	6	5
Department of Education (DE)	6	5
Department for Communities (DfC)	27	19
Department for Infrastructure (DfI)	11	9
Department of Finance (DoF)	45	36
Department of Health (DoH)	3	1
Department of Justice (DoJ)	39	30

The Executive Office (TEO)	9	8
Total	190	145

NICS Apprenticeships

The NICS Apprenticeships' Guiding Principles were developed in August 2020, and set out the key elements to be applied to NICS apprenticeships and led work to expand the number of apprenticeship schemes available in the NICS. Work to develop a new NICS Apprenticeship policy and supporting guidance for line managers and apprentices is progressing and it is intended that the new policy will be implemented during 2024/25.

During 2023 four apprenticeship competitions launched, with 43 appointments accepted by 31 December 2023.

Information on NICS apprenticeships is available on NICS Recruitment website under [Apprenticeships \(nigov.net\)](https://nigov.net/apprenticeships).

ICT Level 1 Apprentice Scheme

The ICT Level 1 Apprenticeship Scheme is an Apprenticeships NI work-based training programme with Belfast Metropolitan College. Apprentices undertake training at Level 3 on the Apprenticeships NI frameworks in IT and Telecoms, specialising in either Network Infrastructure (which includes Cyber Security) or Software Development.

2022 competition

The scheme attracted 66 applications, with 16 candidates successful at interview. Four appointments were made during 2023.

2023 competition

The ICT Level 1 Apprentice competition was advertised in the summer of 2023 to attract school leavers. As part of the selection process, all applicants were required to complete an aptitude test. There were 199 applications received; 91

candidates passed the test and were invited to interview. Forty five candidates were successful at interview with 14 appointments made during 2023.

Civil Engineering Apprentice Scheme

The Civil Engineering Level 1 Apprenticeship Scheme is a structured programme of education and training operated to enable apprentices to obtain a Civil Engineering qualification and gain a wide experience of work in Roads and Rivers throughout Northern Ireland.

Apprentices undertake a two-year part-time Level 3 BTEC Civil Engineering course at a Northern Ireland based Further Education College. Apprentices study to obtain a Level 3 qualification and work towards obtaining a professional qualification as an Engineering Technician with the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE).

The Civil Engineering apprentice competition was advertised in May 2023 attracting 303 applications. Forty one out of 89 candidates invited to interview were successful, with 22 appointments made during 2023.

Industrial 1 Vehicle and Plant Fitter Apprentice

The Industrial 1 Vehicle and Plant Fitter Apprentice Scheme is a work-based training programme that takes place at a Northern Ireland based Further Education College. Apprentices undertake the NVQ Heavy Fleet Maintenance qualification, studying both Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in Vehicle Maintenance and Repair (Heavy Vehicle).

In May 2023, an Industrial 1 Vehicle and Plant Fitter Apprentice competition was advertised. The scheme attracted 14 applications with all candidates progressing to interview. Six candidates were successful at interview, with three appointments made during 2023.

NINE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



NICS Diversity and Inclusion

The NICS is committed to being a diverse and inclusive employer, and to creating an inclusive workplace culture where everyone can fully participate, perform at their best and reach their potential.

The NICS Diversity Champions Network was established in 2015 and continues to drive diversity and inclusion across the service. It includes senior colleagues as designated Diversity Champions for each of the nine Ministerial NICS departments and Public Prosecutions Service, as well as four thematic leads for gender, race and ethnicity, disability and LGBTQ+.

Diversity and inclusion remain a strategic priority for the NICS. The diversity and inclusion programme of work continues to be delivered through the annual NICS Diversity Action Plan (DAP) which is developed by the Diversity Champions Network in collaboration with the People and OD function and staff networks.

Implementation of the DAP is overseen by the leadership of the NICS Board, the Diversity Champions Network, staff networks and the People and OD function as well as through partnership working with other stakeholder organisations. Progress against the DAP is monitored and reported on a quarterly basis by the Diversity Champions Network with an annual progress report provided to the NICS Board.

Visibility of the diversity and inclusion agenda at the most senior levels of the organisation has been fundamental in driving progress, delivering the DAP and helping to embed inclusion and diversity across the service.

Diversity Action Plan 2023/24

The [Diversity Action Plan 2023-24](#) was published in July 2023. It recognises the importance of intersectionality and sets out priorities on a cross-cutting basis as well under the specific thematic areas of gender, disability, LGBTQ+ and race and ethnicity.

Gender / LGBTQ+ / Disability / Race and Ethnicity

Diversity and inclusion initiatives are delivered on a service wide and departmental basis and have the commitment and support of Senior Civil Servants. To ensure senior leaders demonstrate and are accountable for visible inclusive leadership and behaviours, the diversity and inclusion related performance objective which was introduced for Permanent Secretaries in 2022 was extended to all Senior Civil Servants in 2023. Diversity Champions also completed inclusive leadership training.

