

Senior Civil Service Permanent Secretary Roles

IRC270732

Completed application forms must be returned to HRConnect no later than **12 noon (UK time) on Friday 19 November 2021.**

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

Candidate Information Booklet

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FOREWORD

I am delighted you are considering applying for a Permanent Secretary role in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).

These are exciting opportunities to lead an NICS department at a time of significant challenge and change. We deal with a vast range of issues and the successful candidates will play a pivotal role supporting the NI Executive Ministers in developing policies and transforming the delivery of public services.

We are looking for dynamic leaders who will inspire people to create and deliver policies for all our citizens. You will bring a track record of leadership and senior management achievement, demonstrating innovation and making sense of organisational challenges.

If you are excited about the opportunity to join the NICS at this important time, and if you have the experience and track record we are looking for, I do hope that you will apply.

Jayne Brady
Head of the NI Civil Service (HOCS)



CONTEXT

- The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) supports the Assembly, the Executive and the institutions of government. We work to develop and implement government policies and help deliver services to the public.
- As one of NI's largest employers, we employ over 23,000 staff across a wide range of disciplines and aspects of government that touch on everyone's day to day lives, managing a total annual budget in excess of £20 billion.
- We have **nine Departments** (which range from around 300 to over 7000 staff in post) which support the NI Executive and Ministers by developing and implementing government policies and legislation and delivering key public services in areas such as health, social development, justice, education, regeneration, environment, culture, agriculture, economic development, employment and transport. In addition, the Public Prosecution Service is staffed by civil servants and is a **non-Ministerial Department**.
- More information can be found on the website www.nidirect.gov.uk
- As a Senior Civil Servant, you will provide leadership, vision and drive and act collaboratively to deliver NICS corporate aims and departmental objectives. While Senior Civil Servants are appointed initially to a specific post, you can expect to move to other posts at the same grade in any NICS department, providing opportunities for a wide ranging and varied career.

JOB DESCRIPTION

1. Senior Adviser to an individual Minister, and to the entire NI Executive via the NICS Board, on the working of NI government on a daily and weekly basis, developing and delivering on policy.
2. Leading and managing people and business in a department, delivering outcomes and innovation and driving better public services, reporting directly to the Head of the Civil Service (HOCS) as your line manager.
3. Accounting to the NI Assembly (through the Public Accounts Committee) for the sound management of risk and public funds in an individual department, as Principal Accounting Officer for that department.
4. Making an effective contribution to the collective leadership and management of the NICS as an executive member of the NICS Board, facilitating the development of Ministerial and Executive strategic policy making over the medium and long-term.
5. Representing the NICS externally and engaging with a wide range of stakeholders.
6. Embodying the central importance of propriety and ethics throughout the NICS.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential skills and experience

Eligibility, Shortlisting and Interview Assessment Criteria – Setting Direction, Engaging People, Delivering Results

- 1.** Effective, sense-making, strategic analysis of organisational risks and opportunities for innovation. **(Setting Direction)**
- 2.** Successful brokering of stakeholder relationships, influencing and negotiating in a context of uncertainty and change. **(Setting Direction/Engaging People)**
- 3.** Effective leadership and management of the delivery of challenging outcomes. **(Delivering Results)**
- 4.** Effective management and motivation of people, developing a sense of corporate ambition, delivering work with tenacity and resilience under scrutiny and pressure. **(Engaging People)**
- 5.** Effective delivery of value for money in investment, administration and expenditure. **(Delivering Results)**

The panel will assess the candidates in response to these criteria at each stage of the process, taking forward those candidates that best meet the criteria.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The Merit Principle

In accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, appointments to the NICS are made under the 'merit principle', where the best person for any given post is selected in fair and open competition. Further information on the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.nicscommissioners.org.

Selection Panel

Sinead Burns, Civil Service Commissioner, will chair the panel.