In 2023 the NICS strengthened its links with the education sector and delivered a programme of outreach activity with the aim of attracting as diverse an applicant pool as possible (see section eight).

As many issues around lack of inclusion can relate to a lack of knowledge and understanding, a concerted effort was made in 2023 to deepen knowledge and understanding of diversity issues to ensure a supportive and inclusive NICS workplace culture, which included:

- launch of a new diversity and inclusion learning bundle, featuring two new mandatory diversity and inclusion e-Learning courses, as well as e-learning modules on LGBTQ+ Inclusion and Trans and Non-Binary Inclusion;
- delivery of a programme of disability awareness training and range of webinars on LGBTQ+ awareness and cultural competencies;
- an all-staff event on neurodiversity; and
- new learning resources including a Guide for Allies, LGBTQ+ Role Models Guide, a LGBTQ+ pilot Reverse Mentoring Programme and Women's Mentoring programme;

The NICS also participated in events to celebrate diversity including National Inclusion Week, Belfast Mela, Pride, Carers Week, International Men's Day, International Women's Day, Black History Month, International Job Shadow Day, International Day for Persons with Disabilities and International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The NICS renewed its commitment to the White Ribbon Charter to end violence against women and as part of this, continued to promote the support available to those experiencing, or at risk of, domestic or sexual abuse and trained more Safe Place Advocates across the service.

In recognition of the invaluable role that staff networks have in promoting inclusion, encouraging active allyship, and providing a sense of belonging and support for colleagues, the five NICS staff networks (LGBTQ+, disability, race and ethnicity, women and Student Network) were supported to maintain and grow. Joint network activities were delivered to celebrate National Day for Staff Networks, National Hate Crime Awareness Week and as part of National Inclusion Week. In October 2023, a new Cancer Support Network was established to support colleagues with a cancer diagnosis and those supporting a loved one, with the formal launch of the network planned for February 2024 to coincide with World Cancer Awareness Day. A student network to support the new 2023/24 cohort of student placements in the NICS was established in December 2023.

A pilot Essential Skills Programme was developed to support industrial staff in the DfI and the DAERA who wish to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. The first cohort of staff will commence digital skills training in early 2024, with training in numeracy and literacy skills to follow later in 2024.

A range of external benchmarking on NICS practices and approaches was undertaken with several diversity accolades being awarded, including the Stonewall Silver Employer Award; Silver Diversity Mark; and the Disability Positive accreditation. The NICS also retained the Onus Gold Workplace Charter for the work undertaken to support colleagues who are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, domestic or sexual abuse.

DoF, TEO and DfE won the Best Resourcing and Talent Management Strategy at the CIPD NI Awards 2023 for the Civil Service Skills Academy which was developed to diversify the entry routes into the NICS and its workforce.

A “Count Me In” campaign ran from October to December 2023 encouraging colleagues through a series of communications to update their equality data to increasing completion rates and help the NICS to identify areas where action is required to better meet the needs of all colleagues. The campaign will run on an annual basis.

To drive the NICS diversity and inclusion journey forward, a Diversity Action Plan for 2024/2025 will be developed.

Key actions delivered in each of the specific diversity themes include:

Disability

The NICS is committed to the employment of disabled people and operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) which applies to all external NICS recruitment competitions (at any grade and any discipline) where appropriate, and ensures that a guaranteed number of disabled applicants, who meet the minimum essential eligibility criteria for the role they have applied for, are offered an interview. For more information on the GIS please refer to the [“Information for disabled applicants”](#) section of the NICS recruitment website.

The NICS has a designated Disability Champion who is supported by the NICS Disability Working Group, which is a consultative group who work to promote disability equality and inclusion across the service. The Group is comprised of representatives from the disability sector, trade union side, the People and OD function, the Disability Staff Network and colleagues from a range of NICS disability policy branches. A range of actions were taken to promote NICS career opportunities to the disability sector during 2023, including positive action advertising, targeted advertising and outreach information sessions for the Administrative Officer recruitment competition. As lead partner of Employers for Disability NI (EFDNI) the NICS continues to have a permanent presence on the EFDNI Jobs Bulletin Board which is an online career opportunities service circulated to disability organisations.

In 2023, preparation work commenced for the NICS to participate as an employer in Phase Two of the Job Start Scheme, offering 16-24 year olds who are job ready, nine-month work placement opportunities. The NICS will target “Specialist Pathways” groups which includes young disabled people; those not in education, employment or training (NEET); care experienced; those engaged with the criminal justice system; and those at risk of falling into paramilitary activity or coercive control.

A programme of disability awareness training was delivered in 2023 which included Disability Positive training for staff and specifically for Diversity Champions which allowed participants to attain the Disability Positive accreditation.

To promote neurodiversity in the workplace an awareness event was held for all staff alongside a series of internal communications to mark Autism Awareness Week, Dyslexia Awareness Week and ADHD Awareness Month.

The NICS has supported International Job Shadow Day (IJSJ) since 2018 which provides work experience for disabled people of all ages. The NICS offered 53 placements in 2023 with nine placements accepted.

The NICS commenced a review of its reasonable adjustment procedures to ensure line managers are equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills; and that the organisation provides an effective reasonable adjustment process for users which complies with obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, reflects best practice, and supports service delivery/business needs. The outworkings of the review will include a new reasonable adjustment policy and guidance which will be developed and co-designed with stakeholders including colleagues with lived experience.

LGBTQ+

The NICS has continued to implement initiatives to be a LGBTQ+ inclusive employer and to support LGBTQ+ Inclusion.

The NICS achieved Stonewall's Silver Employer Award under the 2023 Workplace Equality Index. As part of benchmarking of policies and practices to ensure that they are LGBTQ+ inclusive, a submission was made during 2023 to the 2024 Index. Results are expected in summer 2024.

Pride 2023 was celebrated with a series of internal and external communications and events, and participation at the Belfast Pride Village provided a valuable opportunity to promote the NICS as a diverse and inclusive employer. Civil servants, including senior leaders such as the Head of the NICS, supported the LGBTQ+ Staff Network and participated in the Belfast Pride parade.

The LGBTQ+ Staff Network continues to play an integral role in advancing LGBTQ+ inclusion across the organisation. In addition to supporting the development of e-learning products on LGBTQ+ Inclusion and Trans and Non-Binary Inclusion, the network launched an LGBTQ+ Role Models Guide and delivered a pilot Reverse Mentoring Programme. To further raise awareness and understanding across the organisation, the network also arranged a number

of events, communications and initiatives focusing on relevant health, wellbeing and lived experiences of colleagues.

Gender

The NICS has implemented and continues to develop actions to support gender diversity; to seek to remove barriers to female progression; and promote equal representation at every level of the NICS.

Female representation at senior levels continued to improve in 2023, rising to 42.8% compared to 11.3% in 2000.

In 2023, the NICS was awarded the Silver Diversity Mark in recognition of the work to promote gender diversity.

The Women's Network continues to grow and in 2023 led on activities to celebrate International Women's Day (IWD) and developed a pilot Women's Mentoring Programme to support career development of female civil servants.

In addition to IWD, the NICS celebrated International Men's Day and Menopause Awareness Month. The Menopause policy and accompanying e-learning continued to be promoted to support colleagues experiencing menopause symptoms with several new departmental menopause circles established.

A number of departments piloted provision of free period products in accordance with the Period Products (Free Provision) Act.

Race and Ethnicity

A range of activities to encourage and promote NICS career opportunities to minority ethnic groups were delivered during the year, including positive action advertising; targeted advertising and outreach information sessions (see section eight). The NICS also participated in Black History Expo to promote Civil Service careers and its public services.

In summer 2023 the DoF, as a Friend of Mela, once again supported the annual Belfast Mela. Mela offered an important in-person opportunity for the NICS, as an employer and service provider, to engage with minority ethnic communities

and the public promoting the wide range of careers available and its public services.

The Race and Ethnicity Network continues to build its presence across the service and delivered a programme of events and communications. This included collaboration with [JoinHer Network](#) and the wider minority ethnic sector to promote opportunity, recognition and inclusion with learning opportunities created through webinars with lived experienced speakers and facilitators, covering a range of topics developed and led by the minority ethnic sector as part of Black History Month.

TEN CONCLUSION

This Annual Report provides an overview of recruitment related activity in the NICS for the period 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 in compliance with the requirements of Article 4(5) of the 1999 Order and as set out in Appendix C of the Recruitment Code.

The People and OD function along with NICSHR continues to develop the evidence-based framework which underpins and supports the assurance given by the DoF Permanent Secretary to the Chair of the Commissioners that appointments to the NICS are made on merit, and in line with the requirements of their Recruitment Code.

Looking forward to 2024, the People and OD function will continue to work in partnership with NICSHR to deliver on key actions contained within the NICS one year People Plan. People and OD function will lead on the development of the five-year People Strategy, which includes work to review and develop the NICS workforce model and approach to workforce planning (organisation shape, size, and skills) and deliver best practice, fit for purpose and legally compliant HR policies that underpin people management processes across the NICS.