The other panel members will be:

Jayne Brady, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service

Declan Billington, CEO at John Thompson & Sons Ltd

Ellvena Graham, Chair of Catalyst, Belfast

Date	Stage
28 October	Advertise
19 November	Closing date for applications
1 December	Eligibility and shortlisting sift
15 and 20 December	First interview
21 December - 5 January	Psychometric work
12 January	Second interview

SELECTION PROCESS

Throughout the process, candidates will be assessed against the skills and experience set out under the Person Specification, consistent with the leadership behaviours of the NICS competency framework: Setting Direction, Engaging People and Delivering Results.

Information on the NICS leadership behaviours and competences (skills, knowledge and behaviours) can be found [here](#).

These indicators are not designed to be comprehensive, but rather to give an understanding of what is expected of NICS leaders.

Eligibility and Shortlisting Sift

After the closing date, all applications will be carefully considered and evaluated by the panel on the basis of the written evidence provided against the criteria, as set out in the Person Specification. Only the employment history and eligibility sections will be made available to the panel.

First Interview

The panel will assess candidates against the skills and experience set out under the Person Specification, consistent with the following NICS leadership behaviours:

Setting Direction:

Seeing the Big Picture, Making Effective Decisions

Engaging People:

Leading and Communicating, Collaborating and Partnering

Delivering Results:

Delivering Value for Money, Achieving Outcomes through Delivery Partners

The panel will determine which candidates should proceed further in the selection process.

Psychometric Assessment

Candidates successful at first interview stage will complete an online psychometric profiling tool. That tool assesses motives, preferences, needs and talents at work under four main cluster headings (**Thought, Influence, Adaptability and Delivery**) including different headings directly relevant to this role, for example resilience.

The reports from those profiles will be used to inform the panel on areas to explore deeper at the second interview.



Second Interview

This final stage will involve a presentation from candidates. The presentation topic will be provided on the day of interview. As informed by the psychometric work, the panel will deep dive into the skills and experience set out under the Person Specification, consistent with the following NICS leadership behaviours, in addition to those considered at the first interview:

Setting Direction: Changing and Improving

Engaging People: Building Capacity for all

Delivering Results: Delivering at Pace

The panel will list those suitable for appointment in order of merit.

It is intended that interviews will be held at NICSHR, Bruce Street, Belfast. Candidates should note that subject to COVID-19 restrictions at the time, social distancing measures will be put in place as required at each stage of the selection process.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

There are currently two permanent full time vacancies, one in the Department of Finance (DoF) and the other in the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). The order of merit will be valid for one year during which time further appointments may be made from this competition.

Secondment

These posts may be filled by secondment for an agreed fixed period as an alternative to open-ended appointment. Such an arrangement would be on a successful candidate's current terms and conditions of service.

Ministerial Endorsement

Appointments will be subject to endorsement by the relevant Ministers.

Location

The DoF post is based at Clare House, Belfast and the DAERA post between Dundonald House, Belfast and Ballykelly House, Ballykelly. To build on our response to the Covid-19 pandemic and prepare for the future, a hybrid style of work which blends working at home (and remotely) with working in the office will be in the context of the emerging NICS 'New Ways of Working' policy.

Salary

The salary scale for the role is £124,282 - £141,866. If a successful candidate is an existing NICS civil servant, starting pay on transfer to a new substantive grade will apply.

In order to comply with the disclosure requirements in our Annual Accounts, we will be required to disclose details of the total remuneration, including any taxable benefits in kind and pension benefits for this post in our annual accounts. Further information may be disclosed in line with any future disclosure requirements relating to the senior management of departments. It is a condition attaching to the appointment to any Senior Civil Servant post in NI that appointees agree to these disclosure requirements.

Pension

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package providing a range of valuable benefits both for the member and their dependants, providing peace of mind when it comes to planning for future retirement. Provisions also include generous ill-health, death and dependants' benefits and scope to boost pensions through paying Additional Voluntary Contributions.

The 2021/2022 employer contribution is 34.2% of salary and the employee contribution is 7.35% of salary between £55,500.00 and £152,499.99.

More details can be obtained from the website www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni or if you are unable to access the website please contact Civil Service Pensions at Waterside House, 75 Duke Street, Londonderry, BT47 6FP.