Appendix 1 – Recruitment competitions closed for applications during 2023

Reference	Title
IRC262687	Press Office SM DP
IRC270056	Health Transformation Project Grade 7
IRC276640	Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer (G5)
IRC280369	Director of Ordnance Survey
IRC281925	Deputy Departmental Solicitor, DSO
IRC284814	PSD New City Deals G5
IRC285575	EO1 Fraud Investigator
IRC285578	Assistant Scientific Officer
IRC286576	AWP DWP/CMS SO
IRC287544	Digital Marketing Officer
IRC287596	Internal Auditor Staff Officer
IRC287775	EO1 Web Accessibility Officer
IRC288004	Assistant Chief Inspector
IRC288225	PPTO Quantity Surveyor - DoF Construction and Procurement Delivery
IRC288242	HPTO Quantity Surveyor - DoF Construction and Procurement Delivery
IRC288262	SPTO Quantity Surveyor - DoF Construction and Procurement Delivery
IRC288344	Head of Financial Analysis Branch (G7)
IRC288345	Head of Operations Branch (G7)
IRC288676	Senior Scientific Officer Marine & Fisheries
IRC288716	Staff Officer Financial Investigator
IRC288917	Director of Advisory Division 2
IRC291935	Senior Purser Strangford Ferry
IRC291942	Forestry Officer Grade III
IRC291943	Inspector Grade I
IRC292028	Industrial 1 Chargehand
IRC292063	Industrial 2 - Supervisor
IRC292107	Agriculture Inspector Grade 3
IRC292109	Agriculture Inspector Grade 3
IRC292454	Senior Information Officer
IRC292591	Assistant Valuer
IRC292727	Agriculture Inspector Group 2 - Agriculture
IRC292742	Vehicle Examiner
IRC292882	Safer Communities Directorate Director SCS

Reference	Title
IRC292883	Director of NI Courts and Tribunals Service G3
IRC292922	HPTO M&E Assistant Fleet Workshop Manager (NICS)
IRC292923	HPTO M&E Assistant Fleet Contracts Manager (NICS)
IRC293040	PTO M&E Assistant
IRC293171	Senior Learning & Development Consultant, DP
IRC293172	Veterinary Inspector
IRC293192	Inspector Group 2 - Food Technology Technician
IRC293285	Deputy Director of Public Procurement Policy (Grade 6)
IRC293358	Civil Engineering Apprentice
IRC293390	HPTO Structural Engineering Assistant
IRC293394	Deputy Principal Statistician - NISRA
IRC293404	District Valuer - Grade 6
IRC293442	Deputy Centre Manager, Professional and Technical Officer (PTO)
IRC293444	Professional and Technical Officer (PTO), Compliance and Roadside Enforcement
IRC293445	DVA IVAT Cookstown - Vehicle Driving Examiner
IRC293466	EOI Youth Justice Practitioner
IRC293468	Higher TG Area Supervisor
IRC293512	Industrial 2 Tradesperson (Walling Mason/Bricklayer)
IRC293582	Higher Scientific Officer - Resource Efficiency Division
IRC293583	Mapping and Charting Officer
IRC293593	Senior Traffic Examiner
IRC293608	Inspector Group 2 - Horticulture
IRC293613	Reporting Officer Chemistry Stream
IRC293665	Vehicle and Plant Fitter Apprentice
IRC293758	Assistant Director of Pensions Division
IRC293787	Information Communication Technology (ICT) Apprentice ICT Level 1
IRC293793	Industrial 2 Skilled Operative - Plant Operator
IRC293794	Industrial 2 Skilled Operative - Handyperson
IRC293830	Principal Legal Officer
IRC293845	Higher Psychologist (Staff Officer)
IRC293914	Higher Psychologists (Staff Officer)
IRC294286	Psychology Assistants (EO1) Department of Justice (DoJ) (NIPS)
IRC294287	Senior Psychologist (Forensic)

Reference	Title
IRC294408	Consultancy Services East Graduate Trainee
IRC294925	Grade 6 Chief Allied Health Professional
IRC294950	SGBII Laboratory Attendant
IRC295073	Industrial 2 - Portal Operations
IRC295097	Principal Inspector (Health and Safety) Grade 7
IRC295106	DNA Assistant Scientific Officer
IRC295116	HPTO Operations and Testing
IRC295148	SPTO Client Advisor/Project Manager
IRC295149	Support Grade Band SGB2 (NIPS)
IRC295187	Head of Internal Audit, Grade 7
IRC295325	Director of Regional Planning Governance and Legislation G5
IRC295371	Trainee Trading Standards Inspector
IRC295482	Industrial 2 Ranger DFC
IRC295571	Industrial 1 Road Worker
IRC295572	Staff Officer Accountant
IRC295575	FSNI Higher Scientific Officer Forensic Engineer/Forensic Collision Investigator
IRC295583	Strangford Ferry Service SPTO
IRC295590	Electronics Technician - Scientific Officer
IRC295777	Area Inspector Trading Standards Service
IRC295807	SPTO Estate Officer
IRC295883	Chief Executive, NIEA
IRC296099	EOII Driving Examiner
IRC296110	Business Support and Network Lighting HPTO M&E Eng Asst
IRC296142	Public Prosecutor, PPS
IRC296217	Senior Civil Service, Permanent Secretary Roles
IRC296229	Veterinary Inspector
IRC296230	Deputy Principal Accountant
IRC296284	HPTO Estate Officer
IRC296285	Professional & Technical Officer (PTO) Estate Officer (NICS)
IRC296305	Student Placement
IRC296418	Conservation Grade F
IRC296446	Principal Legal Officer
IRC296455	HPTO Electrical Building Service Design Engineer

Reference	Title
IRC296628	Principal Public Prosecutor, PPS
IRC296644	Graduate Trainee Electrical Engineer
IRC296686	SPTO (M and E Engineering Assistant)
IRC296691	Building Maintenance Officer - Mechanical HPTO
IRC296820	Director of Youth Services
IRC297090	SPTO Civil Engineering Assistant
IRC297220	Higher Scientific Officer, Technical Process Manager AST
IRC297240	HPTO Quantity Surveyor Assistant
IRC298527	Administrative Officer - Alternative Working Pattern
IRC293340	Custody Prison Officer
IRC293453	Night Custody Officer
IRC293454	Prisoner Custody Officer Escort (30 Hour Contract)
IRC293455	Prisoner Custody Officer Driver/Escort (40 Hour Contract)

Appendix 2 – Summary of eligible applications and updated appointment figures

Table 1 – Summary of eligible applications by Equality Group for competitions which closed to activity during 2023^[1]

Equality Category	Description	Non SCS Permanent Jobs	SCS Permanent Jobs	Temporary Jobs	Total
Overall	Total	8,965	232	430	9,627
Gender [2]	Male	4,465	106	214	4,785
	Female	4,495	126	216	4,837
Community Background	Protestant	3,869	108	150	4,127
	Catholic	4,193	99	217	4,509
	Not Determined	903	25	63	991
Ethnicity [3]	White	8,747	229	400	9,376
	Minority Ethnic Groups	216	3	30	249
Disability	With a declared disability	695	9	30	734
	Without a declared disability	8,270	223	400	8,893
Age-group	16-24	1,300	0	390	1,690
	25-34	3,338	7	27	3,372
	35-44	2,668	61	11	2,740
	45-54	1,325	118	0	1,443
	55-64	328	45	2	375
	65+	6	1	0	7
Sexual Orientation [4]	Different sex	8,278	226	399	8,903
	Both sexes	309	0	21	330
	Same sex	368	6	10	384
NICS employment history [5]	Current	3,463	172	4	3,639
	Previous	602	15	5	622
	None	4,820	42	421	5,283

There were no temporary SCS competitions which closed to activity during 2023 ^[1].

For all permanent jobs, Gender is missing for 5 Eligible applicants ^[2], Ethnicity is missing for 2 Eligible applicants ^[3], Sexual Orientation is missing for 10 Eligible applicants ^[4] and Employment History is missing for 83 Eligible applicants ^[5].

For non- SCS Permanent jobs, Gender is missing for 5 Eligible applicants ^[2], Ethnicity is missing for 2 Eligible applicants ^[3], Sexual Orientation is missing for 10 Eligible applicants ^[4] and Employment History is missing for 80 Eligible applicants ^[5].

For SCS Permanent jobs, Employment History is missing for 3 Eligible applicants ^[5].

Table 2 – Summary of eligible applicants, invited to interview, passed interview & appointed by Equality Group for competitions which closed to activity during 2023

Equality Category	Description	Eligible Applicants	Invited to Interview	Passed Interview	Appointed
Overall	Total	9,627	3,884	2,230	1,467
Gender [1]	Male	4,785	2,036	1,136	724
	Female	4,837	1,848	1,094	743
Community Background	Protestant	4,127	1,689	956	608
	Catholic	4,509	1,742	1,015	700
	Not Determined	991	453	259	159
Ethnicity [2]	White	9,376	3,773	2,172	1,429
	Minority Ethnic Groups	249	109	56	36
Disability	With a declared disability	734	262	150	101
	Without a declared disability	8,893	3,622	2,080	1,366
Age-group	16-24	1,690	698	333	171
	25-34	3,372	1,126	642	429
	35-44	2,740	1,147	761	560
	45-54	1,443	684	385	238
	55-64	375	225	108	69
	65+	7	4	1	0
Sexual Orientation [3]	Different sex	8,903	3,627	2,094	1,380
	Both sexes	330	104	55	36
	Same sex	384	146	76	48
NICS employment history [4]	Current	3,639	1,672	1,115	876
	Previous	622	264	140	70
	None	5,283	1,912	954	514

[1] Gender is missing for 5 Eligible applicants.