Telephone: 02871 319000
Email: cspensions.@finance-ni.gov.uk

Vetting

Appointments will be dependent on the successful candidates satisfying the vetting requirements. The level of vetting required for these posts is Security Check (SC). Further details on this check are provided below on page 16.

Conflict of interest

It is a basic requirement for all civil servants that their private activities should not bring them in to conflict with their official duties. Conflict of interest is not limited to the individual's own private, financial or other interests, as family, friends and associates may also have dealings which affect NICS business directly or indirectly. To avoid any conflict or potential conflict and to demonstrate impartiality to the public at all times, an officer must not, without prior approval, engage in any activity which could be considered to be in conflict with official business or give an impression of a conflict.

As such, to protect employees and the NICS from public criticism, it will be mandatory for applicants to complete a conflict of interest declaration as part of the application process. The successful candidates will also be required to sign a Register of Interests on appointment.

Holidays

In addition to public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, the annual leave allowance will be 30 days.

Hours of Work

Normal conditioned hours of work are full-time: 37 hours net per week Monday to Friday. The post-holders will be required to work outside their normal conditioned hours to fulfil the demands of the role.

The successful candidates will be expected to travel throughout NI and may be required to travel nationally and internationally on a regular basis.

Probation

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



HOW TO APPLY

Application process

Please register to this vacancy and complete an online application form and conflict of interest form via the NICS recruitment website: www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.

- **The session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.**
- You must click SUBMIT once you have finished your online application. You will receive an acknowledgement email. Please contact HRConnect if you do not receive an acknowledgment email within 24 hrs: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

The closing date for receipt of completed application forms is 12 noon (UK time) on Friday 19 November 2021.

Queries and further information

For an informal and confidential discussion about any aspect of this role, or the recruitment process, please contact Wesley Emmett at the Strategic Investment Board NI, who is assisting with the recruitment process and will be present during the interviews.

Mobile: +44 (0) 7760 160985

Email: wesley.emmett@sibni.org

Help with making your application

If you require any documentation in an alternative format, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1300 330 or email recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

Should you require it, you can get advice or assistance from local disability employment organisations. To find out more about local disability employment organisations contact Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE), an umbrella group for individuals and organisations promoting opportunities for people with disabilities to access and maintain employment, email info@niuse.org.uk, telephone 0044 (0)28 71 377709, text phone 0044 (0) 28 71 372077

FURTHER INFORMATION

NICSHR Privacy Notice

NICSHR are committed to protecting your privacy. HRConnect manage job applications on behalf of NICSHR, in line with the NICSHR privacy notice available via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

Changes in personal circumstances and contact details

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

Please ensure you inform HRConnect immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

Transgender Requirements

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

Disability Requirements

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

Documentation

Identification documents to satisfy the Nationality and Security requirements of the post will be required. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment. You should ensure that the required documents are readily available.

Right to Work and Nationality Requirements

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

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

Further guidance on Nationality requirements is available via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk.



Security clearance

For this post the level of vetting is Security Check (SC).

For this check you will be required to provide the following:

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard:

- a) Your passport OR
- b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) AND your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
- c) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

Further information regarding the Baseline Personnel Security Standard, including other acceptable documents is available via www.gov.uk. Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

- 2. Counter Terrorist Check (CTC):** as point 1 plus check of Security Service records.
- 3. Security Check (SC):** as point 2 plus credit reference check.

HRConnect will contact you and organise for a Security Check to be carried out by Defence Business Services, National Security Vetting should this be required before the conclusion of the recruitment process.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978. You should not be put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note the Equal Opportunities monitoring section of the application form is required in order to submit an application. For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to the Department of Finance website www.finance-ni.gov.uk.

The NICS is an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace and welcome applications from all suitably experienced persons. Applications will be considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Feedback

The NICS is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair and in accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioners Code. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken at each stage of the recruitment processes.

**THIS CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET DOES NOT
FORM PART OF CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**