[2] Ethnicity is missing for 2 Eligible applicants, 2 applicants who were Invited to Interview, 2 applicants who Passed Interview and 2 Appointees.

[3] Sexual Orientation is missing for 10 Eligible applicants, 7 applicants who were Invited to Interview, 5 applicants who Passed Interview and 3 Appointees.

[4] Employment History is missing for 83 Eligible applicants, 36 applicants who were Invited to Interview, 21 applicants who Passed Interview and 7 Appointees.

Table 3 – Summary of competition and appointment figures for internal competitions (promotions and trawls only) at all NICS grades for the years 2021 - 2023

	2021		2022		2023	
	No. of Competitions	No. of Appointments	No. of Competitions	No. of Appointments	No. of Competitions	No. of Appointments
Internal SCS Competitions	1	1	2	2	1	0
Internal Competitions below SCS	81	316	11	81	22	42
Total	82	317	13	83	23	42

Note: Includes Trawls and Promotion Boards with a closing date for applications in the relevant year.

Appointments refer to staff promoted by 31 December 2023. Further appointments could be made from some of these competitions.

Appendix 3 – Extensions to Merit List 2023

EXTERNAL COMPETITIONS (Merit list extended for 33 competitions)

EO1 GENERAL SERVICE VOLUME – IRC265807				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	31 Aug 2023	31 Dec 2023	552	100+

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 31 August 2023.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

EO2 GENERAL SERVICE VOLUME – IRC265817				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	09 Aug 2023	31 Dec 2023	603	100+

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 09 August 2023.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

AO GENERAL SERVICE VOLUME – IRC240709				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
2 nd Request	31 Dec 2022	31 Mar 2023	1436	100+
3 rd Request	31 Mar 2023	30 Jun 2023	1436	100+
4 th Request	30 Jun 2023	31 Dec 2023	1443	100+

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 01 October 2022, with the first extension request made in 2022.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

EO2 – DRIVING EXAMINER – IRC252042				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
2 nd Request	16 Feb 2023	31 Dec 2023	18	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 16 August 2022, with the first extension request made in 2022.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

EO2 – TRAINEE MEAT INSPECTOR – IRC254165				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
5 th Request	30 Apr 2023	30 Oct 2023	16	10
6 th Request	30 Oct 2023	31 Jan 2024	18	8

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 03 July 2020, the first, second, third and fourth extension requests were made in previous years. Extending the merit list for the fifth and sixth time was required to facilitate mandatory medical checks prior to offers of appointment being made.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

AO – FSNI ASO – IRC254876				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
2 nd Request	13 May 2023	12 Nov 2023	39	3

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 13 May 2022, with the first extension request made in 2022. Second merit list extension was required to allow candidates to complete mandatory medical checks prior to offers of appointments being made.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

HPTO ESTATES – IRC261341				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	18 Jan 2023	18 Apr 2023	3	3
2 nd Request	18 Apr 2023	18 Jul 2023	4	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 18 January 2023. First extension was required to enable successful candidates to complete preplacement checks, to enable offers of appointment to be made. The second extension was required to enable offers of appointment to be made following a temporary pause by DAERA on filling vacancies.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

HPTO ARCHITECTURAL ASSISTANT – IRC263483				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
2 nd Request	07 May 2023	07 Aug 2023	4	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 07 November 2022, with the first extension request made in 2022. A further extension was required to allow the successful candidate to complete Counter Terrorism Check (CTC) clearance to enable an offer of appointment to be made and for the candidate to take up post.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

SO – AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIST – IRC263840				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
2 nd Request	04 Jan 2023	04 Apr 2023	2	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 04 October 2022, with the first extension request made in 2022. A further extension was required to allow the successful candidate to complete preplacement checks to enable an offer of appointment to be made and for the candidate to take up post.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

SO – AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING GRADE III – IRC265696				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
2 nd Request	01 May 2023	05 Sep 2023	1	1
3 rd Request	05 Sep 2023	05 Nov 2023	1	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 01 November 2022, with the first extension request made in 2022. The second and third extensions were required to enable an offer of appointment to be made and for the candidate to take up post following a temporary pause by DAERA on filling vacancies.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

DP – SENIOR SCIENTIFIC OFFICER – IRC265934				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
2 nd Request	26 Feb 2023	23 May 2023	3	2
3 rd Request	23 May 2023	23 Aug 2023	3	2
4 th Request	23 Aug 2023	23 Nov 2023	3	2
5 th Request	23 Nov 2023	23 Dec 2023	4	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 26 November 2022, with the first extension request made in 2022. The second, third and fourth extensions were required as a result of a vacancy reconciliation exercise, followed by a temporary pause by DAERA on filling vacancies. The final extension was required to ensure a candidate's appointment, which was delayed as a result of an administrative error.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

SO – AGRICULTURAL INSPECTOR GRADE III EQUINE – IRC267020				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	05 Feb 2023	05 Aug 2023	2	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 05 February 2023. An extension to the merit list was required to enable an offer of appointment to be made and for the candidate to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

SO – AGRICULTURAL INSPECTOR GRADE III FOOD TECHNOLOGY – IRC267441				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	03 Mar 2023	03 Sep 2023	4	5
2 nd Request	03 Sep 2023	03 Dec 2023	4	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 03 March 2023, with the first extension required to accommodate preplacement checks to be completed to enable an offer of appointment to be made and for candidates to take up post. Following delays caused by a temporary pause by DAERA on filling vacancies, a second extension was approved to fill a further vacancy.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

DP – SENIOR SCIENTIFIC OFFICER – IRC268112				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	23 Jan 2023	23 Jul 2023	3	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 23 January 2023. An extension to the merit list was required to enable offers of appointment to be made and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list for these specialist posts was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

EO1 – PTO CIVIL ENGINEERING ASSISTANT – IRC268138				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	21 Jun 2023	30 Sep 2023	60	1
2 nd Request	30 Sep 2023	31 Dec 2023	60	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 21 June 2023. Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

EO1 – SCIENTIFIC OFFICER – IRC270955				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	25 May 2023	25 Sep 2023	33	11
2 nd Request	25 Sep 2023	25 Dec 2023	33	11
3 rd Request	25 Dec 2023	25 Mar 2024	34	11

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 25 May 2023. Due to a vacancy reconciliation exercise and budgetary issues experienced by DAERA, an extension to the merit list was required to enable offers of appointment to be made and for candidates to take up post. Further extensions were required to facilitate preplacement checks on a number of further vacancies.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

SO – ENERGY GROUP – IRC271190				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	13 Jun 2023	13 Sep 2023	21	8
2 nd Request	13 Sep 2023	13 Nov 2023	22	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 13 June 2023, with the first extension required after several new posts were created to take forward priority areas of work within Energy Group. A number of candidates either withdrew from the competition or declined their offer resulting in the same posts having to be reallocated for a second and in some cases third time, creating delays in filling these vacancies. A second extension was required to enable an offer of appointment to be made and for the candidate to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

DP – SERVICE DESIGNER – IRC273925				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	07 Jun 2023	07 Dec 2023	6	4

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 07 June 2023. Due to budgetary pressures, anticipated vacancies were no longer being filled. Given that the pool of fully qualified Service Designers was very small and in high demand, there was limited value in running another recruitment competition in the near future.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

SO – ASSISTANT STATISTICIAN – IRC273939				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	09 Jun 2023	09 Sep 2023	44	2
2 nd Request	09 Sep 2023	09 Dec 2023	44	18
3 rd Request	09 Dec 2023	08 Jan 2024	48	18

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 09 June 2023. The first extension was required to facilitate preplacement checks for two candidates to take up post. The second and third extensions were approved as a further 17 vacancies were submitted, and additional time was required to allow preplacement checks to be completed to enable offers to be made and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds taking into account the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

EO2 – FISHERIES OFFICER 2 – IRC274209				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	27 Jun 2023	27 Sep 2023	3	2
2 nd Request	27 Sep 2023	28 Feb 2024	3	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 27 June 2023, with the first extension required to facilitate mandatory medical checks for two candidates to take up post. A further extension was required following delays in placing candidates as a result of budgetary issues and completion of medical examinations.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

EO1 – SCIENTIFIC OFFICER – IRC275900				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	25 Jul 2023	25 Oct 2023	10	1
2 nd Request	25 Oct 2023	25 Mar 2024	11	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 25 July 2023, with the merit list extended to allow Counter Terrorism Check (CTC) clearance to be completed and for the candidate to take up post. Following submission of a further vacancy, a second extension was required to allow sufficient time for CTC clearance and for the candidate to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

DP – SENIOR SCIENTIFIC OFFICER, REGULATION UNIT WASTE – IRC276118				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	06 Jun 2023	06 Aug 2023	3	2
2 nd Request	06 Aug 2023	06 Oct 2023	3	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 06 June 2023, with the first extension required to allow time for completion of post grading exercise. A further extension was necessary to facilitate preplacement checks to enable offers of appointment to be made and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

AA – INDUSTRIAL ROAD WORKER 1 – IRC276805				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	12 Aug 2023	12 Nov 2023	11	6
2 nd Request	12 Nov 2023	12 Feb 2024	13	4

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 12 August 2023. First & second extensions were required to allow sufficient time for the completion of mandatory medical examinations to enable offers of appointment to be made and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

SO – ICT LEVEL 5 SECURITY – IRC276982				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	11 Oct 2023	11 Dec 2023	11	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 11 October 2023, with the merit list extended to facilitate completion of preplacement checks to enable an offer of appointment to be made and for the candidate to take up post.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

GRADE 7 – PPTO MULTI DISCIPLINARY TEAM LEAD – IRC277394				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	23 Sep 2023	31 Dec 2023	3	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 23 September 2023, with extension to merit list approved to enable a further vacancy to be filled.

Extending the merit list is considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

EO1 – Careers Adviser – IRC277690				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	18 Oct 2023	04 Mar 2024	5	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 18 October 2023, with merit list extension approved to provide sufficient time to enable two further vacancies to be filled.

Given the difficulties in attracting and recruiting qualified Careers Advisers, extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

AO – SGB1 NIPS – IRC279095				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	15 Sep 2023	15 Dec 2023	4	5
2 nd Request	15 Dec 2023	14 Mar 2024	5	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 15 September 2023, with the merit list extended to enable CTC clearance to be completed and for candidates to take up post. A second extension was necessary as further vacancies were identified, and preplacement checks had commenced but would not be complete by closing date to enable offer of appointments to be made and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

SO – HPTO ARCHITECT – IRC279416				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	12 Oct 2023	12 Jan 2024	1	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 12 October 2023, with extension to merit list approved to provide sufficient time for a further vacancy to be filled.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

GRADE 6 – SENIOR PRINCIPAL STATISTICIAN – IRC281895				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	07 Dec 2023	07 Mar 2024	7	5

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 07 December 2023, with an extension to the merit list required due to delays in placing candidates as a result of budgetary constraints.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

AO – INDUSTRIAL 2 SENIOR CRAFTS PERSON – IRC282738				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	13 Dec 2023	13 Mar 2024	0	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 13 December 2023, with an extension to the merit list required to allow sufficient time for completion of medical examinations and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

AO – INDUSTRIAL 2 SKILLED OPERATIVE – IRC282755				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	16 Dec 2023	16 Mar 2024	1	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 16 December 2023, with an extension to the merit list required to allow sufficient time for completion of medical examinations and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

GRADE 7 – HEAD OF PROCUREMENT – IRC282780				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	01 Nov 2023	01 Feb 2024	3	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 01 November 2023, with an extension to the merit list required due to delays in placing candidates as a result of budgetary constraints.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

EO1 – SCIENTIFIC OFFICER WATER CHEMISTRY – IRC281156				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	19 Dec 2023	18 Mar 2024	10	2

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 19 December 2023. Following a temporary pause on filling vacancies as a result of budgetary constraints experienced by DAERA, an extension to the merit list was necessary to enable offers of appointment for these specialised posts to be made and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

INTERNAL COMPETITIONS (Merit list extended for 5 competitions)

EO1 – DFI PRIVATE OFFICE – IRC258930				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	07 Feb 2023	07 Jul 2023	14	1
2 nd Request	07 Jul 2023	31 Oct 2023	14	3
3 rd Request	31 Oct 2023	31 Dec 2023	14	4

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 07 February 2023. The first and second extensions to the merit list were necessary as departments would need an immediate supply of staff should the political situation change and devolved government be restored. The third extension was required to enable offers of appointment to be made and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

DP – SENIOR SCIENTIFIC OFFICER – IRC253589				
Extension Request	Previous closing dates	New extended closing dates	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	30 May 2023	30 Aug 2023	3	1
2 nd Request	30 Aug 2023	30 Nov 2023	3	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 30 May 2023, with the first extension required due to delay in filling the post as a result of budgetary constraints experienced by DAERA. A second extension was necessary to enable offer of appointment to be made and for the candidate to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard for the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

DP – FRAUD INVESTIGATOR – IRC243558				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	02 May 2023	02 Nov 2023	1	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 02 May 2023, with the merit list extended to facilitate the completion of preplacement checks to enable an offer of appointment to be made and for the candidate to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

GRADE 6 – SENIOR PRINCIPAL STATISTICIAN – IRC255163				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	31 Jan 2023	30 Apr 2023	3	1

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 31 January 2023, with extension to merit list necessary to enable the final candidate to take up appointment into this key and business critical policy facing role/

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.

GRADE 7 – STATISTICIAN – IRC265008				
Extension Request	Previous closing date	New extended closing date	No. appointments before extension	Anticipated number appointments after extension
1 st Request	17 Oct 2023	17 Jan 2024	12	9

Cogent and practical reasons for extending the merit list

Original closing date was 17 October 2023. Following a temporary pause on filling vacancies and as a result of budgetary constraints experienced by DAERA, an extension to merit list was necessary to enable offers of appointment for these specialised posts to be made and for candidates to take up post.

Extending the merit list was considered appropriate on value for money and business need grounds having regard to the anticipated number of vacancies, costs and timescales involved in running a new competition.



Northern Ireland

Civil Service

People and Organisational Development



Department of

Finance

An Roinn

Airgeadais

www.finance-ni.gov.uk

